

DELIGHTFUL CLIFF-HOUSE HOLIDAY SERIES BEGINS INSIDE

# THE SCHOOLGIRL

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EVERY **2<sup>D</sup>** SATURDAY

Incorporating  
"SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN"



**FUN FOR THE CHUMS  
AT THE HOLIDAY CAMP!**

A delightful incident from the  
gorgeous long complete  
Babs & Co. story  
inside.



Here is the First Long Complete Story in a Grand Series which will tell of the adventures of Barbara Redfern, Bessie Bunter, Clara Trevlyn, and many other Cliff House favourites, on their summer vacation in Pinebay holiday camp.

# The SECRET of the BLUE CHALET!



## Trouble Over a Chalet!



"THIS is something like!" cried Barbara Redfern gleefully. "Whoops, kiddlets, are we going to have a good time here?"

"Oh, Babs, I'll say we are!" breathed Mabel Lynn excitedly. "Why, it—it's a simply super holiday camp!"

"Just look at the restaurant!" plump Bessie Bunter glowed. "Kik-crums, I bet they've got lots of grubbins there, you know!"

Babs chuckled. Trust plump old duffer Bessie to think of food before everything! With shining blue eyes she looked at the rest of her chums.

They were all from Cliff House School—all members of the Fourth Form. There was golden-haired Mabel Lynn, Babs' especial chum, who for years had shared the same study with Babs and Bessie. Then there was that great sports enthusiast, Tomboy Clara Trevlyn, who even at that moment was exclaiming gleefully:

"Look at those tennis courts! Aren't they in ripping condition?"

"And the swimming pool! My hat, see that fellow dive?" This from Janet Jordan the best swimmer among the chums.

"And—hallo, that's an open air concert going on over there, isn't it, Babs?" Mabel Lynn asked, with sudden interest.

"Believe it is, Mabs," smiled Babs. "Can't forget your old Amateur Dramatics even on holiday, eh?" Chuckling at Mabs' cheerful grimace, she glanced at the other three members of the Cliff House party—gentle Marjorie Hazeldene, who was smiling happily at a group of kiddies who were enjoying themselves in the holiday camp's childrens' playground near by; Leila Carroll, the American junior, and sleek-headed Jemima Carstairs.

The latter had her monocle in her hand, and was polishing it vigorously as she surveyed the scene.

"Well, Jimmy," chuckled Babs, "what's your verdict of Pinebay holiday camp?"

"Tops!" voted Jemima. "No complaint at all, old Spartan—none whatever. Let us sally forth and see the manager or somebody, and learn where we are to park our fairy selves and our luggage. You're our jolly old leader, Babs, so lead on!"

Babs laughed happily. Oh, it was good to be on holiday with these girls—all such good chums together.

They had only just arrived at the holiday camp at Pinebay, on the South coast, where they were to spend the next month of the summer vacation.

Rather eagerly they had all been anticipating that holiday, and perhaps just a wee bit apprehensive that it

might not come up to the standard they had visualised.

But now—that very first look put any slight doubt they might have retained completely at rest. Pinebay holiday camp, so far from not coming up to expectations, actually surpassed anything they had ever dreamed of. It was glorious.

Perched on a high headland on the downs, it commanded a sweeping view of the broad English Channel which flowed beneath it. Brown, friendly, laughing faces surrounded them on every hand, and the acres and acres of space which the camp occupied was given over to games and amusements of every conceivable kind. Certainly the camp seemed an ideal spot in which to spend a most ideal holiday.

"Well, here's the manager's office," Babs said, "and the view over there is the broad concrete path into the camp. What's the name of the manager—Oh, yes, Mr. Mackenzie!"

"Yes," said a voice, and a man in white flannels came out. "I am Mr. Mackenzie. Ah, you are the Cliff House party," he said, looking at the badge which Babs wore. "Miss—"

"Redfern," Babs dimpled. "Pleased to meet you—very." Smilingly he shook hands all round. "Your luggage is here, all safe and sound. But I'm afraid there has been just one little hitch," he added. "You asked for two family chalets overlooking the sea."

"Please," Babs beamed.

"I'm sorry. We've plenty of family chalets, but if you are to have two together I cannot manage them both facing the sea. If you would like two separate ones, then I can fix you up."

But the chums looked a little dashed at that. Each family chalet, they knew, held four people. As it was impossible to get one large enough to accommodate the whole party of eight girls, they had decided on the next best thing—two neighbouring chalets, with four of the party in each. They were not keen on being separated.

"But you've two others together?" Babs asked.

"Oh, yes! Several, in fact. Over these facing the downs. If you would like to take two of those, you are very welcome. When there are two chalets facing the sea available, you may move into them."

"Well, we'd sooner be together," Babs said, "and the view over there is jolly. Which ones, Mr. Mackenzie?"

"Any along H row—or the Blue Chalets as we call them. The rooms are painted blue, you know." The manager smiled. "Perhaps you'd like to go and have a look at them for yourselves? If you'll let me know which two will suit you, I'll let you have the keys."

"That's topping!" Babs beamed. "Rather fun to pick our own, even though they are all more or less alike. Come on, girls!" And off they went, chattering excitedly, towards the great block of chalets which formed the living quarters of the camp.

A great many were occupied. People in bathing suits and sun-suits lounging on the verandas outside the chalets, smiled at them in friendly welcome as they passed.

From the luxury sun lounge on their right came the sounds of music, showing that some sort of dance or entertainment was in progress, and from the swimming pool near by the bellowing tones of a loud speaker announcing some new event in one of the numerous competitions for which the camp was noted.

Without difficulty they found Row H—commonly known as the Blue Chalets—a row of newly erected chalets, which as yet seemed to possess few inhabitants. Most of them, indeed, seemed to have the "Vacant" card hanging on the door.

"Well, here we are," beamed Babs. "Chalets Nos. 15 and 17 look as if they'll fill the bill. They're both empty, too, so—hallo!" she broke off.

For suddenly, from between the space separating Chalets Nos. 15 and 17, a girl had appeared—rather a nice-looking girl in a grey costume, which seemed to indicate that she, like themselves, was a new arrival. It was rather cautiously she peered out. As she found Babs' eye upon her, she turned back into the alley and vanished.

"Somebody playing hide-and-seek," chuckled Babs. "Wonder who she is?"

"Somebody new to the place, like us," Babs said. "Seems to be a trifle lost. I say, this is dinky," she added eagerly, as she peered through the window of Chalet No. 17. "What about this and Chalet No. 19, next door?"

"Or what about Chalets Nos. 13 and 15?" Clara Trevlyn asked. "They're empty, too."

Plump Bessie Bunter shuddered. "Nun-no, not thirteen, you know! Thirteen's unlucky! Let's have these two. I sus-say, Babs, lul-lets have a look?"

They all had a look, peering interestedly through the window. Certainly the interior of No. 17 looked

## By HILDA RICHARDS

Illustrated by T. LAIDLER.

very snug and inviting. There were four beds in it, two washstands, and two wardrobes, a set of bookshelves, and a glass-doored cabinet. It was, of course, lit with electric light, and a cool-looking green carpet covered the floor.

"Nos. 15 and 17 O.K.?" Babs asked. "Good! I'll run back and get the keys from Mr. Mackenzie!"

"Snap into it, sister!" Leila Carroll drawled.

Away Babs, with a laugh, trotted. As she approached the manager's office she saw a figure breathlessly running ahead of her, and recognised the girl who had peered out from the alleyway between the two chalets.

More leisurely, she walked on herself. She reached the manager's office, and as she paused on the doorstep before obeying the hospitable notice on the door: "Don't Knock—Just Come in," she heard Mr. Mackenzie's voice. It sounded a little vexed.

"Miss White," he was saying, "you have been in this camp an hour—"

"Mr. Mackenzie, I'm sorry," came the voice of a girl; and Babs, though she had never heard her speak, knew,

**"A simply marvellous holiday camp!" was the verdict of Babs & Co. on arrival. And simply marvellous it proved to be! Pinebay holiday camp held just everything they could wish for to ensure a wonderful time. And to add spice to their enjoyment, a likeable and yet quite baffling girl brings mystery into their midst.**

somehow, that it was the strange girl again. "But if you could let me change again—just this once—"

"Miss White, you booked Blue Chalet No. 23," Mr. Mackenzie said severely. "You booked it, if you remember, in advance, before you had even seen it. As soon as you did see it you didn't like it, and moved to Chalet No. 19. I agreed to that. But you haven't had No. 19 more than half an hour—Oh, hallo, Miss Redfern!" he added, as Babs popped in. "Have you found your chalets?"

Babs smiled.

"Thank you, Mr. Mackenzie! We've decided on Nos. 15 and 17. Is that all right?"

From the girl came a sharp little gasp.

"No!" she cried.

Babs blinked.

"I say—"

"I—I was just asking for No. 17 myself!" the girl cried. "I—I—" She faltered, colouring crimson in confusion.

"Miss White," the manager said somewhat fiercely, "cannot make up her mind. Miss White, I am sorry, but I have to study other guests at the camp. Here are the keys, Miss Redfern!"

"Thank you. But—but—" And Babs paused, touched by the alarm and the misery in the other's face. Instinctively she liked her, and instantly she felt the securing of Chalet No. 17 was more than a passing fancy in this girl's mind. "Well, we don't really mind Nos. 13 and 15," she laughed. "If Miss White wants No. 17, let her have it. I suppose your parents are coming down?" she added sympathetically.

The other girl shook her head.

"Nun-no, I'm alone."

"What—with a cabin for four?" Babs asked incredulously.

"Yes. You—you see, I—I want to do some work."

"Oh!" Babs said. She quickly made up her mind. "Mr. Mackenzie, please let her have it."

The manager shrugged.

"All right. But this is your last change over, Miss White. I can't have the whole block upset because you keep changing your mind. Apart from that," he reminded her, "you're only down here for a week, and these girls are here for at least a month. You're lucky," he added. "Miss Redfern, here are the keys of Nos. 13 and 15. Miss White, you'd better take the key of No. 17."

The strange girl joyfully took the key. Babs smiled as she quitted the office with her.

"Poor Mr. Mackenzie!"

"I—I'm sorry for being such an awful nuisance, but—but—" And the girl confusedly paused. "All the same, Miss Redfern, I—I can't tell you how grateful I am!"

"Oh, stuff!" Babs said. "Anyway, don't let's be starchy. My name's Barbara—Babs for short—"

"And—and mine's Sadie," the other girl confessed. "You're sure your chums won't mind—Babs?"

"Not a scrap! One chalet is as good as another to us. Only old Bessie is a bit superstitious of No. 13, but she

can go in No. 15. Let's come along and see them."

Together they hurried back to the waiting Cliff House party.

"Here we are," Babs said cheerily.

"Girls, a new friend for us. Meet Sadie White."

Cheerfully the girls greeted Sadie, and nobody objected when Babs told of the change of chalets, though to be sure Bessie declared that she wouldn't sleep in No. 13—"not for all the grubbins in the world, you know!"

"But, anyway, I'm glad you've got what you want!" Bessie beamed at Sadie. "And I sus-say, you girls, seeing that we've settled down, what about celebrating? Let's have a look at the canteen? My treat."

"Oh, no! Please let me stand treat!" Sadie begged.

"Oh, nun-no! You know, I spoke first," Bessie said. "Besides, I've plenty of money!" And for once Bessie had thanks to Miles Eastman, a wealthy engineering contractor, who had recently married Bessie's favourite aunt, Miss Annie Bunter. "Look!" she beamed, and fished out three ten-shilling notes. "Come on!"

She turned impatiently. Sadie smiled. Then suddenly she stooped.

"Oh, Miss Bunter—Bessie—" she cried.

"Yes, come on, you know!"

"But, Bessie, haven't you dropped something?"

"Eh? No!"

"Well," Sadie said, with a laugh—and it was very good, somehow, to hear her laugh. "The best of us make mistakes, you know, and here's a ten-shilling note you did drop, Bessie. Look!"

Bessie blinked as she looked at the ten-shilling note which Sadie handed to her. There was no doubt that it

was her own, for there was a blob of green ink on the corner of it—the result of contact with a leaky fountain-pen.

Bessie gulped.  
"Oh, thuth-thanks!"  
They entered the canteen in a cheery group. At least, it was not so much a canteen as a great luxury cafe. Everywhere holiday-makers were seated at tables sipping iced drinks. A crowd of other guests stood up at the counter, while brisk-looking waitresses moved hither and thither. In one corner, hidden by palm-trees, a radio-gram played soft music.

"Jolly nice, eh?" Bessie beamed. "Beats the old tuckshop at Cliff House, you girls. But I sus-say, lul-let's stand at the counter, you know; I like to see what I'm buying before I buy it. Yum! Ice cream sodas all round, please. Two of those luscious-looking doughnuts for me. Sadie, what will you have?"

"Ice cream soda," Sadie said. "Nothing to eat, thanks!"  
"Just a little doughnut?" Bessie pressed.

"No, thanks; we shall be having lunch presently." Bessie said. "Right-ho!" Bessie said. "Then order what you like, girls. I sus-say, this is ripping, you know! Yum! I'm going to enjoy myself here. Ooh, what a lovely froth on the ice-cream soda, you girls! Here we are! I sus-say, Babs, hand the glasses round, will you?" Bessie asked importantly.

"Right-ho!" Babs laughed. "Here we are, girls! Now here's to a super holiday! You, too, Sadie!"

"Good holiday!" Sadie laughed, and suddenly stopped. "Oh!" she said.

For another girl, who had been seated at a table when the chums entered, had suddenly risen. She walked up to Sadie White.

"Morning!" she said pleasantly. "I thought I recognised your voice. Weren't you at this camp last year?"

Sadie was pale.  
"N-no," she said.

"No?" The other girl stared. "Sure? I'm sure I remember your voice. What's your name?"  
"Sadie White."

"Hum! Mine's Eva Carnaby," the other said. "Don't remember any Sadie White." She stared at Sadie, and Sadie, white-faced, shifted under the scrutiny. "But I'm sure," she said. "I remember your face."

Sadie gulped.  
"I—I tell you I—I wasn't here last year," she said, in a low, constrained sort of voice. "Babs, I—I wonder if you'd excuse me a moment?" she added, putting down her glass. "There's something I've suddenly remembered I must do. I'll see you later."

Babs blinked.  
"But, Sadie—Sadie! My hat!"  
For Sadie, as if pursued, had fled through the door. When Babs wheeled again it was to find Eva Carnaby regarding her.

"Agitated—eh?" she said lightly. "Guilty conscience."

"What do you mean?" demanded Babs.

"I mean," the other answered, "that there's something fishy about that girl. And if I were you," she added, a trifle grimly, "I should be a bit particular about the friends you pick up. You might find yourself minus something."

"You mean Sadie's not honest?"  
"Just that," the other said, with a nod. "So long!"

And she strolled away, leaving the chums angrily glowering.

### A Bad Sport, or—?



"THERE we are—all jolly and snug!" Barbara Redfern laughed. "Looks quite like home, doesn't it?"

It was an hour later, and she, Mabs, Clara, and Marjorie, having unpacked their belongings in Chalet No. 13, had good cause to feel pleased with the result of their labours. For Chalet No. 13 certainly had a most lively appearance at once.

There were ornaments of theirs on the mantelpiece, books of theirs in the bookcase; Marjorie had a writing-pad on the writing-table, and the drawers of the chest full to overflowing with summer holiday clothes. Babs had even brought a photograph of Cliff House School, which she had hung in one of the panels which formed the walls.

"And there," Marjorie cried "goes the lunch gong."

"And has old Bessie heard it?" Clara grinned, as an excited: "I sus-say, you girls!" came from outside. "Come on; let's beetle!"

They "beetled," joining their four chums from Chalet No. 15. Outside the large restaurant the great gong was banging, and all the camp seemed to be tramping in that direction. In cheerful good spirits they crowded into the place, beaming round at what they saw.

The restaurant at Pinebay was constructed almost entirely of special sun-glass, now for the most part screened over by cool, green blinds.

More than a hundred tables of various sizes filled the floor, and on a flower-decorated platform in one corner an orchestra was playing a lively tune as they stepped in.

People in bathing dresses, just coming in from the beach, others from the pool in the grounds, were awaiting their meal, never even having thought of changing, and the air was briskly alive with chatter and laughter. The head waiter, resplendent in a gleaming suit of white drill, moved forward with a smile.

"Miss Redfern's party?" he said. "Will you come this way, please? I have a table here for ten," he added. "You do not mind if another girl joins you?"

"Of course not," Babs said. "The more the merrier, eh, kidlets?"

"Yes, rather! As long as there's plenty of grubbing, we don't care if a dozen girls join us, you know!" Bessie beamed. "I sus-say, what's on the menu?"

"Wait till you see it, hoggins-pogs," Mabel Lynn chided. "Here's the table, anyway, and— Oh, hallo!" she added, without any pleasure at the sight of the girl already seated there.

"Hallo!" Eva Carnaby nodded casually. "Nice to meet old friends again. Pretty tough being here on one's own. My friend's coming down at the end of the week, and here we're both making whoopee until the middle of September. Only arrived to-day, didn't you? So did I. Seen your friend, Sadie, since she walked out of the cafe?"

"No," Babs said, a little shortly. "Have you?"

"No; but I fancy she's coming now."

Babs looked round. Sadie White stood in the doorway—Sadie now in a very pretty little frock, looking round somewhat hesitantly. She no longer wore the hat in which the chums had seen her during the morning, and Babs was struck at once by the unusually

rich, deep brown colour of her hair. It seemed to shine.

She stood up, waving an arm to attract Sadie's attention. Sadie saw, involuntarily smiled, and then, after the briefest of pauses, hurried towards the Cliff House table.

"Why, Sadie, we've been wondering about you," Babs said. "Been busy?"

Sadie nodded, pausing a moment as her gaze fell uncomfortably upon Eva. Eva, however, nodded chummily.

"Don't mind me," she invited. "I'm only a stranger here like yourself, though perhaps—with a flash of jealousy—not such a welcome one. Altered the restaurant since last year, haven't they?" she added casually, as Sadie sat down.

"Ye—" Sadie began, and then looked up swiftly, crimsoning. "Oh, ha-have they?" she questioned, trying to recover the poise she had momentarily lost.

"Well, you remember, don't you?" Eva said innocently, yet with such a penetrating glance at the newcomer that Babs knew she was laying a new trap. "They hadn't got those sun-blinds, had they?"

"Why ask me?"

"Well, you were here last year."

"I've already told you," Sadie said, speaking with a sort of suppressed control, "that this is my first visit to Pinebay holiday camp."

"And so," Babs said, "let it rest. Hallo, here come the grubbins!"

The "grubbins" it was, served by a cool-looking waitress in sea-green uniform and a white cap. Soup first—and such delicious soup that Bessie sent back her plate for no less than three helpings—followed by a choice of fish or meat.

Tongues loosened and wagged. But Babs was conscious that Sadie did not join in that happy chatter, and was conscious, too, that from time to time Eva looked at her across the table with a sort of queer bafflement in her eyes.

Why should Eva be so insistent that Sadie had been at the camp last year? And, if Sadie had been at the camp, what possible reason could she have for denying it?

"I wonder," Eva said suddenly, "how Mrs. Holt is getting on? Sadie, you remember Mrs. Holt?"

Just for a moment a look of alarm showed on Sadie's face.

"Mrs. Holt? No, I—I don't know her," she said.

"Oh, Sadie, surely! You know, the woman who lived in Chalet No. 1 in Row B! Don't you remember? We used to call her the First Lady of the camp."

"No," said Sadie, but again there was a half hunted look in her eyes. "Hallo, here's the dessert," she added in relief.

The dessert it was—a plate of delicious fresh fruit salad and cream.

"Fine!" Bessie beamed. "Yum! I sus-say, this is ripping, you know—"

"Reminds me of a place I once knew in Basingstoke," Eva said. "I come from near Basingstoke—frightfully nice place. Let me see, you come from Leicester, don't you, Sadie?"

Sadie looked up quickly.

"No, I don't. Darlington," she said.

"No, really? Well, that's funny."

"I don't see anything funny about it," Sadie retorted.

"But your luggage, you know. I happened to be in the store-room this morning, and I'm sure it was marked Leicester. Sure you haven't made a mistake?"

Sadie suddenly rose.

"I—I think, if you don't mind, I'll



go," she said unsteadily. "Eva has done nothing all through the meal except to try to trap me. 'I'm sorry—'"

"No, wait a minute." Babs stood up. Her own eyes were gleaming now. She felt both nettled and indignant, and, somehow, sorry for Sadie. "You step, Sadie. If anybody's going," she added, looking directly at Eva, "it's you. We're just about sick of the way you're trying to get at Sadie!"

"Yes, we jolly well are," supported Mabs.

Eva sneered. "Have I said anything to you?"

"No," Babs admitted. "At the same time, Sadie's our friend."

"Friend of five minutes," Eva scoffed.

"Friend of five seconds, it makes no difference. She's one of us," Babs retorted. "Anyway, if you can't be decent you can go and find yourself another table. If you don't—"

"If I don't?" Eva asked, her eyes glittering.

"We'll ask the manager to find us one," Babs challenged.

There was a moment's silence. A grin twisted Eva's lips as, with a shrug, she rose.

"All right," she said, "I'll go. And I hope," she added, with a darting glance round, "that you won't find your new friendship too jolly dangerous. Cheerio."

Sadie bit her lip. "Babs, perhaps I'd better—"

"You stop!" Babs said grimly. And she held her arm while Eva Carnaby, with another mocking look, drifted away. Clara Trevlyn sniffed.

"Well, good riddance to bad rubbish," she said. "Sadie, do you know her?"

"No," Sadie said, in a low voice.

"Then why on earth has she taken such a dislike to you?"

But Sadie shook her head at that, and before another word could be said, the big loudspeaker, perched above the band platform, began an announcement.

"Sit tight, everybody, and listen," it announced cheerily. "First, will all who are desirous of entering to-morrow's competitions apply for forms at the manager's office? Don't forget, all competitions are entirely free, of course, and handsome prizes are to be won."

"Whoops! We must look into this, kids!" Clara Trevlyn said gleefully.

"Second. Will all the new arrivals assemble at 3 p.m. at the swimming bath for the initiation ceremony, after which there will be a water polo match between the married and single members of the camp? Third: Will everybody please note that there will be a grand firework display at ten o'clock to-night on the edge of the cliff? That is all for the present, ladies and gentlemen."

The loudspeaker spluttered into silence, leaving an increased babble and murmur of voices in the hall. All those items were interesting—and, in their way, exciting. But it was the second which appealed to the Cliff House juniors.

"Sounds fun," Babs said. "I'll bet it is, too. We're all going?"

"Oh, of course!"

"You, Sadie?"

Sadie hesitated.

"Well—"

"Oh, yes, she's coming, of course," sweet-faced Marjorie Hazeldene said, and after a pause, Sadie nodded.

The ices—last course—came then, and much excited in their minds as to what

form the initiation ceremony would take, they trumped out.

"First," Clara said, "to the manager's office. We're going to look into this competition bizney."

Sadie paused. "Do—do you mind if I don't come? I've some letters to write."

"Right. Then see you at three," Babs smiled. "Come on, kidlets."

They trotted across to the manager's office, already besieged by other interested would-be competitors. Outside the door a notice was posted, and their eyes sparkled as they read it.

There was to be a cricket match between the boys of the camp and the girls of the camp—and Babs, Clara, and Janet immediately put down their names for that. To-morrow there was to be a girls v. boys relay race in the swimming bath. They put themselves down for that. It seemed, indeed, that Babs & Co. were going to have some very crowded hours in Pinebay holiday camp.

Off, then, they scampered to their chalets, there to change into swim-suits and bathing wraps. In a real holiday mood they all spent half an hour sunbathing.

At five minutes to three Babs jumped up.

"Nearly three, kidlets!" she chuckled. "Don't forget the old initiation ceremony. I say, Sadie's not here," she added. "I'll go along and fetch her."

With a laugh on her lips she trotted along to Chalet No. 17. She knocked at the door.

"Com- come in!" instructed the rather breathless and startled voice of Sadie.

Babs pushed the door open. She went in. And then she blinked.

"Why, Sadie, you're not ready!" she said.

Sadie was not ready. She was, in fact, still in the clothes in which she had had lunch. Babs noticed that her hands were dirty, as though she had

been doing some work of a grubby nature

Sadie bit her lip. "I—I—" she said. "Oh dear! I'm sorry, Babs! I—I don't think I'll come, if you don't mind."

"But, Sadie, why not?"

"Be- because I've just found out I—I left my bathing cap at home," Sadie said rather feebly.

"Well," Babs laughed, "you don't mind getting your hair wet, do you? In any case," she added, "I've a spare cap. I'll lend you that. You must come to the ceremony, Sadie. We all want you to come. We all want you to have a good time."

Sadie looked at her and gulped.

"That's sweet of you, Babs," she said unsteadily. "I'll get dressed now. Would you—you mind looking out the bathing cap, Babs? I'll join you in a minute."

Babs laughed as she trotted off to re-join her chums. From her chalet she collected the bathing cap. Outside she tripped again, just as Sadie, a lithe, shapely figure in a really dazzling costume, came out of Chalet No. 17, and joined the cheery party of Cliff House girls.

"O.K.!" she laughed. "Got the cap, Babs?"

"Yes, rather! Here you are," Babs said. "Don't worry about it now, though. Put it on at the bathing pool, otherwise we shall miss the beginning of the fun. Race you all to the pool!" she whooped suddenly.

"Here, but I sus-say, look here!" yelled Bessie.

But everybody, entering at once into the spirit of the thing, was running then, leaving Bessie, with Jemima, to waddle in the rear. They reached the pool, with Babs, just beating Clara, almost colliding with Eva Carnaby, who stood near the entrance. She grinned as she saw Babs, apparently forgetting the scene at lunch-time.

"Hallo!" she exclaimed. "I say, this is fun! Brought Sadie along?"

"Yes," Babs panted.



"MY chums and I have decided to have Chalets Nos. 15 and 17," Babs told the manager of the camp. Then she stared in astonishment at the other girl in the office. "Oh, no," the girl cried. "Not No. 17, please! I—I want that!"



"Oh, good! I want to see her."

Babs frowned.

"Just a minute, Eva," she said quietly. "We'll get this right before we go any further. We like Sadie—she's our friend—and if you want us to like you you've just got to forget all those silly insults you seem so fond of poking at her. If that's understood we shall all get on O.K. together. If not—"

"If not you'd be pleased to see the back of me?" Eva said, in no way offended, apparently "O.K., Babs."

But she did not smile at Sadie, as Sadie, with Marjorie and Janet, came up, and Sadie, seeing her, for a moment looked just a little taken aback.

"Whoops, what's this?" Clara cried. "Oh, my hat, look!"

They looked and they grinned. For suddenly from the end of the bath came a boom like the firing of an ancient cannon, followed by a shout and a laugh as six young fellows, dressed as ferocious pirates, raced out from behind the bathing cabins.

They carried between them a huge plank and a dozen or so blown-up balloons, and the leader waved a skull-and-crossbones flag. At the same time an announcement came from the loud speaker.

"Initiates to the opposite end of the bath, please!"

"Come on!" Leila Carroll cried.

"Initiates!" roared the leader of the pirates, glaring out of one eye, the other being covered with a great black patch which hid half his cheek at the same time. "Ten of ye, there are, by hooky, and ten of ye shall go through it! Now, then, ail in a row there," he ordered, and they ranged themselves in front of him. "Run out the plank, men. Now, if any of you initiates can't swim, stand aside."

Nobody stood aside, though Bessie, to be sure, looked just a wee bit nervous.

"Right! Then you're all going through it. Now, No. 1—you," he said, pointing at Janet. "This way!"

Janet, with a laugh, stepped forward. "Put her in irons, men!" the pirate leader roared.

There was a yell of laughter as two of the other pirates, coming forward, wrapped a string of sausages round Janet's wrists and tied another string to her feet. Then one of the coloured balloons was solemnly attached to the rearmost sausage.

"Now blindfold her!" barked the pirate leader.

Janet was blindfolded, a great black handkerchief being used for the purpose.

Then there was another yell of laughter as two of the pirates, vanishing for a moment, reappeared, staggering under a great bathful of creamy, foaming soapsuds. At a sign from their leader another pirate dropped a mop into the suds, and Janet spluttered as the mop, carrying a great head of the suds, was splashed over her.

Then, while she was still gasping, she was led forward towards the plank, which now had been thrust over the end of the swimming pool.

"Initiate No. 1 will now walk the plank," the pirate chief announced.

"If she can reach the end she may remove her blindfold and dive. Turn her round, men, and set her on the road to Davy Jones!"

There was another laugh, and Janet was spun half a dozen times, and then, with feet tottering, was thrust out on to the plank. With hands in front of her she minced gingerly forward, feeling the plank with her foot before each step.

Babs gurgled.

"She'll make it," she said.

But would she? For hardly were the words out of her mouth than Janet gave a shriek, and both feet suddenly shot under her, and there was a splash as she went over the side to hit the water. For the plank, in that particular spot, was greased!

But hardly was she in the water than one of the other pirates, dressed as he was, dived in after her.

There was another laugh. Everybody chuckled. Now Initiate No. 2 was being led forward—this time, Clara Trevlyn.

"Your turn next, Sadie!" Babs grinned. "Better get your cap on, and look out for that greasy spot!"

Sadie laughed. So interested had she been that she had altogether forgotten Babs' borrowed bathing cap, which she had not yet put on. Now, drawing it open with her fingers, she raised it towards her head.

Then she paused, her face falling.

"Babs, it's too small for me."

Babs blinked.

"Oh, my hat! Stoop down, Sadie. Let me try."

She tried. But it was obvious that cap would never fit Sadie.

"No go," Babs said at last. "You'll have to go in without, Sadie. Hallo, they've blindfolded Clara!" she grinned, turning. "You'll soon be able to dry your hair in the sun, Sadie."

"Of course!" Babs said.

But Sadie, all at once, was looking nervous. Unhappy, too! She did not join in the shriek of mirth that went up when Clara, tottering on to the plank, tried to find the slippery piece before she reached it and lost her balance altogether and went overboard.

"Next one!" the pirate leader said. "Bring forward the next initiate. You!" he added, pointing at Sadie.

But Sadie suddenly shrank back.

"No, no!" she cried. "No!"

"Oh, Sadie, go on!" Babs said disappointedly.

"Show your pluck!" sneered Eva Carnaby.

"I—I can't!" Sadie almost panted.

"I—I can't swim!"

The chums stared at her. Considering Sadie had already been asked that question and implied that she could swim, the denial, they felt, came rather late.

"Well, it doesn't matter," Eva said. "You'll be caught when you go in. Anyway, if you can't swim—"

"I can't!" Sadie panted.

"Then," Eva said, with a grin, "it's about time you learned!"

And she leaped forward and pushed. Sadie gave a cry, staggered, and went in with a splash.

"Eva, you cat!" Babs cried furiously.

"But I say, look!" cried Marjorie Hazeldene.

They all stared. For Sadie, in the act of hitting the water, had twisted herself outwards, shooting away from the side of the bath. Even as they watched she went cleaving her way just under the surface, swimming so fast, so grandly, that she might have been a fish. While they were still helpless in the throes of amazement she reached the side of the swimming-bath, caught the rail, and with one heave drew herself out of the water. Then she was running.

"Sadie!" yelled Babs in amazement.

"Sadie!" shrieked the chums.

Sadie fled between two of the chalets and disappeared.

In utterly baffled bewilderment they stared at each other.

"Well, I guess, for a girl who can't swim, that was a pretty hot exhibition," Leila said.

"And for a girl who's supposed to tell the truth it was a pretty big whopper she told about not swimming," Eva Carnaby jeered. "What price your friend now, Babs?"

### "Sadie's Been Caught—Stealing!"



JUST for a while after that Babs felt more than a little disappointed, more than a little hurt and badly shaken in that good opinion she had already formed of Sadie.

It annoyed her, in the first place, because Eva was now openly able to crow that all the things she had said about Sadie were justified, and it hurt her to feel that her own chums' cordiality towards Sadie had suffered a change. Like Sadie, as they did, they could find little excuse in their hearts for a girl who told such senseless whoppers.

They felt even less for a girl who could so unsportingly spoil the fun of the initiation ceremony by getting out of it in the way Sadie had done.

Not, indeed, that the fun was interrupted more than temporarily. For as soon as they had recovered from the shock of Sadie's abrupt disappearance it was Babs' turn to walk the plank. Poor Babs! She fared no better than Janet and Clara, and, spluttering and laughing, came up just as Bessie was being put through the hoop.

But Bessie was determined to turn the joke against her persecutors. She used her skill at ventriloquism just as the man with the soapud mop was lunging at her. And he, alarmed by the sudden ferocious buzzing of a bee in his ear, turned with a wild swipe, sweeping one of the pirates into the swimming pool amid a smother of soap-suds.

What a yell there was then!

Another hilarious cheer, too, as Jemima Carstairs, snatching up one of the wooden cutlasses, engaged the pirate leader in a bout of swordplay.

Joyfully the leader took up Jemima's challenge, not knowing, of course, the fine swordsmanship of which that girl was capable. To the edge of the bath a battle was waged, until Jemima, skilfully forcing him on to his own plank, prodded him on to the grease patch, where he went overboard with a wild yell. Clara screamed.

"Good old Jimmy! What price Cliff House?"

"Oh, bravo—bravo!" cheered the onlookers.

Great fun! Great afternoon! But though the initiation ceremony lasted a full hour, Sadie did not reappear. By that time Babs' feelings were slightly different. After all, she was telling herself, Sadie must have had some strong reason for telling that fib. In any case, she would be frightfully sorry for what she had done. Babs now was aching to tell her that she was forgiven.

So when Clara, after the initiation ceremony was over, said "What about a spot of tennis on the courts?" Babs said: "Yes; but I'll go and see Sadie first. She must be feeling dreadful!"

Clara grunted a little. The Tomboy wasn't quite so tolerant as Babs.

"O.K., Babs," she said. "But we don't want any more funny business from Sadie, you know."

Babs went off without answering that. She reached Chalet No. 17, and wondered a little why Sadie had drawn



all the blinds, for if the sun was strong it was certainly not shining on the windows. She knocked.

There was no reply, though Babs heard a quick movement within the place. She knocked again. This time Sadie's voice, rather tremulous—a little agitated, to Babs' fancy—reached her. "Who—who is there?"

"It's Babs!"  
"Oh!" Sadie said, and there was another pause; then her footsteps coming towards the door.

Rather to Babs' surprise the key clicked in the lock before the door opened, proving, for some reason, that Sadie had locked herself in. Now she appeared, her head swathed in the folds of a towel.

"Sadie, we're going to the tennis courts," Babs said. "I thought you'd like to come along. You know," she added, struck again by the miserable expression of the other. "you are looking a washout, and you ought to make the most of every minute. You'll go back a wreck, at this rate."

Sadie flushed.  
"I know. I—I'm sorry!" she blurted.  
"But, Babs, I—I can't come to the tennis courts—not yet. I'll come and look for you when I'm ready, eh?"

"Right—ho, then!" Babs laughed.  
"And—and Babs, I'm awfully sorry," Sadie mumbled, "for what happened at the swimming pool. I—I was a fool, I suppose, but I just lost my head."

"That's all right," Babs said comfortingly. "All the same, old thing, you did tell rather a whopper about not being able to swim."

Sadie was scarlet.  
"I know. I'm sorry, Babs."  
Babs smiled. Impossible to feel any resentment against Sadie when she looked so genuinely repentant as she did now.

When she reached the tennis courts Clara and Janet Jordan had paired up against Eva Carnaby and Leila, and were engaged in a smashing doubles game. Jemima, lounging back in a deck chair next to Bessie Bunter, who was fast asleep in another deck chair, smiled lazily.

"Not coming?" she asked.  
"Not yet!" Babs said.  
"Tough!" Jemima murmured. "Too tough! Nice girl, though, what? Wonder what dark old secret is preying on her mind?"

Babs shook her head. She was wondering that herself now.

The game ended, with Eva and Clara victors. Eva lounged off the court, tucking her racket under her arm. She looked at Babs.

"Didn't find Sadie, then?" she asked.  
"Yes, I did," Babs replied. "She was in her chalet."

"My hat! What a time the girl does spend in that chalet! What's she doing there—planning a burglary or something?"

"Mabs, come on!" Babs said disgustedly. "Let's try a singles."

So Babs and Mabs went on to the court while Eva, after watching a few moments, drifted away. Babs saw her go and breathed with relief. Somehow she felt better in the absence of Eva Carnaby.

The singles came to an end. Then another doubles game was started—Mabs and Babs this time against Leila and Clara—with Clara on top of her form, making sure of victory for herself and the American junior. Then suddenly there came a confusion of voices from near by.

"Thief! Thief! Stop, thief!"

"Hallo!" Babs exclaimed, listening. "What's that?"

"Service!" Clara cried from the other side of the net. "Babs, don't stand staring like a duffer!"

The ball came over, but Babs didn't attempt to return it, for Eva Carnaby had come dashing up, red-faced with excitement.

"Hi, Babs!" she cried. "What did I tell you?"

"Tell me what?" Babs demanded.  
"Sadie's been caught—stealing!"

"What?"  
"It's true!" Eva's face was aglow. "Perhaps now you'll believe me! I told you that girl was a crook! Mr. Clayton caught her in his chalet—No. 21—about five minutes ago and chased her out of it and then grabbed her. Now they've sent for the manager."

Down went Babs' racket, the tennis forgotten in a moment. It was a ridiculous story, of course. It was untrue. Sadie—a thief!

There must be some mistake!  
But there seemed to be no mistake when they reached Chalet No. 21, where Sadie, white-faced and quivering, was confronting Mr. Mackenzie, while Mr. Clayton was searching in his chalet to see if anything was missing.

Babs went straight up to her.  
"Sadie, what's this?"

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**Next Week!**

(See pages 18 and 24 for full exciting details.)

"They—they caught me in—in No. 21!" Sadie gulped.

The chums looked at each other.  
"But what were you doing in No. 21?" Babs asked.

"Just—just looking round."

Mr. Mackenzie's face was grim.  
"Doesn't sound a very convincing story, does it?" he asked. "We haven't many rules in this camp, but breaking into other people's chalets is one of them, and it's the strictest of all. I'm afraid, Miss White, you'll have to leave."

"And a jolly good job, too!" Eva cried.

"You be quiet!" Babs flashed on her. She felt a little sick all at once; but somehow she still had faith in Sadie.

"Sadie, what were you doing in No. 21?" she asked.

"I tell you, I—I was just looking round. Nothing else at all. But—but— Oh, Babs don't mix yourself up in this!" she added wearily. "It was wrong, I know, and—and I suppose I'll have to pay the penalty now—"

"Heroic!" sniffed Eva.

At that moment Mr. Clayton came out. He looked grim, but also a little relieved.

"Well, I'm glad to say nothing has been touched," he said.

"Then that's all right, isn't it?" Babs asked swiftly. "Mr. Mackenzie—"

"I'm afraid," Mr. Mackenzie said, "it's far from all right. The fact that nothing is stolen doesn't mean that nothing would have been stolen if Mr. Clayton hadn't come along when he

did. You may pack your things, Miss White."

"But—but— Oh, no, no!" Sadie cried in sudden, sharp despair.

"I'm sorry—"

"Mr. Mackenzie, please!" Babs pleaded. "No harm has been done, has there, and I'm sure Miss White meant no harm at all. I'm sure Mr. Clayton doesn't want to be harsh about it, do you, Mr. Clayton?"

Mr. Clayton, uncomfortably colouring, shook his head.

"Well, no, of—of course not."  
"And Miss White is a friend of ours," Babs said. "Please couldn't you forgive her just this once?"

There was silence. Clara & Co. looked at each other, feeling the responsibility Babs had put upon them, feeling, in their friendship for her, they had to back her up, but not at all sure now that they were doing the right thing.

Mr. Mackenzie looked at Mr. Clayton.

"Well—" the manager said.  
"Hum! In that case, Miss White, you give me your word of honour that you weren't in that chalet for an unlawful purpose?"

"Yes," Sadie muttered.

"Then, perhaps—yes," Mr. Mackenzie considered. "But only because Miss Redfern has pleaded for you—only because you are a friend of hers. But I must warn you that if anything like this happens again, you must leave!"

"Oh, thuth—thank you!" Sadie stutted, almost trembling with relief.

"Babs—"

Babs took her arm.  
"Sadie, old thing, come on!" she said.

"What, still friends?" Eva Carnaby sneered.

"Still friends!" Babs biting retorted.

She went on with Sadie. Eva shrugged.

"Well, all I can say," she said, as she watched the two enter Chalet No. 17, "is that you Cliff House crowd deserve what you get! It'll be fun for you, won't it, if next time it happens you get thrown out with her? And if you ask me, that's what it'll come to!"

"Well, we haven't asked you!" Mabs retorted. "Come on, girls, let's go and bathe or something. We'll see Babs later."

**Mystery Prowler in the Camp!**



"Do you charge anything, Bess?" asked Clara Trevlyn solemnly.

"Or is it all free?" inquired Janet Jordan,

her eyes twinkling.

"Perhaps it's half price to us, as we're your chums?" suggested Leila Carroll.

Plump Bessie Bunter blinked up from her plate. That plate had been full of delicious strawberries a short while ago. There were only a few there now.

"I sus-say, what are you talking about?" she demanded, and then proceeded enthusiastically. "Aren't these strawberries rippin', you girls? Fancy giving us strawberries for tea! Here—"

She broke off indignantly.

"What are you doing, Clara?"  
For that sullen-faced Tomboy was waving her hands gently to and fro in front of Bessie's startled features.



"Do say you don't charge anything, Boss?" she pleaded.

The plump one gaped.

"Ch-charge!"

"Yes, you wouldn't make money out of your old pals, would you?" demanded Clara, gravely.

The expression on Bessie's face brought a sudden burst of laughter from the Cliff House chums. It rang merrily above the cheery tea-time chatter at Pinebay holiday camp. Holiday-makers at nearby tables grinned over at the girls, and Clara, with a swift wink at her gurgling chums, again held her hands in front of Bessie's plump face.

Bessie just blinked dazedly.

"My turn next, Clara, old Spartan," observed Jemima Carstairs owlishly. "Ah, thought so!" she cried as Clara suddenly jerked her hands away. "Too strongish, eh?"

"Ow! Terrific," cried Clara, flapping her hands. "Bess, you might have warned me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bessie glowered.

"I sus-say, what are you talking about?" she demanded peevishly. "Blessed if I can see anything to cacko about. What's terrific?"

"The beacon!" murmured Janet Jordan, and smilingly held a mirror in front of Bessie's flushed features.

"Bu-beacon?" stammered Bessie blankly. She suddenly caught sight of her nose in the mirror. That snub little feature had caught the sun—and caught it badly! It shone with a glorious deep red.

"Really high-powered, old Bess," gurgled Clara. "Practically scorched my hands away!"

"So we hope you won't charge," grinned Mabs.

Bessie heaved a deep breath. She began to understand how they had been pulling her plump leg.

"You—you silly idiots!" she gasped. "You—"

"Just warming my hands on your nose," said Clara cheerily. "Surely you're not going to be mean about it, Bess? Why, think of me freezing to death!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bessie's glower was fierce enough to crack her spectacles.

"You—you silly, fu-fathead!" she hooted. "You—"

The chums rocked with laughter, and that laughter was taken up from the tables near by, where the gentle ragging of Bessie had been overheard.

"Su-silly things!" shrieked Bessie. "What about your own su-silly nose, Clara?"

A fresh howl went up as the Tomboy tentatively fingered her nose, for indeed it had caught the sun almost as badly as Bessie's!

"O.K." said Clara ruefully. "Laugh!" They did!

Good fun, and everyone in the highest of spirits! Strangely enough, however, Babs had not joined quite wholeheartedly in the laughter.

Truth to tell, her mind had been engrossed by other things—Sadie White and the strange happenings surrounding her. The chums as a whole were a little doubtful of Sadie. Was it to be wondered at? But Babs—somehow, in spite of all that had occurred, Babs still believed in the girl.

That Sadie had a secret was obvious. The nature of the secret Sadie had not confided in Babs, yet how utterly grateful she had been to the Cliff House leader when Babs had accompanied her back to her chalet!

Babs meant to stand by her. Perhaps it was the persecutions of Eva Carnaby

that had caused her to champion Sadie's cause. Perhaps it was just instinctive liking, an intuitive sense, which told her that in spite of all Sadie was true blue. Anyway, there it was.

Babs was sticking by Sadie, and the rest of the chums, doubtful though they might be, had decided to back up Babs, as they always had done in the past. They had faith in their leader's judgment, and somehow they still liked Sadie.

The girl had not come in to tea. Babs had hardly expected that. For a mercy, neither had the sneering Eva Carnaby.

After tea, the chums strolled down to the beach and contentedly ambled along by the sparkling sea for some hour and a half. Then as a brisk little wind sprang up, they turned back for the camp. They hadn't long, anyway, before the dancing began in the great, glass-domed sun lounge.

"Are you going to change, Babs?" asked Mabs, as they swung happily up towards their chalets. "Think I will. I'm dying to wear that new summer frock of mine."

"Rather!" Babs smiled. "I shall, too."

"Not for me," grinned Clara. "I feel happier in a pair of slacks. And there's no need to change, is there?"

"Guess not," put in Leila Carroll. "Think I'll keep on slacks, too. Gee," she chuckled, regarding Clara. "You look hot!"

The Tomboy tossed back her unruly hair and puffed.

"I am," she admitted. "Wish I was more like old Marjie! Beats me how she always looks so cool!"

And indeed, gentle Marjorie Hazeldene looked wonderfully fresh, and her clear, pale skin was hardly affected by the sun at all.

Jemima Carstairs, immaculate as ever in the latest type of slacks and short-sleeved shirt, was another of the 'always cool' brigade, and elected not to change, as she wasn't frightfully keen on dancing anyway.

A high-spirited fifteen minutes was spent in the two chalets, changing and applying sunburn lotion to the unlucky ones. Then in a gay group, they set off for the sun lounge.

Dancing was already in progress. Babs glanced round with bright eyes. Almost immediately she saw Sadie White. Sadie was standing by herself in one corner, looking rather lonely. Babs' heart was smitten by a sudden pang of pity.

"Mabs—," she caught her chum's arm. "Quick, do something for me, old thing."

"You bet, Babs. What?"

"Go up to the band leader," breathed Babs swiftly. "and ask him if he'll play a Paul Jones next. I want to get Sadie in this—buck her up!"

Mabs nodded understandingly.

"Good for you, Babs," she said, and drifted away through the laughing couples. Babs turned to the rest.

"Listen, girls," she said quietly. "I want to make things brighter for Sadie. Will you back me up?"

There was an instant nodding of heads, and when the dance finished and a Paul Jones struck up—proving Mabs had done her work well—Babs nodded at her chums.

"Come on!"

And they went in a cheerful rush, headed by Babs. Down on Sadie they swooped.

"Sadie—you old slacker!" whooped Babs. "What on earth are you doing sitting here by yourself?"

Sadie looked round with a start; she flushed.

"I—I'm quite enjoying myself watching, Babs—"

"Stuff!" Babs laughed. "Come on! It's a Paul Jones. You're in this. Grab her other arm, Clara! Whoops! Off we go!"

And before Sadie, hesitating, could say another word the laughing chums had pounced upon her.

"Gents outside—ladies in the middle!" the M.C. called cheerfully.

"Ladies—that's us," gurgled Babs. "Link up!"

And in a laughing group they linked up in the middle circle, while the men and boys circled round them. The music stopped.

On Babs' right a cheery-looking, red-headed boy swooped on Clara. Sadie was on Babs' left, with Mabs beside her. Mabs was bagged instantly, leaving only a dark-haired fellow opposite Babs and Sadie.

Sadie would have drawn back; but, with a laugh, determined that Sadie shouldn't be out of the fun, Babs skipped away first.

"Shall us? Lets!" grinned the dark-haired boy, and whirled Sadie away in a quick-step.

Drifting to the side, Babs watched with a smile. When the quick-step ended and the Paul Jones melody commenced again, once more Babs made sure that Sadie had a partner.

And how delighted the Cliff House leader was to see a flush come to Sadie's cheeks, a smile to her lips.

As the dancing went on Sadie really began to enter into the joyous high spirits of it all. No need for Babs to watch her then. No need to feel anxious that Sadie would be out of things.

It was all grand fun, and the Cliff House party and Sadie were beaming and excited when at last they trooped away to supper in the magnificent restaurant.

Eva Carnaby was at the door, talking to Mr. Clayton. She flashed Babs rather a sneering smile as she passed with Sadie. Babs said nothing, however; and Sadie merely turned her head away.

They had supper—a really excellent meal of ham and tongue served with crisp, green salad, with fruit tart and cream to follow. Then they discussed plans. For the first time in many weeks they had no set bed-time to worry about, and they were all rather anxious to make the most of their holiday freedom.

"I vote," Clara said, "a moonlight walk and watch the fireworks from the beach. Who says?"

"Goody!" approved Babs. "You'll come, too, Sadie?"

"Well, if—if I might," Sadie agreed, but paused. "What time?"

"In fifteen minutes," Babs said. "That agreed, everybody? Now, let's get back to the chalets. I want a wash, and we'd better collect our coats. Might be a spot chilly."

So off they went. It was not quite dark yet, but a glorious full moon was peeping over the sea, and the air was fresh and warm. An ideal evening for the walk.

The chums entered their chalets, and Sadie went to hers. Some of them had to change out of their dance frocks, and they all wanted a clean-up. Ready at last, Babs trotted off to get Sadie. To her blank amazement, she found that girl in her pyjamas.

"Sadie," she cried, "I thought you said you'd come with us?"

Sadie looked uncomfortable.

"I—I know, Babs. But I've got such a splitting headache that—that I thought I'd go to bed."

In a flash Babs was all sympathy.





"**MORNING,**" said the stranger, with an affable smile at Sadie. "Thought I recognised your voice. Weren't you at this camp last year?" Babs, who was casually watching, had quite a shock at the look of dismay that came to Sadie's face. "No, I wasn't!" Sadie said almost passionately.

"Poor old kid!" she murmured. "You don't mind—really?"  
 "No, of course not! You'll sleep it off," Babs said encouragingly. "See you in the morning, Sadie."  
 "Yes," Sadie said. "I—I hope you'll have a nice walk. Going now?"  
 "Right away."

When she looked into Chalet No. 13, however, there was a further delay. Bessie had lost her spectacles.

"Oh dud-dear! I'm sure I put them on the table," she said.

"Well, chump, they're not on the table now!" Clara said.

They looked round—in vain.

"Well," Clara snorted, after five minutes' exasperating search, "you are a fine sort of wash-out, aren't you? Did you leave them in the restaurant?"

"Oh dud-dear! I don't know," Bessie stammered.

"Did you have them in your hand when you put your coat on?" Babs said. "My hat!" she cried. "Look!"

And they all glared as Babs, pointing to the pocket of that coat, indicated the rims of the spectacles, which were now sticking out.

"Well, I sus-say, fuf-fancy that, you know!" Bessie said in surprise. "They must have been there all the time!"

"You're telling us!" Leila sniffed.

"Well, let's go, sisters! Sure won't be starting this walk till midnight at this— Oh, hallo!" she added, as there came a knock at the door and Eva Carnaby's face peered in.

"Hallo!" Eva said. "I say, what's Sadie doing?"

"Sadie's in bed—headache," Babs explained briefly. "Come on, everybody!"

"Sadie's what?" Eva smiled scornfully. "You mean she told you she was in bed?"

"Tell you she is in bed!" Babs said impatiently. "If she isn't, she's just about getting into it."

"Keep your wool on," retorted Eva. "I've just seen Sadie, that's all, sneaking along towards the end of the row—and fully dressed. And if you think I'm just trying to make mischief, go and have a peep in her chalet," she challenged.

"Rats!" Babs retorted. "I don't believe it. I tell you she's in bed."

"Calling me a fibber—eh?" Eva sneered.

"No, but— Oh, well—" And Babs shrugged. Obviously the quickest way to put an end to the argument was to prove Eva wrong. "I'll go and see," she said.

"I'll come, too, I guess," Leila added.

And, leaving Eva with the rest of the chums, they strolled to Chalet No. 17. The lights in the chalet were full on, and Babs, peering through the window, looked in. Then she frowned.

Sadie's bed was unoccupied, and the pyjamas she had been wearing when Babs visited her were thrown back on the bed, proving that Sadie had dressed again.

"Say, it's right!" Leila breathed.

Babs had to admit it was.

"What's the big idea?" Leila asked.

"Oh, I don't know!" Babs shook her head, as if by that means she would banish the little worry which had crept into it. "Perhaps she found she wanted something," she said, "and had to dress to go and get it. Anyway, it's not our business. Let's get back."

"And apologise to Eva," Leila said, with a grimace.

They didn't apologise to Eva, though it wasn't easy to admit they were in the wrong. At the same time, as Babs rather bluntly pointed out, it was no crime for Sadie to declare she was going to bed, and then get up again.

They started their walk—without Eva. With the cool breeze playing upon their faces, the silver-ribbed sea on one hand and the dazzlingly illuminated camp on the other, they swung along.

A marvellous night! Descending the cliff, they walked along the beach until, reaching the little jetty where boats plied for hire, they were tempted, at a shilling a head, to go by motor-launch into the bay and there watch the fireworks which would be released from the summit of the cliff. Out in the launch they sped.

"Say, I wish now I'd brought my camera," Leila regretted as the fireworks started. "Sure would be fun to get a snap or two in this light."

Interestedly they settled down to watch. Certainly the firework display left nothing to be desired, and they

were all sorry when it came to an end and they were chugged back to the shore.

It was past eleven o'clock then, and despite the novelty of being out at such an hour they were all beginning to visualise bed with something like pleasure. The day, starting with the trip from London, had been a pretty strenuous one.

In contrast with its noisy gaiety of the day, the camp seemed deserted and silent when they climbed the cliff path into it.

The moon had disappeared now; a grey sort of darkness, which made them move carefully, had taken the place of the silver brilliance which had filled the world when they set out. As they turned the corner of the camp in which the Blue Chalets were situated, however, Babs gave a jump.

"My hat! I say, look!" she cried. "That's our chalet!"

The chums stopped as she pointed. Row H, its occupants in bed, was in darkness except for one chalet in which a light gleamed. Even as they watched the light was extinguished. They heard the sound of a door being opened.

"A bib-burglar!" quivered Bessie. "Somebody nosing around," Babs said angrily. "Come on!"

She was the first to run forward. As she did so she saw a slinking figure pulling the door closed. Whether it was a boy or a girl, it was impossible to tell. Swiftly, however, she ran, intent on heading off the unknown intruder.

At the same moment the latter heard her approaching, swiftly turned, and began to run. There was a deafening clank as a pail which stood in the way went over, a cry as the intruder for a moment measured his or her length. Babs whooped.

"Come on; we've got him!"

But they hadn't. For even as she dashed up, the unknown, jumping up, had darted off, disappearing between Chalets Nos. 19 and 21. Babs stopped, panting.

"Got away," she said. "Bother it. Still, better look round and see that everything is all right. Hallo, what's

this?" she added, stooping down: "I say, a clue—a hat."

"A girl's hat," Mabs breathed as Babs picked up the object near the overturned pail. A girl's hat it was—of the close-fitting Juliet variety. Quickly Babs took it into Chalet No. 13 and turned on the light. But before she examined it, she looked anxiously round.

Two of the beds had been moved, but apart from that no damage seemed to have been done, and Clara's bag, which that carelessly untidy tomboy had left on the mantelshelf, was untouched.

"Funny," Babs said. "Whoever she was, she hasn't taken anything."

"Probably heard us coming and got the wind up," Mabs said. "Babs, let's have a look at that hat."

They examined the hat, though it did not tell them anything. It was a rather cheap little hat, marked here and there with brown stains. There were no initials in it not even a maker's tab.

"Doesn't tell us much," Babs considered. "All the same, whoever she was she had no right to be in here. What shall we do—tell the manager?"

"Oh, tell him to-morrow!" Clara said, with a yawn. "There's no harm done after all, so why worry? Vote, kids, we get to bed. Sling that hat on the chair, Babs. We'll hand it in at the manager's office to-morrow morning."

Which, in the circumstances, everybody considered was the best possible sort of advice.

### Sadie Unmasked!



"GET up, you slackers! Get up—and look at the jolly old sun! It's shining its head off!"

Clara Trevelyn's exuberant, hearty voice rang through Chalet No. 13 the next morning, and it was followed next moment by three spluttering gasps.

Up in their comfy little beds shot Babs, Mabs, and Marjorie.

"What on earth—" gasped Babs.

"Here, my face is all wet!"

"And mine!" cried Marjorie and Mabs simultaneously.

Clara, already dressed in shirt and blue shorts, grinned down at them unsympathetically. She held one hand behind her back, and Babs blinked suspiciously.

"What have you got there, Clara—"

"A sponge—soaking wet!" whooped Clara, making a playful leap forward. "You've had one dose, you slackers, and if you don't want another—tumble out!"

Grinning, they hastily tumbled out and dived for their towels. Babs started as she glanced at her wrist-watch on the little cream table beside her bed.

"My hat! Half-past eight!" she exclaimed. "Phew! That's what comes of having no rising-bell to awaken us. Bet you haven't been up long either, Clara," she accused cheerfully.

"Guilty, your honour," admitted the Tomboy, grinning. "Ten minutes, to be exact. And now"—she waggled the wet sponge—"I'm going to pop in next door and see if those other slackers are still snoozing!"

"Bet old Bess is, for one!" Mabs chuckled.

"No takers!" Babs laughed. "It's a cert that—" She broke off with a start. "Hallo, that's Eva Carnaby's voice, isn't it?"

They listened. Voices they clearly

heard now, and loudest of all came Eva Carnaby's angry tones:

"I demand a search!" she was angrily crying. "I demand it now. I tell you, somebody broke into my chalet during the night and stole four pounds from the drawer of my table. And not only my money, but my bracelet and gold ring as well!"

"Hal-lo!" breathed Mabs.

They heard Mr. Mackenzie's voice, rather worried and trying to be soothing. Then Eva again.

"And if you ask me, you'll find it in Chalet No. 17," she said. "I told you you were making a mistake when you let Sadie White go yesterday after sneaking into Mr. Clayton's chalet."

Babs' lips set. She swung a dressing-gown about her shoulders.

"Come on; we're in this," she cried.

Hastily she slipped her feet into her slippers. Then she went outside. At the entrance to Chalet No. 32, which was opposite, Eva Carnaby was furiously confronting Mr. Mackenzie. Quite a little crowd of holiday-makers was gathered around.

"Wait a minute!" said Babs, hurrying up.

Eva glared.

"Look here, you—"

"Mr. Mackenzie, that's not fair," Babs said. "You can't search Sadie White's chalet just because this girl's got a spiteful grudge against her."

"Well, maybe I have no warrant to search the chalet," Mr. Mackenzie said, "but I must ask questions. Ah, here is Miss White!" he added, as the door of Chalet No. 17 opened, and Sadie herself peered out with wondering face. "Miss White, will you step this way a moment, please?"

Sadie stepped that way. Her eyes opened in horror when she heard what all the commotion was about.

"But you surely don't think that—that—" She faltered.

"Miss White I think nothing—yet," the manager said. "If it becomes necessary, I shall question everybody in the whole camp. Did you, or did you not, enter Miss Carnaby's chalet last night?"

"No!" replied Sadie, with unhesitating directness.

"And you weren't, I suppose, snooping round the camp after you told Barbara Redfern you were going to bed?" Eva sneered. "Don't lie your way out of that, Sadie White. I saw you!"

Sadie started a little, looking quickly at Babs. Then she shrugged.

"Well, there was no harm in that, was there?" she asked.

"Not at all," the manager said. "At the same time, this does not alter the fact that theft has taken place in the camp, and it is the duty of all of us to try to get to the bottom of it. Did anyone else here see anyone behaving in a suspicious manner in the vicinity of Miss Carnaby's chalet—or any other chalet?"

"My hat!" breathed Babs. "When we came back from the fireworks somebody had been in our chalet. We spied her coming out, but she got away."

"You didn't see her face?" the manager asked.

"No, but we jolly well got her hat!" Mabs said.

"Then," Mr. Mackenzie said, "might I suggest, Miss Redfern, that you produce it? There is just a chance that somebody in the camp may be able to identify it. Get it, please!"

Babs nodded willingly enough, turning towards Sadie to give her an encouraging smile. Rather to her surprise, however, Sadie had vanished.

She stepped back into her chalet.

Now, where was the hat? Last night she had left it on the chair there, but it wasn't there now. Funny!

Blankly she gazed round.

Where the dickens had the thing got to?

Mr. Mackenzie, Eva, Clara, Mabs, and Marjorie peered in at the door.

"Miss Redfern, have you got it?" inquired the manager.

"Dashed if I know what's become of it!" Babs said. "It was here a few minutes ago. Sus-somebody must have stolen it!"

"And that somebody," Eva savagely flamed out, "was Sadie White! Oh, you didn't see her jump when you mentioned the hat! You didn't see her suddenly disappear! But I did. It was her hat, of course, and she's nabbed it because it might bowl her out!"

"Don't talk rot!" Babs retorted; but for the first time she felt shaken.

"Well, we'll soon find out," Mr. Mackenzie said. "It is strange, to say the least, that Miss White should bob off in the middle of the inquiry. Come along to her chalet."

"Looks," Clara Trevelyn muttered, "as if there is something in it, Babs, old thing."

"Come on!" Babs said, almost fiercely.

She led the way along to Chalet No. 17, which Mr. Mackenzie and Eva had already entered. Sadie, white-faced, shrinking, was facing them when the chums appeared at the door.

"Did you remove a girl's hat from Miss Redfern's chalet?" the manager was asking.

"Oh, I—I—that is to say—I—I—oh dear!"

Mr. Mackenzie's face was stern. "Miss White, this has gone far enough," he said. "That hat, as you know, is a valuable clue. If you did take it, then I can only conclude that you took it because you have a guilty conscience. And if—"

"Look!" cried Eva Carnaby, whose questing eyes had been roaming round. And before anybody could stop her she had plunged towards Sadie's bed.

Babs saw, and thrilled with horror. For beneath the pillow was showing just a tiny corner of the hastily concealed hat which she had found last night.

While Sadie gave a cry Eva threw aside the pillow, grabbed up the hat, and flung round.

"Is this it?" she cried.

"Miss Redfern, is it?" Mr. Mackenzie demanded.

"Oh, Sadie!" cried Babs. "Sadie, what did— And then she gave another jump as Eva, darting towards the mantelpiece, picked up a pair of tinted spectacles. Then quickly she looked at the cap, quickly looked at Sadie. Her face was flaming with exultation now.

"So I was right—all along the line!" she cried. "Mr. Mackenzie, look at this hat. Don't you remember the girl who wore it last year?"

From Sadie came a low moan.

"And see the brown stains in it?" Eva vindictively went on. "Dye, Mr. Mackenzie! Look!" And before the bewildered Babs guessed her intention, before Eva could move, she had caught the girl; was viciously running her fingers through her glinting hair. "See!" she almost panted, and held up hands marked faintly with brown stain. "She's blonde really. Mr. Mackenzie, tell her to put those spectacles on."

"But, Miss Carnaby—" Mr. Mackenzie said bewilderedly.

"Tell her!" Eva cried. "Mr. Mackenzie, don't you see? This girl



is in disguise. Her real name is Lorna Bayford."

The manager jumped. "Lorna Bayford—no!" he cried; and then he stared at her again, and a glimmer of understanding came into his eyes "By gosh!" he exclaimed. "I believe it's true! You wore fair hair then, and had tinted spectacles. Miss Carnaby, put those spectacles on!"

Sadie, her face white and desperate, had turned towards the door. Her eyes were wild then.

"Let me go!" she cried. Babs, behaving like some stunned automaton, made way for her. But quick as Sadie was, the triumphant Eva was quicker. In one tiger-like bound she had jumped on her, twisting her round, and at the same time jammed the spectacles on her face. The tinted lenses, covering the blue eyes, certainly made a startling difference.

trap her into admitting it, but she was just a bit too artful, especially as Miss Redfern and her friends were backing her up. I hope you're satisfied now, Barbara Redfern?"

Babs did not speak. She could not. She tried to catch Sadie's eyes, but Sadie averted her face. From her chums, gathered behind her, a mutter of disgust went up.

"And now," Eva said, her face alight, "I want my money and my ring and bracelet, you thief!"

"I never took your things!" Sadie panted. "You're making it up!"

"Am I?" Eva flamed, and suddenly she darted to the mantelpiece, grabbing up an earthenware pot which stood there. "Wait a minute!" she cried.

"What's this?" And with her back to the room she emptied the pot into her hand, then turned. "Here they are!" she cried. "You awful little thief!"

Sadie cried out.

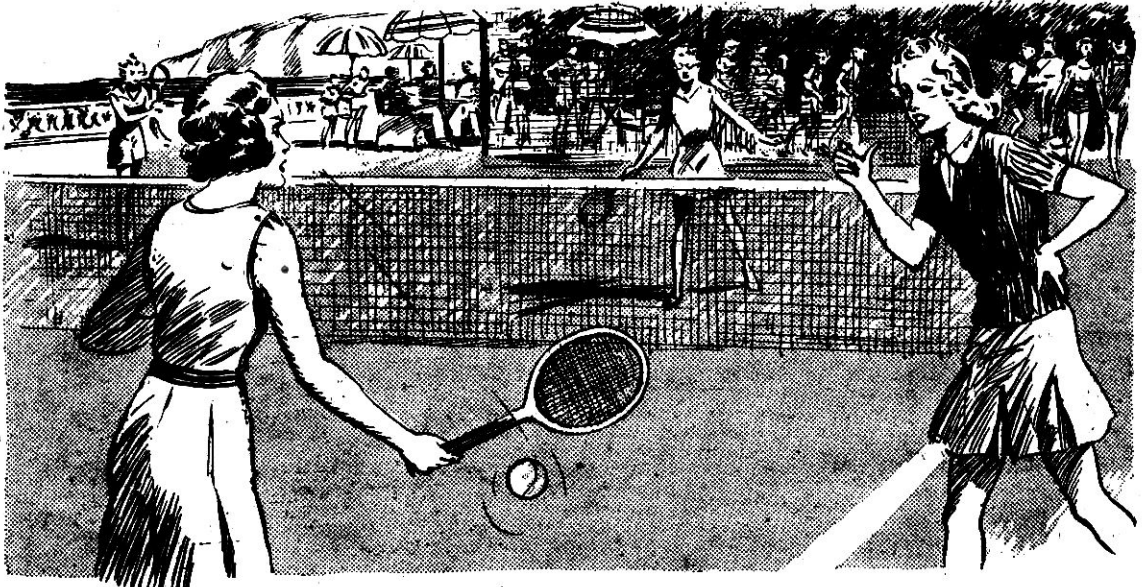
prisoner in this camp, waiting to be taken off by the police. Sadie—that strangely acting girl whom she had liked—whom she still liked—in spite of anything. Oh, there must be some mistake—there must—must!

Sadie was honest. She still felt it. And remembering suddenly that small incident of Bessie Bunter's ten-shilling note, she found her doubts beginning to dissolve. If Sadie had been a thief by instinct, then Sadie, most certainly, would have stuck to that ten-shilling note.

Babs began to review facts in a new light. Last night Sadie supposedly had broken into their own chalet, but she had stolen nothing, another factor which pointed to her honesty. What, then, had she wanted in that chalet?

And why, from the very first moment she set eyes on her, had Eva Carnaby been so vindictively set against her?

"Babs—" Mabs started.



"HI, Babs, what did I tell you?" came a cry, and on to the court dashed the unpleasant Eva Carnaby. As Babs, ignoring the ball, turned towards her, Eva gave a low laugh. "Sadie's been caught," she added maliciously, "stealing!"

"But—but what," she asked, "is Sadie supposed to have done?"

"You do not know?" Mr. Mackenzie asked. His face was grim. "Last year, Miss Redfern, this girl was at the camp in the name of Lorna Bayford. She robbed an old lady named Mrs. Holt, and was expelled from the camp—"

"And that," Eva cried scornfully, "is the girl you made a friend of! Didn't I tell you all along that she was a crook? Just look at her!"

**Babs Releases the Prisoner!**



THEY were all gazing at the girl who called herself Sadie White now. Stricken and guilty in all truth she looked, and Sadie, meeting their eyes, turned her head away.

Babs clenched her hands. She had made a mistake, then. For once instinct had not guided her aright. "It was Sadie who had broken into their own chalet last night—Sadie, all along, who had lied to them, deceived them!"

"I had an idea from the moment I heard her speak that she was Lorna Bayford!" Eva cried. "I tried—to

"I tell you I never took them!"

"I think," Mr. Mackenzie broke in angrily, "that is enough. Miss White, your denials are useless. Last year I refrained from calling in the police at Mrs. Holt's kind request, though her money was never found. This time I shall show you no consideration. Miss Redfern—everybody—please leave. Miss White, I am going to lock you in this chalet until the police come!"

Dazed, bewildered still, they went out, Eva with them. She turned with a sneer upon Babs.

"Well, Miss Doubting Thomas, perhaps you will believe me now!" she jeered. "Was I right?"

"Oh, rats! Don't talk to me!" Babs said gruffly.

"Dash it, I think you owe me some sort of an apology," Eva said.

Babs flushed. Her chums looked a little guilty. Eva was right. They ought to be grateful to her, perhaps, for having nipped the scheme of Sadie White in the bud. Yet somehow they were not.

They all walked away. Even Babs, so loyal in her championship of Sadie, had no word to say, it seemed.

But Babs was thinking, all the same. She was beginning to get back her poise. Sadie—a thief! Sadie—a

"Wait a minute, Mabs. I'm thinking something out," Babs said.

All along Eva Carnaby had been utrcmitting in her persecution of the girl in Chalet No. 17. There was nobody's word except Eva's that her chalet had been raided last night—and Eva herself had found her own valuables—whilst her back had been turned to her audience! Easy enough it would have been for Eva to have had those things in her hand or her pocket all the time, her object, of course, to get the search in Chalet No. 17 organised and then so arrange things that her belongings would be found therein. Why go to those lengths to snare Sadie? There could only be two reasons.

One. Because Eva, for some reason, was afraid of Sadie. Two. Because she wanted to get her out of the camp.

"Babs, you—" Mabs said.

"Mabs, just another second!"

If Eva was afraid—why? Babs shook her head. Why should she want to get Sadie out of the camp, though? And suddenly a new train of thought was set going in her mind. She was remembering now that, before their arrival, Sadie had already occupied two chalets in row H. No. 17 had been her third. After that she had

# OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS



Your PATRICIA is on holiday this week, but, of course, she wouldn't miss writing her weekly letter to you all, which is as bright, breezy and helpful as ever—just the sort of letter you love!

**T**HIS is a real holiday letter to you this week.

For here we are. Mother, father, small brother Heath (or Heatheringington in full) and your little Patricia (or Pat for short)—on holiday!

This is a glorious spot on the coast of Dorset. Adorable Dorset, I call it—since it's "Glorious Devon," and "Smiling Somerset," and "Romantic Cornwall."

As I think I told you, we've taken rooms at a ducky little farmhouse just about a mile from the sea. And as we have the car with us—which is parked with the cows, incidentally—we are able to get around quite a bit.

"Coo, the sea!" screamed Heath at the top of his voice as soon as ever we arrived. "I'm going to build a castle as big—as big as—what, Pat?"

And he turned to me. "As big as a house?" I suggested. But apparently that was pretty feeble.

"No," said Heath scornfully. "Much bigger'n a house. As big as—what, mummy?"

"Oh, about as big as Buckingham Palace, I should say," suggested mother vaguely.

"Yes—as big as Buckingham Palace," agreed Heath.

## ● On the Farm

But even the sea was forgotten when he saw the "a'mals" on the farm.

There never were such darlings, I'm sure.

I don't know which I like best so far. The baby animals are the most fascinating, of course. The young calves are simply heart-melting—Pansy, Daisy, and Buttercup, their names are.

"Wish my eyelashes were as long as yours, you little darlings," I say to them.

Then, of course, I adore the young foals. They've got long, foolish, wobbly legs, that seem always to be in the way, and such large feet they're always tripping over. And their mothers look so proud when I fondle their "babies."

There are also geese on the farm—which I confess were just a spot frightening at first—and turkeys, too. I'm sorry, but I can't pretend that turkeys appeal to me.

## ● Happy Days

I have the dearest little bed-room—which I share with Heath—in the farmhouse. It has tiny windows, which are never closed, a real old-fashioned wash-stand, and a feather bed, in which I nearly lose myself.

The water that I wash in in the morning

is beautifully soft and silky—straight from the rain-butt. The first morning, I made it so soapy that I had to get fresh. But now I know just how little soap you require to use in "soft" water. Not like ours at home—which is rather like washing in rocks!

There's no bath-room in the cottage, so we go bathing each day, in the sea—all the family.

One thing I'm afraid of is that we shall all be putting on a terrific amount of weight. (Mother's getting quite panicky about it!) It's the food.

We get such enormous appetites that we just can't resist the marvellous farmhouse fare that's provided for us. I'd love you to see the great basins-full of cream that are on the table for every meal. (Our milkman at home would just faint right off at the sight of so much, I'm quite sure.)

## ● Breaking Up

But I mustn't carry on like this, or you'll say I'm writing all about myself this week—and that wouldn't do at all.

Instead, let's talk about you. Poor pets, I expect you're forging your way through the last of the exams, aren't you?

But that'll be over in a day or two—and then, three cheers! Your break up, for—

Holidays! That means that next week we shall ALL be on holiday, and I do hope you have a lovely time, whatever you do.

## ● Seaside Brooches

It's sometimes a bit of a puzzle on holiday, isn't it, to know what to do in the evenings after supper? You don't want to go to the pictures, and a walk along the prom seems a bit tame at times.

Personally, I like stopping in, or sitting in the garden, and having a "good read."

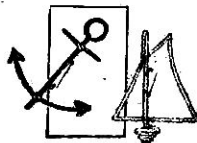
Which reminds me that an excellent book-mark can be made by cutting the corner off an envelope. It fits perfectly over the corner of a page to mark the place.

I've also made myself two little fob mascots to wear on my holiday coat.

I begged two pipe-cleaners from father to make them. (As a rule, he's a bit mean with his pipe-cleaners. He'd much sooner give you the cash to buy some than part up with those he has. But being on holiday he was feeling generous, I suppose.)

Anyhow, I cut one pipe-cleaner into two fairly long pieces and one short piece. One of the long pieces I bent so that it had a loop at the top. The other I made into a sort of quarter circle, with an arrow shape at each end.

These I placed together—as in the picture—and



put the short piece across, near the top. I bound the joins with cotton, and sewed a safety-pin to the back.

The result was quite a smart little anchor brooch.

The other brooch was a sailing ship, made from just two pieces of pipe-cleaner, carefully bent. One makes the mast, and the other the sails. I think you'll see the idea best by looking at the picture. They're both very simple to do.

## ● A Pretty Trimming

But I mustn't go too holiday-fied, and forget the nice schoolgirl who's at home these days. Perhaps she's not going away until later, or perhaps she's just going somewhere each day.

If the at-home girl feels she'd like to do something to cheer up some of her summer clothes,

what about trimming a plain dress so that it looks like the one in the picture here?

There was no trimming at all on this at first. But two yards of rick-rack braid—as it is called—was bought, and double rows of it sewn around the neck, and sleeves as shown.

It looks now as if the dress has very smart collar and cuffs—and the fact that they're "only pretend" makes them all the smarter, of course. Especially as they don't have to be removed for washing!

## ● A Treat for Mother

If you're going to the sea and your mother doesn't bathe—nor even paddle—then there's something you must do for her.

You must bring some buckets of seawater to wherever her deckchair is and tell her to bathe her feet in it. Tell her the doctors say sea-water is terribly good for busy feet. It really does take all aches and pains out of them.

Then you can look for some nice wide strips of seaweed, and cut some "socks" out of these. Tuck them inside mother's rubber beach shoes—and she'll find them most restful and comfy.

And here's another idea for mother. If she's knitting on the beach, she'll probably get a bit worried because her wool will keep dropping in the sand. So hang a spare bucket on the top of the deck-chair and place the wool in this.

She'll be so pleased with her clever—and thoughtful—daughter!

Happy days to you all, my pets.  
Your friend, PATRICIA.





# IN YOUR HOLIDAY SUITCASE

Patricia helps you with your holiday packing—  
just to make sure nothing is forgotten!



**P**ACKING to go away for a fortnight or longer is SUCH a business, isn't it? Sometimes you're so anxious in case you forget something, that you simply pack everything you own! This is certainly a safe way out of the difficulty, but it isn't always the best, because you don't want to take a load of unnecessary clothes and treasures away with you.

As you know, this Patricia of yours is a great believer in making out "lists." To see things written down does help, I always think. Then you can add to it or eliminate—and check off all articles as they are packed.

So here I've prepared a "list" of holiday packing for you. You won't follow it exactly, of course, but it may help you in remembering everything when compiling your own.

We'll pretend, then, that you're going to the sea for a fortnight.

You'll have all clean undies on for travelling, of course, and wear a summer dress, and biggish coat for the journey, I expect.

It divide the list into three parts for extra simplicity—"Essentials," those are the "must-haves" for wear. The "Oddments" are nearly as necessary, though can usually be obtained at your holiday resort, if they should be forgotten. And the "Luxuries," which are not essential, but nice to have.

So, first, here's the **ESSENTIALS** list.

- 1 pair thick shoes (for travelling or bad weather days).
- 1 pair beach shoes or tennis shoes.
- 2 pairs over-socks.
- 1 pair silky stockings (for best).
- 2 nighties.
- 2 pairs panties.

- 2 pettis.
  - 2 vests (or bodices, according to which ever you wear).
  - 2 ordinary beach frocks (more if you have them).
  - 1 best beach frock (for special outings).
  - 1 sun-hat.
  - 1 pair best shoes (if you're stopping somewhere smart).
  - 1 bathing suit.
  - 1 bathing wrap.
  - 1 bathing cap.
  - 1 wool jumper or cardigan (for chill evenings).
  - 1 pair shorts (or slacks).
  - 2 blouses or sun-tops.
  - 1 mac (sorry, but this should go!).
  - 1 dozen handkerchiefs.
- Now for the **ODDMENTS** list. Pick out from it things you know you'll need.
- 1 towel.
  - 1 face flannel.
  - 1 nail-brush.
  - 2 tooth-brushes.
  - Tooth paste.
  - Hair brush and comb.
  - Clothes brush.
  - Sponge-bag.
  - Beach-bag.
  - Shoe-cleaning outfit.
  - 3 coat-hangers.
  - Shoe-trees.
  - 1 dressing-gown (if you haven't a bathing wrap).
  - 1 pair bed-room slippers.
  - 1 pair gloves.

That looks rather a lot there, I know—but I expect some of it, will be among the "family packing."

The next list is the "**LUXURIES**"—not essential at all, but you may like to take them with you.

- Camera.
- Manicure things
- Sun-tan oil.
- Oil of lavender (for stings).
- Cold cream (for soothing sunburn).
- Favourite book—or weekly paper.
- Notepaper and envelopes.
- Fountain pen or pencil.
- Hair ribbons.
- Scarf.
- Hair grips.
- Macintosh hood.

Pack all the heaviest garments at the bottom of the suitcase, won't you?

Lay frocks as flat as possible, and if they're silk, place a piece of tissue paper between all folds.

Fill up all odd corners of the suitcase with rolled up articles that won't come to harm—for the clothes in a tightly-packed case will jump about much less, and arrive in better condition than those in a loosely-packed one.

Give the case a rub over with furniture cream; see that the locks are working well.

Now you're ready—ready to enjoy the holiday of your young lives!



## YOUR FIRST DAY AT THE SEA

Some very wise *Do's* and *Don'ts* that really will help to make your holiday more enjoyable.

**DO** unpack your suitcase as soon as you arrive, and put all clothes into the wardrobe and chest-of-drawers of your home-for-the-forever. It's fatal to leave them in the case "until you want them"—for they can become so horribly creased as you rummage to the bottom, for one thing or another.

**DO**NT dash down to the beach and into the sea immediately you arrive at your holiday resort. Give yourself time to get acclimatised first. You'll enjoy your first bathe much more if you take it on the second day of your holiday.

**DO** spend your first day exploring. Change into summery clothes and then go for a look round. Find the post office, the shop that sells the best postcards, the best tea-room, and the chemist. You'll want all these people, I expect; and it will help mother quite a lot, too.

**DO**NT clutter up the hall-stand with your particular clothes and treasures, will you? The landlady will love you if you take them up to your room, and so leave space for other people in the hall.

**DO** be on time for meals—even if the pier is fascinating, and the band just going to play your favourite piece.

**DO**NT use the landlady's or hotel-keeper's towels on the beach, especially if you're going to apply sun-tan oil to your skin. Instead, ask mother if you may buy a special beach-towel. They're very cheap, and so useful back home again.

**DO** ask your landlady if she is willing to pack picnic lunches for those days when you want to be out all day—whether on the beach or on a coach trip. I'm sure she'll say yes, and they do save such a lot of money.

**DO**NT leave your camera in the full glare of the sun on the beach. Cover it with a towel, or place it under a deck-chair on a piece of paper, so that the sand won't get in and "spoil the works."

**DO** keep your wrist-watch well up your arm. More watches go wrong on holiday

through sand getting into them, than you'd believe possible. So this mustn't happen to yours.

**DO**NT forget to wear your sun-glasses if the weather's all I hope it is for you, otherwise you may get headaches, and a crotchety feeling that you won't be able to account for.

**DO** place a towel, or paper, under your head when you lie on the beach. If the sand does get into your hair, you'll be so sorry, for it can tickle most annoyingly.

**DO**NT put off the writing of that eard home to mother as soon as you arrive if you've gone away without the family, will you? And post it, too!

**DO** give any "valuables" and some of your holiday money to a grown-up to look after. It's so upsetting to lose things on holiday—and so nice to have some money left for the last few days.

**DO**NT forget that the grown-ups are on holiday, too, so be your nicest young self, thoughtful and kind, and showing pleasure at all the treats arranged for you.

(Continued from page 11)

been found in No. 21—another in the same row. Last night she had visited No. 13, and for all Babs knew, she had also visited No. 15—which meant that, at one time or another, Sadie had looked round all those chalets which were next door to each other.

Now, was she getting somewhere at last?

Why should Sadie be interested in that one particular group of chalets? The reason was solved when Babs remembered the disturbed state of Sadie's own chalet on the first occasion she had visited it. Sadie was looking for something!

That was it.  
"I don't believe it!" Babs looked at them. "Sadie's true blue, as I always said she was. This is a trick—a plot!"

"But there's no doubt about her disguise!" Clara pointed out.

"None at all," Babs agreed. "On the other hand, would you come back as yourself to a place you'd once been kicked out of?"

"But why did she come back?" Leila Carroll wanted to know.

"I don't know."

"Well, I think it's plain," Janet Jordan sniffed. "I didn't like Eva Carnaby, but we've all got to admit she's been right. Anyway, if you ask me, we're well out of it!"

There were nods. Most of the chums shared that sentiment. Babs, however, did not reply, nor at this stage did she argue. Her object now was to see Sadie—to learn from Sadie's own lips the truth before the police came.

That, as it happened, was not a hard job. Sadie was locked in her chalet, and outside an attendant had been placed on guard. But in the rear of the chalet was also a door, and as the doors were of a standard pattern, Babs had hoped that the key of their own chalet would fit it. When the chums went off to the swimming pool, Babs, excusing herself on the plea of having letters to write, sneaked along to the rear of Chalet No. 17. She paused at the door, her heart giving a little jump as she heard the sound of a stifled sob from within.

She inserted the key from her own chalet and turned it. To her joy the door opened at once. Swiftly she stepped in, closing the door behind her again.

Sadie, her face wet with tears, jumped up.

"Babs," she breathed—"Babs, you, you—"

"Sadie, I've come—to help you," Babs said. "No, don't thank me yet, because, after all, I might not be able to do anything. But, Sadie, you've got to tell me now why you came here—and exactly what happened last year. Speak softly, though!"

"Yes, Babs, I wish I'd told you before now," Sadie said. "But—but I—"

"Well, tell me now," Babs invited. And Sadie, in a low voice, told the story—a simple enough story, in all truth.

Last year she had come to the camp for a fortnight, but the camp had not been half so big or so luxurious as it was now. She was completely alone, and returning late one night from a midnight bathe, had been passing the door of Mrs. Holt's chalet when two figures had suddenly rushed out, one canoning into her.

"Who they were I did not see, because it was dark, but immediately they had gone I saw something lying in the path. It was a five-pound note. Then, while I stood wondering what to do with it,

Mrs. Holt started crying out that she had been robbed. I knew then that the two girls I had met had robbed her."

She went on from that point. There had been no time to do anything but the quickest thinking. With that incriminating note in her hand she had realised that, if caught, she might be judged to be the thief. She had bolted. Unfortunately, she had been seen going into her chalet. The fact was reported, and when the chalet was searched the five-pound note which Mrs. Holt identified as one of those stolen, had been found.

"Th-then I told my story. They didn't believe it, of course. Mr. Mackenzie was going to send for the police, but Mrs. Holt, who was a very kind old lady, hated the idea, and so I was just expelled from the camp. I went. But the story presently got to my employer's ears, and as Mr. Mackenzie was a friend of his and he had sent me here in the first place, he took a grave view of it. 'Sadie,' he said, 'I am sorry, but I cannot have a girl in my employment who is suspected of being a thief, and who, moreover, is believed to have kept twenty pounds of the money she stole. Until you return that money, or until you can prove you are not a thief, you must leave my employment.'"

Babs' heart melted.

"Poor old Sadie!" she muttered. "And so I—I went," Sadie said un- easily. "I couldn't find work. I've never had a proper job since—only odd jobs here and there. Not so long ago mother was taken ill and I went to the doctor. While I was in the wait- ing-room I heard two girls talking in the next room about this holiday camp, and one of them said: 'What did you do with Mrs. Holt's twenty pounds?'"

"Phew!" whistled Babs. "And the other said: 'I rammed it between the floorboards of Chalet No. 23, in Row H, and I expect it's there now. Anyway, I'm going along this summer to look for it again.' She also said something about some snaps."

"You saw the girls?" Babs asked tensely.

"No; when I got into the room they had gone. But I vowed then that it should be me, not her, who would find that money, and although I hadn't much cash I booked No. 23 of the Blue Chalets right away. And, naturally, having been expelled once, I had to come here in disguise, and under a different name."

Babs' eyes were shining with excite- ment.

"But what was your reason for chang- ing chalets so quickly?"

"Because," Sadie said despairingly, "as soon as ever I saw the chalet I knew it wasn't the right one. You see, the camp had been considerably altered and added to since last year, and they must have renumbered the doors. I couldn't remember exactly where No. 23 was, but when I found out that I was on the wrong track I had a look round, and then I was sure that No. 19 was the chalet. I moved into that, only to find again that I had drawn a blank."

"And that's why," Babs said, "you wanted No. 17?"

"Yes. I'd worked it out to my own satisfaction that the original No. 23 must now be No. 17. But there, also, I was in the wrong, and in desperation I decided to search every chalet in the row. But I—I never went near Eva's chalet—I swear that! And—oh!" she added, her face suddenly paling.

For outside came a voice.  
"Hallo, here are the police at last!"

"Babs!" Sadie cried, white to the lips.

Babs jumped up.  
"All right, steady!" she whispered. "I'm helping you now! I've got an idea I might be able to do something, but you've got to do what I say. First of all, I've got to get you out of this." "You mean, you've going to help me to escape?" Sadie gulped.

"Yes."

"But, Babs, if it's found out—"  
"Never mind that now. Sadie, this way," she said, going to the rear door and opening it. "Wait a minute, though. I'm going to force this lock, to make it look as if you've broken out." She fitted the key in the lock, fiercely turned it, bending it at the same time, so that the lock jammed. "Now!" she hissed, as a key grated in the front lock, "get to No. 13. Keep under cover, though!"

Sadie nodded. Out she flew. Babs, pausing only to jerk the bent key from the lock, followed her just as Eva's startled voice rang out.

"She's gone!"

## The Trap is Laid!



"ALL clear, Babs?"  
"All clear!"  
Barbara Redfern announced. "You can come out now, Sadie!"

The face of Sadie White appeared from beneath the bedspread which overhung the side of Babs' bed in Chalet No. 13.

It was an hour later, and the police, as far as Babs knew, were still scouring the countryside in search of the missing fugitive who had escaped from Chalet No. 17.

Such a hue and cry there had been! And all through it Sadie had lain hidden under Babs' bed.

Clara & Co., still in the swimming pool, knew nothing of all that, however. For once, Babs was playing a lone hand.

And from this moment on Babs was determined to play a lone hand. If she was on the wrong track, then serious consequences would follow, not only for Sadie, but for herself. Babs had no intention, until she was sure of her ground, in overshadowing her own chums' happiness by making them share her anxiety.

"Sadie, you've got to get away from here," she said. "Borrow some of my clothes from the case, here, and wait till lunch-time, when nobody will be about, and slip out. Don't go too far, though, because I may want to get in touch with you. Look here! Tell you what," she added. "Meet me at the bottom of the steps leading down to the beach at eleven o'clock. Can you manage until then?"

"Yes," Sadie said breathlessly. "But, Babs, what are you going to do?"

"First," Babs said, "I'm going to find out which really is the original Chalet No. 23. And that shouldn't be hard. Mr. Mackenzie's bound to have a map, or something. Sadie, why didn't you think of that?"

Sadie bit her lip.

"Well, I—I did," she said, "but—but—oh, Babs, perhaps you can under- stand? I didn't want to do anything which would bring up the past. Mr. Mackenzie might have been curious if I'd started asking questions, and I wasn't so sure of my disguise as all that. That was why I didn't get about more than I could help, and that was why I ran away at the initiation ceremony."



"No, I don't quite follow that," Babs said.

"Well, you see that hair dye, it—it's only a temporary one," Sadie said. "Once that dye gets wet, it comes off like anything, you know, and if I'd gone into the water without a bathing cap I should have been spotted at once."

"Oh!" Babs said, and then understood. "What a time you've had!" she said softly. "Still, now do as I ask. I'll try to keep Clara, Mabs, and Marjorie out of here until after lunch. Meantime, don't forget—eleven o'clock to-night at the foot of the steps leading down to the beach."

Away went Babs to the manager's office. Mr. Mackenzie, smoking his pipe at the door, nodded to her as she came up.

"Sorry to say there's no news of Lorna Bayford, Miss Redfern."

"Oh!" Babs said, frowning. "Seems to have got away all right, eh? Funny about that girl, Mr. Mackenzie, don't you think? You know, I've been thinking about things—in a vague way, of course. She did book Chalet No. 23 before she came here, didn't she?"

"That's right."

"And that was her chalet when she was in the camp last year?"

"No." He frowned. "If I remember rightly that chalet was occupied by Miss Carnaby herself. But why, Miss Redfern?"

"Oh, nothing! Just trying to follow up a train of thought," Babs said. "It struck me, you know, that she might have had some object in asking for a chalet with a special number. I thought, perhaps, she might have been after her old chalet for some reason."

He smiled a little. "Oh, I know what you're driving at, though I can't see it leading to anything. In any case, getting hold of the same number chalet she had last year wouldn't have helped her, because during the alterations and additions in the winter all the numbers were changed. Chalet No. 23 of last year would be—now let me see? Why, yes, it would be Chalet No. 13. That's yours, isn't it, Miss Redfern?"

"That's ours—yes," Babs agreed, though the manager could never have guessed what an exciting thrill that piece of information gave her. "Odd, isn't it?" she asked, with a little laugh. "Do let me know as soon as you get any news of her."

The manager smiled as Babs sauntered away. She reached the swimming pool, to find the chums in the act of going to change for lunch, and with them was Eva Carnaby. She looked up with a quick scowl as Babs approached.

"Well, I see your crook got away," she sneered.

"That's right," Babs agreed imperturbably.

"And I hope now you've jolly well got your eyes open!"

"I have," Babs said, "but not in the way you mean, Eva."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," Babs said, "that I've still got an idea that there's an explanation to all this. I just can't get it into my head, you know, that Sadie is a thief. I'm not asking any of you to believe what I think, but—well, there are one or two things I want to think out."

"Such as?" Clara Trevlyn questioned.

"Well, in the first place, I've just been having a talk with the manager," Babs said. "Do you know, girls, that our chalet was Chalet No. 23 last year?"

"Well, what's that got to do with it?" Mabs asked.

"Nothing, perhaps. On the other hand, perhaps a lot. It just struck me as odd that Sadie should have tried to get hold of that chalet, and then, having got it, moved twice into other chalets near it. You know," Babs said thoughtfully, "I've a definite idea she was searching for something."

She did not miss the startled light in Eva's eyes.

"And just supposing," Babs went on, "she was searching for something in a chalet that was numbered No. 23 last year? True, we caught her in our chalet, but we probably disturbed her before she could search properly, which means," Babs reasoned, "that whatever she was searching for must still be hidden in Chalet No. 13."

"Oh, piffle!" Eva exclaimed un- easily.

"Well, I don't know," Mabs said.

she added. "Hallo, there's lunch bell! Come on kiddlets: let's go!"

"Yes, rather! Hurry!" Bessie advised eagerly.

Off, then, they dashed for a hasty change before lunch. Sadie had gone when they got to their chalet, and inwardly Babs chuckled. Lunch—an excellent meal, accompanied by the usual orchestra—was enjoyed, and after that it was a case of all crowding to the tennis courts for the first stages of the competition in which they had entered.

Eva was in that. Eva, of course, had to go along with them.

It was a hot afternoon, and an exciting one as it happened.

Eva and Clara were drawn as doubles partners against Babs and Mabs, and hot and fierce was the encounter between them, with Clara and Eva just winning.

After that came a series of singles, with Babs triumphant this time. And



**BABS'** chums stared at her in amazement as she tiptoed to the lighted window of the chalet, raising a hand for caution. "But look here," Leila Carroll protested. "You were taking us for a bathe, and now—"

"Hush," Babs enjoined anxiously. "Listen!"

"Babs is generally right about these things. Anyway, it's no business of ours."

"But it is," Babs said quickly—"very much so. At least, I consider it my business. Because, you see, without asking for any of you to share it, I've got a definite hunch that Sadie isn't the bad egg everybody thinks she is. Now if, for instance, we could find the thing she was searching for," Babs went on musingly, "that might help us to understand things. Anyway, it will be fun having a try."

"But—but— Oh, stuff, it's still rot!" Eva broke out. "If there'd been anything, you'd have found it already."

"If," Babs said, "we'd looked properly, but we haven't. For instance, there are the floorboards. They are covered by carpet this year, aren't they? They weren't last year. Pretty big job," she added. "Can't do it to-day, because this afternoon we're in the tennis championship. Might have a shot to-morrow morning, though,"

after that they all returned for a short bathe and tea—tea this time, at Babs' suggestion, taken on the veranda of their chalet, and with, most amazingly enough, Babs inviting Eva as a special guest. And it was then that Babs, with a quick look at Eva, brought out the suggestion she had been mentally toying with for some time.

"I say, I've got a ripping stunt for to-night, girls! What about a moon-light bathe from the beach?"

"Ripping!" Clara voted.

"You'll all come?"

"What-ho!"

"Eva, what about you?" Babs asked.

"You keen on the idea?"

"Well, I am—yes." Eva nodded her head. "What time will you start?" she asked.

"Oh, about ten, I should say! Do join us!" Babs urged.

But Eva gave a sigh of regret.

"I—I'm sorry. I'd love to come, really, but I'm afraid it can't be managed. You see, I've promised to—to go to the supper dance, and that won't

be over, as you know, till midnight. Would have loved to, otherwise. Ten o'clock you're leaving, did you say?"

"That's it," Babs nodded.

There was a motive, of course, underlying Babs' suggestion, but the chums never suspected it.

At ten o'clock they all gathered outside Chalet No. 15, and with towels on arms and bathing suits under their swimming wraps, tramped off. It was only as Babs passed Chalet No. 32—that occupied by Eva—that she cast a quick look round.

And then, rather grimly, she smiled. But Babs said nothing to her chums until, reaching the lane outside the entrance to the camp, she stopped.

"I—I'm sorry, girls," Babs said, "we've got to go back."

"Look here, what's the giddy game?" snorted Clara.

"Come on!" Babs bade.

They stared. But Babs was already turning. Then, with a resigned look at each other, they followed her. Back along Row H Babs led the way, until, nearing Chalet No. 13, she paused.

"Hist!" she warned.

"But look here—" Leila Carroll whispered.

"Hush!" Babs said again. "Now follow me. Go carefully, and for goodness' sake make no sound!"

On tiptoes Babs led the way, her eyes gleaming as she saw the faint, wavering glow of light which reflected against the window of Chalet No. 13. Outside the window which flanked the door, she paused.

"Hush!" she whispered again.

"Listen!"

They listened, and they started. For from inside the chalet came a distinct squeaking sound.

Cautiously Babs stepped towards the window; cautiously she raised herself. Clara and Leila, close on her heels, followed suit. Then they all started.

Someone was in the room.

A torch was on the floor, its beam shining on the carpet. It revealed the back view of a girl bending over the carpet. It revealed that carpet rolled back and the girl, with a hammer in one hand and a chisel in the other, in the act of prising up a board. Clara's breath came in a hiss.

"Babs, it—it's Eva!"

"I know. But shush! Leila, cut off—quickly! Fetch the manager! Don't do anything, Clara—yet."

They watched. Now Babs and Jemima and Marjorie had come forward. With their eyes on a level with the sill, they stared in. They saw the chisel go under the board. The board came up with a squeak of nails.

Suddenly, from behind them, there was a sound of footsteps.

Mr. Mackenzie, with Leila in tow, hurried up.

"Miss Redfern, you sent for me?"

"Yes," Babs nodded grimly.

She caught his arm. While the chums stood by, she led him to the window—just in time to see the floor-board completely removed, and Eva plunge her arm into the aperture thus made. Mr. Mackenzie's brow darkened.

Without a word he turned from the window. In two seconds he was at the door. That door, since Babs had the key, was not locked, and yielded to his first touch. He stepped inside, at the same time pressing on the electric light.

"Miss Carnaby!" he cried.

There came a cry that was almost a scream from Eva as she flung round, in her hand a small yellow packet.

"Miss Carnaby, what are you doing here?"

"I—I—" stuttered Eva, and then gave back. But too late. Babs, with

one swift leap, was across the room and had snatched the yellow packet from her hand. "You!" she choked. "You—give that to me! It's mine!"

But Babs swiftly passed it to Mr. Mackenzie, while Eva, eyes blazing, cheeks flaming, made a futile snatch at it.

The yellow packet was an ordinary snapshot wallet, and on its front was written Eva's own name and the date on which the snaps had been developed—August, 1938. Eva gasped.

"Mr. Mackenzie—"

"Mr. Mackenzie, look in it," Babs said desperately. "Please—"

"Don't you dare!" screamed Eva.

But Babs was in front of her as she flung herself forward. Clara, half-understanding now, was at her side. The manager opened the wallet, and then jumped. For out of it came several negatives—two or three printed snapshots—and four five pound notes.

"What—what—" the manager stuttered. "Miss Carnaby, what is this?"

"This," said Babs scornfully, "is the money Eva stole from Mrs. Holt last year! This is the reason she's done her best to get rid of Sadie White—because she knew Sadie was trying to find that money to prove her innocence. Tonight she had to make this search because I told her that we ourselves were going to search to-morrow."

"Is that true, Miss Carnaby?"

Eva did not speak. It seemed that she realised she was lost.

The wallet itself gave her away—with her own name on its front and her own snaps in its interior.

"Oh my hat!" cried Clara. "Babs, how did you find this out?"

"And where," breathed Marjorie, "is Sadie now?"

"Just wait here a few moments," Babs smiled. "Mr. Mackenzie, while you talk to Eva, I'll go and fetch Sadie."

"You mean—she's here?"

"Near here. You see, it was I who helped her to escape this morning while I set this trap for Eva!"

A few moments later Babs brought Sadie to Chalet No. 13. By that time Mr. Mackenzie had sent for the police-officer who had remained in the camp

on the off chance of finding Sadie, and Eva was in his charge. The manager's face changed as he saw Sadie.

"Miss White," he said, "or rather, Miss Bayford, I owe you a thousand apologies. I suppose you have heard what has happened? Thanks to your friend, Miss Barbara Redfern, your innocence is proved."

Eva looked dazed.

"Babs—"

"And naturally," Mr. Mackenzie went on, "I shall do my best to make up for the awful mistake of last year. This very night, Miss Bayford, I am writing to your former employer to tell him what has happened. No, please do not thank me," he added quietly. "Thank Miss Redfern."

"And, Sadie—or Lorna," Clara said, as the police-officer led Eva Carnaby away, "kick us at the same time!"

Lorna was laughing then—shakily, but happily.

"Then—then please shall we say no more about it? But, Babs—oh, Babs, how wonderful you've been!" she breathed. "And how clever! I shall never, never be able to show you how grateful I am."

"Won't you?" Babs laughed. "But you will and can. From now on, Sadie—Lorna—you've got to be happy. You've got to enjoy your holiday, and you're going to be one of us. Is that agreed, girls?"

Agreed it was—heartily and with enthusiasm. That night there was no happier girl in Pinebay holiday camp than Lorna Bayford, and in the morning certainly no more joyful. For by the very first train Lorna's old employer came down, not only to assure Lorna that her situation was open for her again as soon as she chose to return to it, but also to give her an extended leave which would exist until the Cliff House chums departed from the holiday camp.

And apart from that, a whole month's salary to make up in part for the injury he felt he had done her.

From that moment Lorna was, in truth, one of the Co., looking forward with the greatest enthusiasm to the glorious days and adventures ahead of her.

THE END.



## "THEIR SEASIDE FEUD WITH THE FIREBRAND!"

It is not the fault of Babs & Co. that Pinebay Holiday Camp becomes the scene of a "battle" between themselves and Diana Royston-Clarke, the stormiest girl in all Cliff House. Diana appears like a bolt from the blue, and, in her supercilious, ambitious way decides to become Queen of the Camp Carnival. But Babs & Co. have other plans, and so Diana becomes her old vicious, scheming self—yet, in secret, generously doing a good turn to someone in need. Don't miss this superb Hilda Richards story. It appears next week.



COMPLETE this week. Another splendid Canadian story featuring—

# KIT OF RED RANCH



## To Save a Husky!

"Lo, boys! Off for a joyride?" Kit Hartley reined up her horse, Pete, as she hailed the three cowboys who had just grouped themselves in the yard of Red Ranch. There was something in their manner so grim and earnest that it filled Kit with uneasiness. So when she had asked about the joyride, she had been joking.

Wherever they were going, it was not on a joyride. Darrel Lamoine had a Winchester repeater in addition to a brace of six-shooters, and his eyes wore the dark glitter of anger.

"Just ridin' around?" asked Kit quietly. "Mebbe I could join up with you?"

She looked at Jem, the youngest of the three, and the one she liked best. But he did not seem inclined to talk.

Darrel Lamoine looked down his nose.

"Reckon it's no gal's business," he said gruffly.

"Oh? Waal, that means it's tough and rough, and probably silly," said Kit candidly. "And as it's something that can't be said, I guess it's not on the level, either."

She knew that'd brave Jem up, and she was right, for a squarer lad never sat a horse.

"It's the dawg," he said. "The dog! Which dog?" asked Kit. "The little yeller fellow in the town?"

Darrel Lamoine's eyelids snapped. He was a surly fellow whom Kit did not trust, or like, and now he seemed to be getting raw.

"Listen, Miss Kit!" he said crisply. "What we're gonna do is for the good of the cattle. And that's all. But it's gotta be done fast, and soon."

He clucked his tongue, and his horse moved forward. The others followed, and Kit sat astride her horse, silent, thoughtful, and anxious.

Quite clearly the three punchers were out stalking a dog, and stalking it with the intention, when they ran it down, of shooting it.

The thought turned Kit's blood cold, and, swinging from her horse, she went into the compound at a run, seeking

Bill, her dad's tough, moustached foreman.

"Lo, Bill!" said Kit cheerily, to put him off his guard. "What's the fun about the dog?"

"Fun!" said Bill, grunting. "It's no fun when the cows are mauled and chased."

"Gee, that's bad!" said Kit, startled and dismayed. "Do you know the rascal?"

Bill nodded, his eyes narrowing. "Ah, we know him all right!" he said darkly. "Leastways, we's pretty sure. There's only one dog herearound likely to do it. Fools think they can tame 'em, but they can't."

Kit knew at once without further searching for clues, whose dog it was they held to blame. Jennie White's husky, a dog believed to have a strain of wolf in it.

"Solo? Jennie's dog?" Kit cried, aghast. "Wh, whatever people say,

There was little hope of her out-riding the boys. She knew that. But there were other ways of getting ahead of riders than overtaking them on their own road—there were short cuts.

The cowpunchers were in a hurry, but they hurried along the road. When Kit was in a hurry she called up her Redskin friend, pretty Redwing, of the copper-tinted skin and gentle smile.

It was easy to find Redwing by giving the Redskin call, and as Kit rode along she put a finger to her mouth, and let it go.

Presently back came the answering call, and then from the hillside came Redwing, mounted on her horse, riding bareback—Indian fashion—and leaning well back as the horse cantered down the steep, tricky slope.

"Gee, she's glad to that horse!" murmured Kit, in wonder. "I'll never learn to ride that way in years!"

Redwing, cantering up, swung her

**"I'll save your pet," Kit vowed to the distracted owner of the "wanted" husky dog. But it wasn't as easy as all that, for before long Kit herself began to wonder if she'd made a big mistake.**

that dog's tame. And Jennie sure loves him, Bill. Where's the proof that he mauled the cattle?"

Bill looked a little shame-facedly down at his boots, and shuffled; for Kit's honest eyes were hard to meet when there was the light of scorn in them, as there was now.

"Waal, looky here, Kit!" he murmured. "Hyson saw the dog roaming loose right where the cattle were mauled."

"Hyson? The man you fired a mouth or two back?" Kit cried. "That crook? Gee, you'd shoot a dog on his word!"

And, anxious and indignant, she ran to her horse. Bill took an alarmed step forward.

"Hey, Miss Kit, where're you going?" he asked.

"To stop this shootin'!" snapped Kit, leaping into the saddle and galloping away.

horse round, fore feet in the air, and smiled happily.

"Miss Kit," she murmured, "you ride fast?"

"Redwing," said Kit, her grave voice showing her anxious mood, "do you know the girl with the husky—Jennie White?"

The Redskin girl nodded, lifted a lean, copper-tinted arm, and pointed through the trees.

"Short way—quick!" she said.

"Then lead on, for it's a matter of life and death—for the husky," said Kit.

Redwing led. She swerved and turned, cleared bushes, and ducked between trees where no way seemed possible, up-hill and down, but always taking the shortest way.

It was not long before Jennie White's shack came in sight. It was a log cabin on the hillside. She lived there with her granddad, now too old to work and for whom she kept house.

When they were still a few hundred yards away, Kit saw her emerge from the house to shake a cloth, accompanied

By

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## BETWEEN OURSELVES



**M**Y DEAR READERS,—Well, I've two exciting items of news for you this week, so I won't delay a moment longer, but start telling you all about them right away.  
First of all—

### "VALERIE DREW'S HOLIDAY MYSTERY!"

There! It's out at last! Now you know the meaning of those little notices which have been appearing in your favourite paper recently stating that the famous girl detective would shortly be making her bow before you.

For Valerie Drew is to make her bow next week. And those of you who have never read about this wonderful character—not to mention her lovable and extremely clever Alsatian dog, Flash—are going to be thrillingly surprised.

Those of you who have met Valerie before—well, you'll all be eager and impatient to renew that acquaintance, I know.

"Valerie Drew's Holiday Mystery" is one of the most enthralling serials I have ever read. It concerns a delightful, picturesque farmhouse, where Valerie and her pet go to spend a quiet holiday.

But it isn't at all quiet. In fact, Valerie and Flash are plunged into a baffling mystery the very instant they arrive. I won't tell you what the mystery is about, but leave you to discover that for yourselves. But it's going to intrigue and fascinate you

tremendously. What is more, you'll revel in the happy holiday spirit which runs through the whole story.

Remember—the first instalment of this thrilling story, specially written for us by Miss Isobel Norton, commences in next week's SCHOOLGIRL—which, by the way, will be published one day earlier than usual, that is, on Friday, August 4th, instead of Saturday the 5th. So do order your copy well in advance. Then you'll make sure of the second treat in store for you. And that is—

### "THEIR SEASIDE FEUD WITH THE FIREBRAND!"

Diana Royston-Clarke at Pinebay Seaside Camp!

No wonder Babs & Co., having the time of their lives, are rather taken aback. And it's the same old Diana, too—magnificently lording it over new acquaintances, setting her heart on a certain selfish objective, and trampling rough-shod over all who get in her path, and yet, coming upon someone in need of help, generously giving that help.

Naturally, Diana, with all her "Firebrand" traits, crossed the chums; naturally she is ruthless in her efforts to score off them. What cares Diana if she is breaking someone's heart?

The Holiday Camp are holding a carnival, and Diana is determined to be Queen of that Carnival, no matter what it involves.

Meanwhile, the Cliff House chums are equally determined that someone else shall be the Queen. And so—  
You'll be enthralled from first word to last of Hilda Richards' new masterpiece.

As usual, our next number will contain another delightful Kit and Redwing COMPLETE, and more of Patricia's Bright and Interesting Pages. And, of course, there will be a few more remarks from

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

But there was no husky to emerge, and Kit almost clapped in delight to think how he had been fooled of his prey.

The two men argued with Jennie, and then her old grandfather came to the door and shook his fist at the men.

"Search, laddies!" breathed Kit. "Smart work! Keep them thar searching, Jennie, while we get Solo away!"

She turned back and rejoined Redwing, who had Solo safely held with a long, strong creeper lead.

"Now where'll we take him?" murmured Kit. "It'll need be somewhere pretty far and safe, I'm thinking, Darrel will hunt like a foxhound now."

They discussed various likely places; and Redwing said that she would willingly camp out with the husky to make sure that he did not roam.

"We've got to take care of his howling, too," mused Kit. "That'd give him away mighty quick. Now, Solo, old chap—no yapping!"

The husky, bright red tongue lolling, looked up with worried eyes, and then sat down. And no amount of tugging would drag him on. He just stayed put.

"Thinks he's being stolen!" frowned Kit. "And in a way he is, so far as he knows!"

She dismounted and spoke to him. "Listen, laddie, we're your friends," she said gently, "so you'd better come along with us!"

It took several minutes of coaxing to persuade Solo that he had better, but, after petting, he seemed to understand that these girls were not enemies, and off they all went, leading the horses.

"Way up' on hill, fine place—cave," said Redwing presently.

A cave seemed ideal, so they made the slow, laborious journey, weaving a zigzag course to make the climb easier for the horses, and presently Redwing pointed aloft.

"There!" she said.

Kit stared, seeing a cave, and then moved her head to one side slightly.

"Say, that's no vacant site; I can see smoke," she murmured.

"Smoke?" asked Redwing. "Yes, yes!"

She slipped from her horse, and went swiftly up, returning in a moment or two as silently as she had gone.

"Yes?" asked Kit.

"Man," whispered Redwing.

Even as she spoke, there came the bark of a gun, and the shrill whistle of a bullet as it passed over their heads. It was not dangerously near, but Kit grabbed at Redwing and ducked.

A rough roaring voice called to them.

"Git goin'! And don't come back."

Kit did not argue; signalling to Redwing, she hurried down the slope, and did not speak again until they had reached the path below. She had not seen the man, and she did not recognise his voice—although she thought that she knew all the men in the district by sight and sound.

"Do you know him, Redwing?" she asked.

"Plenty heard," she said, touching her chin. "Not see him much, but t'ink—t'ink him once work with your dad."

"Gee!" gasped Kit, as she suddenly recalled her conversation with Bill.

"A bearded man? You mean Hyson?"

Redwing gave a nod of assent; and Kit whistled softly, intrigued and excited.

"Hyson, eh? And it was Hyson who said he saw Solo hunting on the plain? A gink like that who'd bin fired by dad wouldn't have a nice warm spot in his heart for the ranch or the cattle!"

by her husky, a dog from the Frozen North, Solo.

"He's there still," said Kit, in relief. But, turning in her saddle, she saw a cloud of dust moving on the road a mile behind them. "Hey, the boys! Fast's the word, Redwing!"

There was a clear stretch in front of them, and standing in the stirrups, Kit gave Pete his head. They reined up just short of the shack, and Kit sprang off and ran forward to Jennie, who, having seen the riders advancing at such speed, was at the fence to meet them.

"What's wrong, Kit?" she asked.

"The husky—get him hidden—here, let me have him!" said Kit breathlessly.

"The husky—Solo? But I don't get it," said Jennie, her pretty, fair face wrinkled. "Why do you want him?"

There was no time to argue. Kit pointed to the cloud of dust that was rapidly moving nearer.

"In the middle of that dust-cloud are three of our boys," she said, "and one of them's got a Winchester. At three hundred yards he could drop your husky, and I'm telling you he will. It's why he's come here!"

A light of horror was in Jennie's eyes as she looked from the dust-cloud to Kit.

"In a minute they'll see us—and

guess," said Kit. "Can the dog jump?

Then up here, boy!"

"Up!" commanded Jennie.

Kit looked down at the bright eyes of the husky, and smiled as he poised himself for the jump. Then, with a fine spring, he was on to the saddle, which she moved back to vacate.

"Forward a bit, laddie!" she murmured. "Hold on—we're off! Don't worry, Jennie!" she called back. "He'll be safe where we hid him!"

Before that cloud of dust became a group of riders, Kit and Redwing had to be in the nearest clump of trees, going out of sight—and out of range of Darrel Lamoinne's Winchester!

### Suspicious!

"WE'VE made it!" gasped Kit, when they were safely hidden amongst the trees some minutes later.

Then, leaving the husky with Redwing, who speedily plaited a lead out of tough creeper, which she cut with her sharp knife, Kit moved back to the fringe of the trees to watch. She saw the riders rein up, and two of them go to the shack and knock.

Darrel remained at the gate, and even as Jennie opened the door the Winchester went to his shoulder.



And Kit was deep in thought as she rode on with Redwing. Connecting Hyson with the mauling of the cattle was only a guess; but it was as good a guess as Darrel Lamoine's accusing Solo. Nevertheless, it was not easy to see how Hyson had done the work.

"It wants looking into," mused Kit, "but first we've got to find a hide-out for Solo, and somewhere safe where Darrel won't be snooping around."

Redwing, knowing every inch of the countryside, soon bethought herself of a new hiding-place, another cave, in front of which was a plateau.

"You'll be all right here?" Kit asked anxiously, when they arrived. "I'll be back with food for you and blankets, and if I can slip away without being seen, I'll be here myself pretty often."

Redwing smiled, touched by her friend's thoughtfulness.

"Not worry, Miss Kit," she urged. "Redwing keep Solo. He not get way. No one come take him."

Kit knew well enough that Redwing would not desert her post. Solo would be safe with her; and already he seemed to have made up his mind that she was a friend. More contented, he settled down, and looked from one to the other. Then, when Kit, deciding to go, said "good-bye," he sat up politely, and gave her his paw to shake.

With a wave to them both, Kit returned to Pete; and then, following the Redskin girl's directions, found the quickest way back to Red Ranch.

As she tethered Pete, she saw Lamoine & Co. in the ranch yard talking to her dad.

"Lo, dad," she said.

"Here, Kit!" he called in severe tone. "What's this about your hiding Jennie White's husky? That dog has been maiming my cows, and I'm not standing it."

Kit, brows knit, put her arms akimbo. "Dad, I'm sorry to hear you talk this way," she said in reproach. "What makes you mighty sure that it was Jennie's dog did the damage? There's no kind of evidence except that Hyson says he saw him around. And who's Hyson, anyway? A gink you fired!"

Darrel Lamoine cut in sharply. "Never mind Hyson," he snapped. "What other dog e'd have done the damage? A pug dog? The little terrier? It was a pretty big, powerful dawg."

Kit shrugged her shoulders. "O.K. But give the dog a break. He's got as much right to go on living as you, and what's more, there's Jennie to think of—"

She broke off, for there came then the sound of a horse, ridden hard, and looking round she saw the very girl whose name was on her lips, Jennie White. Jennie, clearly panic-stricken, reined up, almost threw herself from her horse, and without waiting to tether it, ran to the group.

"Mr. Hartley," she panted. "What's all this 'bout shootin' Solo? He's never maimed cattle. He's just a pet, and anyone who says he's got a streak of wolf is just crazy."

Kit slipped an arm about her as, scared and anxious, she looked from the three grim cowboys to Mr. Hartley.

"That's all right, Jennie," said Kit. "These thick-heads don't know how to think!"

Her dad spoke slowly, weighing his words.

"If the dog didn't do it, then I reckon there's no need to worry," he said. "But we're gonna find the rascal that did, and then—"

"Then he won't never do it agen," snapped Lamoine.

Kit felt Jennie shiver. Squarely, she faced her dad.

"Dad, swear that you won't allow Solo to be shot. Can't you see? It'd break Jennie's heart! Whatever Darrel says, whatever Hyson says, I'll swear they're both wrong. Solo's not to blame."

Darrel Lamoine turned away, his expression sneering, but Kit's dad nodded gravely. He was a kind-hearted man, and just.

"All right, Kit," he said slowly. "No pet dog will be shot without proof of his guilt. Guess I can't say more'n that. And," he added, turning to the three cowboys, "if any gink takes the law into his own hands, then he'll reckon with me."

Jennie, consoled and encouraged, returned to her horse with Kit, and for a few minutes they stood chatting, discussing the mysterious affair. Kit told her about Hyson, and—having made sure that Lamoine was not in hearing—explained to Jennie how she could find Redwing's secret hide-out; for Jennie naturally wanted to go to her pet, and assure herself that he was all right.

Jennie swung into the saddle, pressing Kit's hand in warm gratitude for all the trouble she was taking, but as she did so, there came a shout from the compound. A cowboy had just come riding in from the plains.

"I've seen him!" he shouted. "The dawg that's bin maulin' the sheep! I shot at him but he got away—"

"It's that husky, the half-wolf belonging to that girl there!"

Denial trembled on Kit's lips; but it was a time for deeds not words. There was at last a sure way of proving whether that dog was Solo or—a double!

If Solo was still with Redwing, and had not left her, then he was not the culprit the cowpunchers were seeking. No longer need Jennie fear for his life! Kit sprang to Pete, and mounted him.

"Come on, Jennie!" she cried.

## Found Guilty!

Kit reined up. She had ridden as hard as she could, and Pete was steaming after the fast run to the base of the hill, where Redwing and the husky were hidden. Jennie, at slower pace, was following, not knowing all the hazards of the route as Kit did, but she was not far behind.

"Dismounting in the lovely sunlit scene, Kit looked up the hillside, amongst the trees, bushes, and grass for some sign of Redwing.

Surprised that the quick-eyed Redskin girl had not heard her coming, she called, but there was no response. Then, her anxiety growing, Kit hurried up the hillside.

The silence prepared Kit for the discovery she made, though it was a shock. For the cave was deserted. Redwing was not there, nor was Solo! Alarmed in earnest now, Kit gave the Redskin call, and presently heard the response.

"All right," called Kit to Jennie, who was hurrying up the hillside. "She's answered. Mobbe she's just taken Solo for a run."

That was what Kit hoped was the true explanation of the Redskin's girl's absence, but in her heart she doubted it.

She ran to meet Redwing as she came into sight. Redwing's face showed her distress, and, seeing Kit she stopped, looking worried and ashamed. She was alone.

"Solo! Where is he, Redwing?" Kit gasped.

Redwing pointed to the plain. "Gone way over," she faltered miserably.

"You mean he got away from you?" Kit asked.

But Redwing shook her head, and now spoke more freely with a ring of indignation in her voice. It was a startling story she had to tell.

"Bad man come, hold gun," she said.



"MISS Kit. Looky here. Quick!" Redwing cried, pointing to the ground. Kit, leaning down from her horse, started as she saw the strange marks in the ground. They had been made by an animal—but not the "wanted" husky!

"Say he want food. Say not have any. Dog he go for bad man—"

"Yes?" breathed Kit. "And then what—"

"Man carry old sack. Throw over Solo. Cut creeper rope. Man run 'way. Solo go free."

Kit whistled softly, amazed and indignant.

"Held you up with a gun, eh? You mean Hyson?"

"Yes. Bad man!" said Redwing eadly.

"Poor Redwing! It wasn't your fault," said Kit consolingly. "But, gosh, I reckon that rascal needs what's coming to him. Jennie," she added, turning to that friend, "you heard? Solo's at large. We've got to find him! And let's hope that Redwing's story is believed."

Kit wasted no time, but hurried off with Jennie to search for the dog. It was only a few hundred yards along that trail that they came upon telltale signs—thin, faint spots of blood.

"He's been shot!" cried Jennie, in horror.

Kit did not answer. She followed the trail, her face dark, her eyes troubled.

Suddenly Jennie gave a shout.

"There he is, Kit!"

Kit saw the rustle of leaves ahead, and through a gap between two bushes came Solo. He halted, and then, with a sharp cry of joy, ran forward to greet his mistress. On his left flank was a slight gash, but he was not otherwise wounded. Yet there was sign of blood about his jaws, and Kit stared in horror.

That blood could mean but one thing. Solo had just mauled cattle!

"Oh!" murmured Kit.

Jennie sprang down from her horse, and threw her arms about him.

"Solo, Solo!" she cried. "Oh, darling, what happened? Who hurt you?"

From behind, Kit heard the sound of men's voices. The cowboys were coming.

"Jennie, ride on!" she cried. "Ride on, and hide him, and clean him up quick as you can!"

Wheeling her horse, Kit rode towards the advancing cowboys, whistling and calling Solo, as though she did not know where he was. Given a few minutes' lead, Jennie might get home even yet with her pet.

It was a simple ruse, but it worked, and when the cowboys saw Kit riding to the west, they followed, shouting, and calling her back. But she could not maintain the pretence for long, and very soon she had to pretend that she had lost him.

Leaving them to search, she returned to Redwing.

The little Redskin girl was kneeling on the ground, a hundred yards or so from the foot of the hills, and on seeing Kit sprang up excitedly.

"Miss Kit," she cried, "looky here! Quick!"

She pointed to the ground, and Kit swung off, and stared down at a queer mark at a spot where the ground was soft.

It had the appearance of being some animal's paw, yet it was one she had never seen before in her life. It was not Solo's, nor any dog's, yet it clearly was an animal's footprint.

Suddenly she shot a look at Redwing. "Gee, d'ye get it, Redwing?" she cried excitedly. "This mark—some other animal made it. Not a dog at all. And that animal's the one that did the mauling."

A shout from Darrel Lamoine came to her then.

"O'mon, fellers! Wherever the dawg is now, I reckon it'll find its way back home. On yer way, boys!"

Kit clenched her hands and looked down at the mark. It was evidence, clear and convincing, that another animal was lurking in the district; but even so it was not clear enough proof that it was to blame for the mauling.

And suddenly Kit, deep in thought, gave an exclamation as a startling idea came to her. Turning, she looked to the hill where the first hideout was. Hyson's lair!

"Hyson!" she exclaimed, and, without mentioning her thoughts to Redwing, Kit mounted Pete and wheeled him.

In a few minutes she reached the foot of the hill on which the sacked cowpuncher had his cave. Dismounting, she tethered her horse, and climbed, Redskin fashion, up through the bushes.

But she did not go right to the top; for when she was half-way there she saw a bearded, shabbily dressed man. In his hand he held a stout chain, and as he walked he looked about him worriedly, calling softly.

Kit's thought raced, and now a plan took form in her mind. She was certain that this man had planned the cattle raids; and now she meant to trap him.

"Hey!" she called suddenly.

He swung round as though he had been shot.

## ONE DAY LESS

to wait for your favourite paper next week. The next issue of

## THE SCHOOLGIRL

will be published on Friday, August 4th, instead of Saturday, the 5th.

"Lo, there!" he answered, looking for her amongst the trees and bushes.

"If you can give evidence against the husky," called Kit, "you're wanted at the Whites' shack now. Darrel Lamoine's thar."

He hesitated, and then called reply.

"O.K. I'll be right there!"

Kit went back to her horse, moved it to a place of hiding, and remained hidden with it as Hyson came down, putting on a jacket. He hurried along the path, and soon was lost to sight. Instantly Kit hurried up the slope again.

On hands and knees she searched the ground near his cave, and as she found what she sought gave a sharp cry of excitement. In all directions were the same marks as those that Redwing had found. There were signs, too, that others had been recently obliterated. In a corner of the cave was a strong chain, Kit snatched it up.

With that as evidence of the animal's existence, she mounted her horse, and then hard as she could go rode to the Whites' shack. Ahead of her was Hyson, on foot, but she took a course through the trees that avoided him.

Presently she saw Jennie's shack. In the garden stood Jennie, her hands covering her face, but of the cowboys there was no sign. Kit hailed her; and Jennie, running forward, explained between sobs that the boys had taken Solo to Red Ranch.

"Jennie, keep hopin'!" called Kit. "There's a chance even yet!"

But because it was a race against time she could not stay to explain. She rode on, pressing Pete hard, and did not rein in until, to her amazement, Redwing suddenly jumped into view ahead.

"Miss Kit—cougar—puma!" she called. "Bad hurt—wild—go trough trees! Take care!"

A cougar! A savage, wild animal unused to these parts. The mauling of the cows was instantly explained. But, even so, that explanation might yet come too late to save Solo.

Kit, riding hard, saw a cloud of dust ahead, and presently was but a hundred yards from the cowpunchers. She hailed them, and they slowed. In their midst trotted Solo, held by a rope, head down, as though he knew that he was going to his doom.

"Stop, you raving mutts! It was a cougar did the maiming!" shouted Kit urgently. "Set the dog free!"

Lamoine wheeled.

"This dog's caught, and he's guilty all right!" he retorted.

But Kit did not reply. She had noticed a movement in the long grass beside the road, and, turning in her saddle, she peered closely at the spot. Horrified, she saw the black-spotted, yellow body of a cougar.

At that moment the cougar sprang straight at Lamoine's horse. The horse reared, and Lamoine, flung off, crashed to the ground. In a moment the cougar was on him.

But Kit saw Solo's lips curled back, saw the flash in his eyes; and, jumping forward, she freed the rope from Lamoine's saddle.

Solo leaped in. For a moment there was a wild fight; then the cougar drew back, snarling, turned tail, and bolted.

In a mob, guns blazing, the cowpunchers went in pursuit of the cougar; but Kit loitered to attend to Lamoine, who, although not badly hurt, had a bitten arm.

"And there's the dawg that saved your life," said Kit grimly. "Now you know what the bloodmarks on his jaws were; he's fought the cougar before—"

"Guess he won't have to do it again, Miss Kit," said Jem, putting his gun back into the holster, as he returned with the others. "And reckon that's the last of the maiming business."

"Not quite the last," said Kit, and held up the chain. "See this? I got it from Hyson's cave on the hills. That cougar was some kind of tamed thing he brought here—and brought here for the one job of wreaking vengeance on Red Ranch!"

Five minutes later they were all back at the Whites' shack, where Jennie, hardly able to believe her eyes, stood motionless in grief.

And there, after her glad reunion with Solo, Hyson went to give evidence; but what he had to say for himself he said later at Red Ranch, where he was taken a prisoner by the infuriated punchers. It was rough justice he was given—a booting down the trail—but justice nevertheless.

Taking Kit's advice, Jennie kept Solo to the ranch, except when she was with him; henceforth she was not taking even a chance of her dog getting into the cowpunchers' bad books.

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

**A**REN'T Kit and Redwing a delightfully attractive pair of characters? You'll be meeting them again next week in another fine COMPLETE story, and remember that our next issue will be published on Friday, August 4th.



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 SCHOLES. 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.

Once installed at Fernbank, the Scholes' house, she meets RONALD BENSON, who tells her he is working on her behalf.

After many adventures, Ronald reveals to Brenda that Veronica Scholes is an impostor—that she, Brenda, is the real Veronica. All along, Ronald has been working to prove this.

Ronald and Brenda find the vital proof of Brenda's identity, but it is stolen by a certain Mr. Jones, who is really Veronica's father. Mr. Jones hides this proof—actually a child's story-book—in the house he has rented near Fernbank.

Ronald plots to get it back. But Veronica and her father are desperate now. It is essential that Veronica shall not be shown up at Fernbank for at least two days, for ten thousand pounds is due to come to the real Veronica by then. That is what the impostor and her father are after.

Learning who Brenda really is, Mr. Jones lures her from Fernbank by a bogus phone call. In her absence a letter is found which seems to prove she has stolen money off Mr. Scholes and bolted. This is Veronica's work, of course. Meanwhile Brenda finds herself trapped by Mr. Jones and accomplices.

(Now read on.)

**Ronald Learns of Disaster!**

"LET me go—let me go!" Brenda panted, and, with all the strength of utter desperation, she tried to wrench free of her captors.

But it was useless. Between them Mr. Jones and his two confederates easily held her powerless, and while Mr. Jones himself fastened a scarf about her mouth, one of the others set the car leaping forward.

Away they tore. Brenda, realizing that resistance was futile, sank back. What ever had gone wrong? How had Mr. Jones discovered her secret—for it was obvious he must have done.

She did not discover the answer to that problem; but presently Mr. Jones confirmed the fact that he knew she was heiress of Fernbank, the real Veronica Scholes.

The car drove up to the house he was renting, and Brenda was carried out into the house, and up to the top floor room where Jones, signalling to one of his companions to remove her gag, smiled mockingly.

"Don't bother to shout, my girl!" he taunted. "You're too far from the road or another house. You'll stay here a couple of days, then my daughter and I will be saying goodbye with ten thousand pounds, which should really be yours, of course. And as for that kid's story-book I got from you, don't bother to enlighten me as to why you're so keen on it. As I shall burn it before I go, it doesn't matter. Oh, by the way, that boy friend of yours can't help you to-night."

**BRENDA ACCUSES THE IMPOSTOR!**

**But her accusation meets with ridicule and brings danger to herself.**

"I'm having him well trailed. Make yourself comfortable," he ended, with a sneer.

And then he was gone. Brenda stared dazedly about the room, with its single table and chair and shake-down bed. It was some consolation to realize that the plotters did not understand the significance of that book—that it could establish her identity.

But what scant consolation, indeed! Wearily Brenda sank on to the bed, chin resting in her hands. A dry sob shook her frame.

She'd lost—lost everything!

"Attaboy! They've gone!" Ronald Benson breathed, giving his tie a tug. It was the following morning, and Ronald was swiftly dressing, standing by his bed-room window. Last night he had been prevented from searching for the vital book at Mr. Jones' house by the persistent shadowing of a

couple of men, who had even remained on watch outside this same window last night.

But there was no sign of them now, and Ronald, elated at his sudden freedom, quickly finished his toilet, breakfasted in record time, and set off to get in touch with Brenda.

"Poor old kid, she'll be expecting me to have that book—wondering why I didn't phone her last night!" he muttered. "I'll have a shot at getting it later."

But all thought of the book fled from his mind when he got through to Fernbank. Mrs. Scholes' voice, both agitated and relieved, interrupted his inquiry for Brenda the moment she guessed his identity.

"Oh, Ronald, I'm so glad you've rung! I've just rung you, but your father said you'd gone rushing out. What ever do you think? Brenda—Brenda—Ronald! She—she's gone!"

"Gone!" Ronald cried. He clutched the receiver. "How do you mean—gone?"

"Gone, Ronald—run away! Just—just left us! But that's not all! Some money's missing—twenty pounds! My husband and Veronica are sure she's taken it! I—I don't know what to think! Oh, Ronald, could you—would you come over?"

Ronald's face was a picture of incredulity. Brenda gone! Twenty pounds missing! But—but—

And then, in a blinding flash, he understood. Good gosh! A plot! That's what it was—a plot by Veronica and her father.

"I'll be over, Mrs. Scholes!" he cried. "I'll be over right away!"

"What do you think, Ronald? It doesn't seem possible for there to be any mistake, does there? That note just—just proves it. It's her writing. We all know it."

Despairingly, Mrs. Scholes spoke. For she, being so fond of Brenda, still wanted to believe her innocent. And yet, how could she in the face of such overwhelming evidence? Even Ronald was grim-faced as he studied the note.

It was a remarkable forgery. Ronald would have sworn Brenda had written it. But he knew her too well for that. And, in any case, common sense told him that no girl would abandon her claim to a fortune, to parents, to everything Fernbank meant to the rightful daughter for the sake of twenty pounds.

Something had happened to Brenda. She'd been kidnapped or lured away, and this forgery had been left to explain her otherwise incredible disappearance.

Desperately Ronald wanted to rush off to learn where Brenda was, to release her, if she was a prisoner, and that book. But first—he must make sure Mrs. Scholes, so deeply pained and grieved, did not suspect the truth.

"Not much doubt about it," he said, and, sighing, handed the note back. "She's gone—with the money. But, my gosh, it's amazing! She seemed such a topping kid! Must have been a shock to you—especially for poor old Veronica. How's she taking it?"

"She's dreadfully upset, of course. She's still in bed."

"Well, anyway," Ronald said, to close the conversation, "the party'll buck her up to-morrow. And that ten thousand pounds she'll receive then, too!"

"Oh, yes! We had, you know," Mrs. Scholes said, "intended giving her her cheque-book during the party, but as it's her birthday to-day, and the banking account is now open, and there are one or two little things she'd like to get—presents for other people, I believe, we've agreed to give it to her this afternoon."

"This—this afternoon?" Ronald said, and clenched his fists.

Why—why, that gave him less time than ever!

"Yes, Ronald, I think it's quite a good idea. Don't you agree?"

"Oh, yes, quite—yes, rather!" Ronald faltered. "A—a topping idea!"

But his mind was in a turmoil.

Oh, cunning Veronica! How artful she had been! Realising how dangerous her position had become, she was making sure of the money a day in advance. And, Ronald mused, jaw hardening, once she had it in her possession, and was herself clear of Fernbank, she'd communicate with her father, and the pair of them, together with the fortune that belonged to Brenda—and the precious book, too—would vanish from the face of the earth.

Ronald did not delay another moment, but, excusing himself as politely as he could, he left the house. Only one thing did he stop to say, and that was:

"Don't tell Veronica I called, Mrs. Scholes. She'd wonder why I didn't see her. I'll see her at the party, any way."

Quickly he walked down the sunlit lane, bracing himself determinedly.

Almost certainly Brenda would be a prisoner in Mr. Jones' house, he decided. He'd go there. Somehow he'd rescue her. On he strode, anger rising, alarm and perplexity ever gnawing at his heart.

Why had they kidnapped her? He started. Because they knew who she was?

"My gosh!" Ronald muttered, eyes lighting up. "That's about the size of it. They've found out at last. No wonder they collared her. Must have felt pretty desperate. Now I see why that little rotter wants that money earlier. And Brenda's at that house. I know she is! I—I—"

But Ronald broke off then, biting his lip.

Did he know? Not for certain. He only had suspicions, and his own shrewd reasoning to go upon.

"How the dickens can I make sure?" he fretted, hands clenched, and set his lips as the house came in sight in the distance. "Oh, gosh! If only I could make that Jones scoundrel give the game away, trick him into betraying where Brenda is, I reckon—By jingo!"

Excitedly Ronald halted, snapping his fingers.

"Got it!" he breathed. "Jim—he's the fellow to do it! It's the only chance!"

### Freed—and Caught!

RONALD broke into a run. He entered the call-box farther along the lane. Grabbing up the receiver, he gave a number.

In four seconds he was through to a pal of his, Jim Marshall. Swiftly, excitedly, he spoke.

Three minutes later, hanging up, he went racing out of the box. His first mission was to buy a pound of the cheapest and hardest toffees the first sweet-shop had in stock. Armed with this queer supply of ammunition, he retraced his steps.

By the garden fence of Mr. Jones' house he halted, whistling softly. At once the same two mastiffs who had previously prevented him from entering the house came tearing across, their long chains rattling, their teeth bared.

But the snarls changed to noisy crunching as Ronald threw handfuls of the sweets in different directions, taking care the dogs could reach them. The bag empty, he tossed it aside and tore for the gate.

"That'll keep them busy long enough for me to get to the house," he murmured.

The trick, working like a charm, enabled Ronald to steal up to some french windows without a solitary bark or growl to betray his presence. Cautiously pressing himself against the wall, he peered into the room beyond.

One man was there, seated in an easy-chair, reading. His back was towards Ronald, who tried in vain to recognise him. In suspense the lad waited. He glanced at his watch. Ten minutes since he'd phoned Jim. Time Jim did his part. At any second now he should—

Ronald tensed. There it was—the ringing of the phone. And it was Mr. Jones who dropped the book, and, springing up from the chair, strode over to a small desk.

Scarce daring to breathe, Ronald watched. He saw Jones give a violent start, heard an exclamation of alarm, then saw him smash down the receiver, and, in an obvious state of panic, dive for the door.

Ronald, whipping out a penknife, waited until the man had disappeared, then, swiftly working at the catch, forced the french windows open. Into the room he stepped. Quickly he shut the windows, tiptoed across to the door, and looked out.

His eyes gleamed as he saw Jones just vanishing up the stairs.

Daringly he stole in pursuit. Up two staircases went Mr. Jones, obviously making for the top of the house. Not far behind came Ronald. And when he saw Jones dart down a passage, halt at a door, and turn back the key, his face lit up.

"The trick's worked!" he breathed.

"So that's where Brenda is!"

Satisfied, he stepped back into hiding. As Jones appeared on the threshold of her prison, Brenda looked up. She sat on a chair over by the window, her face pale. Though misery and dejection were in her heart, she faced her captor bravely.

"If you've come here to gloat you can save yourself the trouble," she said scornfully, and turned back to the window.

Mr. Jones, glancing about the room, nodded understandingly.

"Just a little try-on, eh?" he murmured. "Well, I must look into this."

He withdrew then, and Brenda looked at the door, frowning.

"Try on?" she echoed. "What on earth's he mean? I haven't tried anything on."

She was still pondering in a half-hearted fashion when the key clicked in the lock again, and for the second time within as many minutes the door opened.

"Why don't you leave me alone—" she began, and then started up as she saw who it was who, slipping into the room, quickly withdrew the key and locked the door on the inside. "Ronald!" she gasped huskily. "Oh, Ronald, it—it can't be you! Ronald—Ronald—"

Half-laughing, half-choking, she reeled across the room. Ronald, grinning hugely, helped her on to the edge of the bed, then clasped her hands.

"It's me all right, old thing," he said in a low, tense whisper. "And I've got to work fast. So have you. Listen! This is how things stand now, Brenda—we've only got two or three hours to spare at the most, perhaps less!"

Brenda was dazed at first when he had told her of the developments at Fernbank. Slowly, her eyes wide, she shook her head.

"And—and they believe I stole it; that I—I robbed them and—and bolted?" she whispered. Then, as though transformed, she sprang to her feet. "We've got to get out of here, Ronald! We've got to get back to Fernbank and—and—" She broke off, utter hopelessness in her eyes. "Oh, but—but how can we, Ronald? Why," she looked at him in amazement, "I'd forgotten. How did you get in?"

"Easy as pie. Just got a pal to phone up Jones pretending to be me, and say you'd escaped. Naturally Jones, with the wind-up, panicked off to see if it was true. I slipped in, followed him, saw him enter this room, and—there you are!"

He gave an expansive little gesture, but next moment became grim again.

"You've got to get away from here. You can, if you'll take a risk, by a rope made from sheets."

"Oh, I'll risk it, Ronald. You know I will!"

"Course I did," he smiled, and patted her shoulder. "You dash back to Fernbank and try to hold things up. Keep Veronica there. Bluff, do anything you can—even accuse her of being a fraud. But don't let her slip off with that money!"

"I'll do my best," Brenda said, drawing a deep breath. She began dragging off the bedclothes; but suddenly, as Ronald started to help her, looked round in fresh dismay. "But the story-book, Ronald, we'd forgotten the book! We can't do anything without that. We couldn't prove a thing!"

"You leave the book to me," said Ronald quietly, and would explain no further. "Right-ho!" as he gathered



up the sheets from the bed. "Now let me show you."

In five minutes the rope of sheets had been made. In another minute Brenda was sliding over the window-sill. Down the sheets she slid. She reached the ground, paused to wave, and then went tearing off. For a horrible thirty seconds Ronald feared the dogs might spot her, or Jones himself. But to his utter relief he saw her reach the road and vanish.

Drawing back the sheets, he unlocked the door and stole out. Stealthily, on tiptoe, heart beating, but fists bunched for instant action if the need arose, he crept down the stairs.

Got to find that book! Where was the most likely place? Jones' room! The room the man had been in just now. But—supposing Jones had returned to it?

Ronald was in luck's way, for as he neared the hall he heard the man cough in another room. Like lightning Ronald seized his chance. He swiftly stepped into the room by which he had entered, half-closed the door, and quickly scanned it.

Ah! That desk in the corner. With long, panther-like strides he reached it. Drawer after drawer he examined; drawer after drawer he dismissed, until—he came to one that was locked.

Excitedly then, he produced his pen-knife. With shaking hands he inserted it above the lock. A deft twist, a click, a tug—and the drawer came open. Was the book inside? Did this mean triumph? Triumph, after all—

But—what was that? A sound from behind him!

Round Ronald flung. He saw someone framed in the doorway, and his heart went cold. For that someone was Mr. Jones himself!

### The Story-Book Again!

**S**OBBERING for breath, her head whirling, and her legs dragging like leaden weights, Brenda staggered up the winding path of Fernbank towards the house.

All the way from her prison she had run.

Ahead came now the sound of a car's engine. A moment later a blue limousine turned the bend ahead. Just in time, Brenda crouched out of sight in the bushes, watching the car disappear through the gates.

"Wonder who that was?" she murmured, hurrying on. "A man driving—rather an old man. Never seen him before—"

"Oooo, Aunty Brenda! Aunty Brenda, is you back again? Ray, ray!" sounded a deliriously happy childish voice, and then little Dickie Scholes, his chubby face one flushed, radiant beam of happiness, came charging across the lawn, to hurl himself into her arms.

Brenda clutched him to her. There was a mist before her eyes. Dickie—her very own, darling little brother. And what was he asking? Had she come back—for good? For evers and evers?

"Y—yes, dear," she said tremulously, and forced a smile. "For—for good. Just you go into the summer-house and wait for me, and I'll be with you in—in no time."

"Not hours an' hours?" Dickie said anxiously, eyes rounded.

"No, darling. Just a teeny-weeny while," Brenda smiled, and then, as he turned to skip happily away, she gently caught his arm. "Oh, there's just one little thing you could do for me, Dickie. Who was that gentleman in

the motie-car who drove away just now?"

"Oooo, solicitor-mans!" said Dickie, nodding importantly. "Came to see Veronica an' give her lots an' lots of pennies! Bye-bye! I'll be as good as good in the summer-house, Aunty Bwenda, till you come."

"Bye-bye, darling," Brenda whispered, and watched him frolicking off.

But she was thinking of something else. The solicitor! Oh, good gracious, there wasn't a moment to spare! His visit could mean only one thing. Everything was ready now for Veronica to take over her banking account; everything was ready for the plotters to strike!

Somehow she'd got to stop them; she must, she must!

Desperately she tore for the house. She raced up the steps, let herself in, closed the door, and then, hearing voices from the drawing-room, hurried across to it. The door was ajar, and every word from within clearly reached her ears.

She set her lips, then, for Veronica was talking—

"I returned," Brenda said, hands clenched, "because I didn't take any money. I didn't!" she repeated passionately. "I'd never have been away all night if I hadn't been—kidnapped!"

"Kidnapped!" barked Mr. Scholes.

"Well, if—if that doesn't take the biscuit," gasped Veronica, trying to hide her agitation by pretending to be almost amused.

"Kidnapped, eh?" said Mr. Scholes, with an ominous smile. Then his face set. "Kidnapped, my foot!" he rapped. "You don't imagine for one moment that we're going to be deceived by that utter rubbish, do you, girl?"

"It's true, all the same," Brenda cried. "I was kidnapped. Last night, when I went down the lane to—"

"And why were you kidnapped, may we inquire?" Mr. Scholes cut in, dryly sarcastic.

"So that you'd believe I took that money," Brenda returned. "Someone else took the money and wrote that note, and a confederate dragged me into a car and made me a prisoner in a house. Oh, I—I know it sounds unbelievable," she cried, as she saw his



"WHY don't you leave me alone—"  
Brenda began, and then started up with a cry. For it was not her captor, but Ronald, who now slipped silently into the room. "Ronald!" she gasped huskily.

"Of course. I won't draw out much, aunty; just enough for one or two surprises for everybody. Oh, dear, you don't know how excited I am. It's so lovely having your own bank-book. You're two perfect dears. I won't be gone long—"

Brenda, trying to calm her pounding heart, pushed the door wide and stepped over the threshold.

At sight of her the three occupants of the room seemed momentarily turned to stone. Veronica, dressed in her outdoor clothes, stopped in her stride, flung a hand to her mouth, fighting against a scream, and then stood motionless; Mrs. Scholes' eyes widened to a look of mingled hope and pained reproach; while Mr. Scholes registered blank amazement.

But he it was who recovered first; and then his face suffused with anger.

"You!" he snapped, taking a stride forward. "So you've come back, have you? You treacherous, ungrateful little wretch, where's that money?"

"Why, my goodness," said Veronica, with a shaky little laugh. "How—how extraordinary. Brenda, we thought—"

"Brenda, why have you returned like this?" asked Mrs. Scholes, in a low, tremulous voice.

incredulous expression. "but it's true. Every word of it's true, and—"

"Every word of it is an outrageous invention!" said Mr. Scholes grimly. "Silence, girl! I refuse to listen any longer. Veronica, you will be passing the police station. Tell them to send a constable at once!"

"Very good, uncle," Veronica said, and drawing on her gloves, she made for the door.

It was then that something seemed to blaze up inside Brenda.

The sight of that impostor, with flushed face and gleaming eyes, about to make her getaway, stirred her far more than Mr. Scholes' fury, or Mrs. Scholes' scorn and pain.

"Stop!" she cried, and, darting to the door, sent it crashing to. "Just a moment!" she said huskily, barring Veronica's path. "Mr. Scholes—Mrs. Scholes, now I'll tell you why I was kidnapped and who by. By this girl's father!"

The Scholes stared at her blankly. "This girl's father kidnapped me," Brenda went on, breathless, quivering. "She stole the money; she wrote that note in my handwriting. And why? Because I know her secret. I know she isn't Veronica Scholes at all, but an



impostor, a fraud, a cheat. And—and I also know," Brenda faltered, all the fire seeming to go out of her now, "that I—I'm the real Veronica! That's why I was kidnapped!"

Panting for breath, she leaned back against the door.

Veronica, ashen-faced, had retreated. For an instant stark terror showed in her face. Then she burst out in well-assumed indignation:

"Why—why, of all the silly, idiotic nonsense—"

And she gave a little laugh, very shaky, very unreal.

Mr. Scholes, seeming to swell, strode across the room and seized Brenda's shoulders.

"Miss Day," he ground out, his eyes smouldering, "are you mad? Never have I heard of such a fantastic story. Your conduct is absolutely unpardonable! There is only one way to deal with you!"

With a rough push, he sent Brenda, gasping and dizzy, slumping on to a chair.

"Sit there and don't dare move a finger!" he rapped. "You run along, Veronica, but don't bother to call in at the station. I'll phone them myself—now!"

He made for the phone then, but at that moment someone burst into the room; someone, at sight of whom Brenda almost swooned with the maddest, wildest joy and relief.

"Ronald!"

"And just about in time, I fancy," Ronald Benson said grimly, closing the door.

He looked an extraordinary sight, with one cheek cut, his hair dishevelled, collar and tie askew, and his clothes torn and grimy. But there was a gleam of triumph in his eyes.

"Sorry to have to behave like this, sir," he addressed Mr. Scholes. "And I hope you'll excuse the mess I'm in." He gestured to himself. "I suppose Brenda's told you about that girl and her father?"

The Scholes exchanged staggered, dumbfounded looks.

"You—you mean it's—it's true?" Mr. Scholes said incredulously. And then, as if furious with himself: "Oh, rubbish! Now see here, young man—"

"Ring the police," Ronald swiftly advised. "They'll confirm what I say. This girl's father's in their hands by this time. We had a bit of a scrap, and he took a dive down some steps. I phoned the police to get him, and rushed here—with this!"

From under his coat he produced a tattered and grimy children's story-book, which had belonged to the real Veronica Scholes. The Scholes started as they saw it. Veronica, deathly white, looked about her like a hunted animal.

And Brenda gazed at the book with all the wondrous fascination of someone who has found the most priceless treasure in the world.

"Oh, Ronald, you got it!" she breathed, clasping her hands. "I'll—I'll never be able to thank you! Mrs. Scholes—and you, Mr. Scholes—that'll prove I'm really Veronica!" she cried, eyes shining. "My finger-prints are on it! It won't matter what that girl says now!"

THERE WAS a clear case against the plotters, whose real name was Jones, as it happened, Myrtle Jones and father.

The book, together with the evidence

of Brenda and Ronald themselves, and the other witnesses they were able to call—including the photographer and Miss Allen, the dance instructress—not only convicted the Jones, but established Brenda's identity beyond all doubt.

As a result, Myrtle Jones was sent to a correctional institution, and her father to prison.

But that was some weeks after the sensational events which took place on Brenda's own birthday. By then, of course, her parents, whom she could not even remember, had been reunited with her, soon recovering from the shock of finding on their return from Canada that the girl they had left behind was a fraud, under arrest, and her place taken by someone else.

But once they had become reconciled to it, Brenda knew, with almost unbearable happiness, that they were overjoyed. Everyone was overjoyed, for the impostor had never inspired complete affection and admiration, and the birthday party, despite the amazing circumstances in which it was held, was a glorious success.

The whole story was soon pieced together. Brenda's real name was Veronica, of course. When four years old, she and her parents had been involved in an aeroplane disaster over the Welsh mountains. An old hermit woman had found her beside the wreck, and, believing the other passengers dead, had adopted her. Afterwards, unable to provide for her any longer, the woman had sent her to the London orphanage, with some story of having found her abandoned on a doorstep.

Meanwhile, Brenda's parents, saved, had mourned her as dead—until, out of the blue, Myrtle Jones had appeared. She and her father had learned the story from the hermit woman, and, knowing of the legacy due to Veronica on her eighteenth birthday, had seen a way of making easy money.

Armed with Brenda's baby clothes and a locket she had been wearing at the time of the accident, it was easy for Myrtle Jones to convince even Brenda's parents that she was their long-lost daughter.

But one person had been curious, doubtful, and finally suspicious. That person was Ronald Benson, who, one evening at Fernbank, explained.

"I'd been your old playmate, old thing," he said, smiling at Brenda, as she sat, with her baby brother on her knee, facing her radiant parents. "And Myrtle didn't remember a lot of things she ought to have done. Apart from that, I'd also met that old woman in Wales. A pretty queer coincidence," he grinned, "but a mighty useful one, as it turned out. And when I learned her story, and then learned that someone was coming from the orphanage to be companion to—well, to the supposed Veronica, I had a staggering idea. That's why I popped up at your carriage window with the ornament. And when you admitted it was familiar, I knew I'd struck oil. The next thing was to get proof. Well, you know as much as I do how I got proof," he ended, with a reminiscent chuckle.

"I think you were awfully clever, Ronald!" Brenda said. "And you deserve— Oh, just lots and lots doesn't he, mummy and daddy?"

Her father, a tall, handsome man of military bearing, nodded, and looked with twinkling eyes at Brenda's pretty mother, whose hand was tightly clasping that of her new-found daughter.

"Oh, by the way," he said, "you know that blue sports car in Baker's, Ronald? Well, I'm having it delivered to-morrow morning—at your house."

Brenda caught in her breath; Ronald sat bolt upright. For a long moment they just stared at each other. Then—

"Whoopee!" Ronald shouted, springing to his feet. "Oh, boy—oh, boy—oh, boy! That car—that spanking racer—mine! My—my gosh—we're all lucky now!"

"H'm!" Brenda said happily. "You—that car. I—well, I've just got everything I'll ever want!"

"An' I've got nice picksher-book with a tigue on the front!" Dickie piped up at that moment brandishing the object which had played such a vital part in bringing Brenda's dream to reality.

She smiled. Her face was flushed and radiant at that moment; the face of a girl who, standing on the threshold of a wonderful new life, knows that she will find greater happiness than she had ever thought possible—and means to share it with all those who have a place in her heart!

THE END.

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