

EVERY GIRL SHOULD READ THIS FINE PAPER!

The Schoolgirl's Own 2^d



**THEIR SUSPICIONS
AROUSSED!**

A dramatic incident from
this week's long complete
tale of the chums of
Morcove School.

There is mystery and humour in this splendid long complete tale of Morcove School.



THE SCHOOLGIRL LISTENERS IN!

By
MARJORIE STANTON.

Dolores Florissa, the strange new girl, and her mother find they have taken on a difficult task when they endeavour to hoodwink Betty Barton and her chums. How Betty & Co. make a great discovery is charmingly told in this magnificent tale.

Another Rumpus.

PAULA CREEL stepped out from the porch of Morcove School into the mellow sunshine of early evening, looking as elegant as usual.

"Now, geals," she said, dropping her hands to her sides after smoothing on her gloves. "Sowwy to keep you waiting! But wheah are all the others?"

"Gone on," Polly Linton explained laconically. "We shall find them on the shore, where Tess is sketching. You were a jolly long time, Paula!"

"A twifling delay at the dwessing-table, Polly, deah, for which, pway do not hold me wespensible. I nevah can find my things where I leave them."

"Oh, grumblin' again!" laughed the madcap. "Gwumblin', Polly? Betty, deah!"—Paula appealed to the only other girl who had waited about for her—"I pwotest! When did I evah gwumble? No, Polly, deah! No, Betty! But when you come to—"

"When you come to the end of a perfect day—like this one has been!" the madcap of the Fourth Form struck in gaily, and she began to sing, with her happy face tilted to let the sun and the soft wind play upon it.

"Oh," sang Polly, "when you come to the end of a perfect day—"

"Yes, wather! Haw, haw, haw! Geals, it is a tweek, this, after the stormy weather we've been having—what?"

And she, too, held her head high, and set her dainty shoulders back, at the same time taking a few jaunty steps that carried her ahead of Betty and Polly.

Betty chuckled. How long would the beloved duffer retain this happy, care-free mood? was Betty's amused thought.

As a matter of fact, in another instant Polly charged after Paula, took her about the waist from behind, and considerably accelerated that young lady's progress towards the school gates.

"Healp! Dwp it, Polly!"

"Gee up! Go on! Ha, ha, ha!"

"How twivolous you are, Polly, deah! I shall wufuse to come out with you!" was Paula's aggrieved cry, half a minute later. "Why can't I

be left alone? Why must it be either you or Naomer—"

"Or both of us, eh?"

"Yes, wather! You laugh, but weally I am tired of pwotesting. All I ask is a bit of peace and quietness. And at this particular time, Polly, deah," appealed the long-suffering one, with intense gravity, "you might be more considerate. Weally, what I have to put up with in my study—"

"You mean the rumpuses between Naomer and Dolores?" Betty Barton chimed in, as they all three stepped along, more decorously now. "Those two girls are not hitting it off any better, then, Paula?"

"Not pwecisely, Betty, deah. No, wather not! On the contwawy, only an hour ago, bai Jove, just before tea—" Paula took time to heave a big sigh. "Dweadful wumpus! I couldn't get out of the woom in time. My wetweat was cut off. I cwawled under the table, bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How you can laugh, you two! A most undignified pwedicament for me to find myself in!" lamented Paula. "Moreover, geals, they over-turned an inkpot, bai Jove! And it twickled down the tablecloth, bai Jove, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha! What a lark if it had trickled down your neck, Paula, darling!"

"Pwecisely what it did do!" deplored Paula, so dolefully that Betty and Polly simply shrieked with laughter.

But after a while the merriment gave place to real gravity, for once again the inseparables of Study 12 were seeing the serious side to this passionate feud between Naomer Nakara and Dolores Florissa.

"The end of it will be, I suppose, Miss Redgrave will find out about it, and then separate them," Betty remarked. "In fact, if that doesn't happen soon, we shall simply have to give Miss Redgrave a hint."

"Yes, wather! One of these days—"

"There is no telling what may happen, that's a fact," Polly agreed seriously. "Naomer— Of course, she is a wild little thing, and can be

most provoking, but there is no bad blood on her side, ever."

"Wather not, geals! I wegard Naomer as a most adowable young wascal. Howevah, don't say I said so," Paula added hastily. "It will only land me in twouble. Her embwaces, as you must wealise, are wather destrwuctive to one's appeawance!"

"Dolores, though"—Betty took up the talk—"is so different. Get her in a passion, and she looks as if she could bite you. Ah, well, perhaps she won't be at the school much longer!"

"Betty, deah, whatevah makes you think that," Paula wondered blankly, "when the geal has only just matewialised, so to speak, as a new scholar?"

"Sometimes I feel that she has only been entered as a very temporary scholar, more temporary than perhaps even the headmistress supposes. Dolores has a mother living at Cliff Edge Bungalow. The place is rented furnished, mother and daughter are foreigners, and— Well, one way and another—"

"My belief exactly," Polly agreed, as she usually did when Betty was stating an opinion. "I say, though, can't we hurry? I'm longing to get down to the shore. The sea is still rough, they say."

So, from the school gateway, they made their way with brisk steps the short distance that they had to go. By way of a descending path to the bottom of a narrow ravine, they soon emerged upon the seashore, and saw the other girls standing about in a group, not far off.

Polly hailed them:

"Coo-ee, girls!"

"Coo-ee!" several of them sang back on the wind that was blowing in, still strongly, from the vast Atlantic. "Isn't it jolly?"

Betty, Polly, and Paula could say "Hear, hear!" to that. This was one of those wild, yet sunny, evenings in the spring when the rugged coast of North Devon is, perhaps, at its best.

The tide was as far out as it ever went along this shore, and dark green rocks stood up amidst the swirl of the surf. Tons of seaweed lay heaped along the beach. To look up at the beetling cliffs was to see them all suffused with the same rosy light which was upon the brawling waves.

"No wonder you wanted to come out and do a sketch!" Polly remarked to Tess Trelawney. "May I see, dear?"

That girl was the only seated one, being provided with a tiny folding stool that was part of her sketching equipment. She had a sketch-block on her knees, and dumped close handy beside her was her open box of water-colours.

Of the girls who stood around, Madge Minden was one. Another was Helen Craig, who had every bit as much reason as Paula for grieving about the continual rumpus going on between Dolores and Naomer. For Helen was in the study that that ill-assorted pair made their battleground so frequently.

Naomer at present was ranging alone along the weed-bestrewn shore, all eyes for anything of a curious nature that the sea might have cast up. She had only to find some pretty bit of seaweed, or a bright shell, and she would come capering back with it, her excited yells drawing echoes from the cliffs.

But Naomer was still roving on, empty-handed, when suddenly a sullen, challenging murmur made her look up sharply.

"What you want? What you coming this way for?" the unfriendly voice had demanded.

It was Dolores Florissa who stood confronting Naomer all so suddenly. The South American girl was alone, and she appeared to be on her way back to the school, via the glen path. The way she now held herself in front of Naomer was a plain hint that she, Dolores, did not mean the girl queen to get past her without a squabble.

"What do I want, you ask? I ask, what you want to ask me for, what I want?" was Naomer's quaint way of retorting saucily.

It would have been difficult to say which of these two girls was the more imperfect in her knowledge of the English language.

"Look 'ere, you go back, see?" Dolores commanded. She often dropped her accents, as most foreigners do. "There is nuzzing along this way for you."

"There is the sea—is he yours, then?" retorted Naomer spiritedly. "There is the shore, the cliffs. Is your father perhaps president of Morcove, that you theenk eet all belong to you?"

"You are insulting!"

"No, I theenk eet is you! Eef you please, go away," Naomer said, feeling she was keeping her temper admirably. "I not like your face as much as all that. I see him enough in the study."

"You! Bah, you have a face that is like ze coffee-pot!"

This allusion to Naomer's dusky skin "rattled" her Serene Highness. She put out her tongue.

"That eet all I care for you, you daughter of a five-meant president! Ha, ha!" she twitted Dolores. "I am a queen, so please get out of my way!"

"I not get out of your way. I not let you go furder," Dolores said flatly. "Along zere is private."

"Ah—bah!"

"So it is private!" Dolores insisted fiercely. "You shall ask zese other girls who are coming. They will tell you my mother rent it all."

"I not need to ask Betty and the rest. I know it is swank what you say!" Naomer flashed back scornfully. "Your mother at the bungalow, she only rent the cave that is for to keep a boat in, on the shore."

"Same thing!" Dolores blustered truculently. "We do not want all of you to do this, and to do that"—she imitated the actions of a prying person—"where we have ze private property."

"We do not do this, and do that," Naomer answered, going through similar actions, "at Morcove. No! In your country, yes!"

"You say one word more about my country—"

"I say two, three words more," Naomer smiled, "eef I want to. But not now. I wait till I finish my walk. Good-bye-ee!"

She took a mincing step, to find Dolores barring the way. Naomer drew back, and made to walk round the opposing girl. Dolores side-stepped, so as to be still in the way, and then—

Well, how could the crowned queen of Nakara be expected to stand that?

Out flashed her brown hand, seizing Dolores by the lapel of her perfectly-tailored coat. Dolores was the bigger girl, but Naomer had it in her just then to swing the president's daughter almost off her feet.

"Yes!" was Naomer's triumphant cry, as she sent the other girl spinning. "And now I finish my walk, eef I want to!"

Either Dolores was stupidly intending to obstruct the dusky one for spite's sake, or else she really had some strange, secret reason for not wanting Naomer to go on and perhaps come to

the cave. Recovering her balance, she made a dash at Naomer, who saucily took to her heels.

By now the chums were quite close, for Tess had packed up her sketching things, and the girls were all intending to take a ramble along under the cliffs. They saw Naomer making Dolores madder than ever by leading her a dance in and out amongst the rocks, and round and round pools of water left by the tide.

"When I catch you—" Dolores was seething. "Ah—bah! When!" was the cheeky response. "Afraid of me, that is what you are! Bah!" "What, me afraid of you?"

And now Naomer stopped. She stood to her ground, even when Dolores whirled round the edge of a pool, with the face of a fury.

"Now then—now then!" Betty and some of the others felt it was high time to cry out. "You two—that's enough!"

"My gwacious, yes, wather! Geals—"

"Oh, look!" Polly exclaimed. "Dolores has seized her! She is hitting her—hitting Naomer!" "Bai Jove, geals!"

"Dolores, stop it!" shouted Betty. They were all rushing forward to intervene, but had several yards to go yet. "Let her alone!"

But it was Naomer's own spirited action that put a sudden end to the bullying she was receiving at the hands of the infuriated South American.

It was been Naomer's ill luck to be overmastered for a moment or so. Now, with a furious struggle, she tore herself free from Dolores. But not to run away—oh, no!

After skipping back a step, Naomer fairly launched herself at the other girl. Two brown hands buffeted against Dolores' shoulders, and backwards she toppled—splish!

Flat as a pancake, into a pool of sea-water—splish!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He, he, he!"

Naomer herself joined in the chums' sudden shrieks of laughter.

And there she capered, doing a Dervish dance of triumph on the sandy margin of the pool, whilst Dolores sat up in six inches of sea-water and waved her arms wildly, raving at the victor.

What Dolores raved was all in Spanish. Even so, Betty & Co. felt quite able to understand every word.

There are times when looks speak louder than words, and Dolores' looks at this moment were—well, pretty eloquent!

The Cave.

"HA, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Dolores—"

"You rather asked for it, didn't you?" came Polly's mirthful comment. "Let's hope that this will teach you to keep your hands off Naomer!"

Dolores floundered to her feet in the pool of sea-water. Dripping from head to ankles, she took such furious strides to reach dry land that fountains of spray flew around.

"Whoa!" Polly chuckled, as she and her chums scattered to avoid a drenching. "Careful, Dolores! Ha, ha, ha!"

The girl need only have looked the least bit inclined to take a share in the laugh that was deservedly against herself, and every one of them, Naomer included, would have instantly become sympathetic. The South American girl's plight was certainly an unhappy one.

But, being the girl she was, it suited her to

retain that venomous look. She was glaring at all the girls, hissing vehement expressions through clenched teeth, and how could such a teaser as Polly be expected to miss such a chance?

"Sorry, Dolores, but we don't know Spanish! Would you mind saying it in English?"

"I have not the words," panted the infuriated girl, "to say how I despise and detest and hate you all!"

"Oh, dear! Ha, ha, ha!"

"All ree-ight; it not matter!" Dolores answered their laughter passionately. "You laugh now—yes! Anuzzer time, perhaps, it will be my turn. You not know what I am—yet!"

"Oh, yes; you say so often!" Naomer retorted.

"You are the daughter of a two-a-penny president!"



DOLORS OF THE HIGH HAND!

"I am a queen, so please get out of my way," said Naomer. "I not get out of your way!" retorted Dolores. "I not let you furdur. All along zere is private! I not care who you are!"

"And you—"

"There, that will do!" Betty said, putting herself, rather courageously, between Naomer and the other girl. "Better go along to the school and get changed, Dolores, instead of staying around to squabble. You are sopping wet."

"And what if I am?"

"Oh, well, if you don't mind, why should we?" Betty had to say to that. "Come along, girls! That's the best we can do."

They promptly walked on, taking Naomer with them, and two or three of them tactfully drew that little imp into talk about safe subjects, to help her to forget that there was a humiliated Dolores to be looked back at and cheeked.

Naomer was eager to explain how this latest rumpus had begun, but not until her standing

enemy had passed out of sight did the chums give her the chance to start on about it.

"She begin by saying I must turn back. I must not go this way. It is private," Naomer remarked at last.

"The seashore private? Ha, ha, ha! What nonsense!" Helen laughed. "Just because her mother happens to rent a cave along with the bungalow up yonder on the cliff-top, is that it?"

Naomer gave it as her opinion that Dolores, being the daughter of an ex-president of San Fernando, considered that all the world belonged to her people. Tess said it might not be quite as bad as that, but it really was a bit of cool cheek to expect them to refrain from "trespassing" along the seashore because Madame Florissa happened to rent one of the caves.

The cave in question was reached a few minutes later. Being one that had been converted into a commodious boathouse by the same man who had built the bungalow on the cliff, its privacy was amply secured.

For the mouth of it was fitted with substantial wooden gates. Often enough had the girls wandered past during a seashore ramble, and had admired the man's enterprise in thus converting the rough cavern into such a serviceable lock-up place. He had not put it up the gates to keep them out, but to guard against visits from doubtful characters. To know that the cave had become private property would always have been enough for the girls of Morcove School, and that was why Betty & Co. felt Dolores' recent remarks to Naomer as such a slur upon all of them.

"Surely Madame Florissa has not thought it necessary to set her daughter on to warning us not to trespass!" Madge said, whilst they were halting outside the locked gates to take a look at the place. "As if we would have gone in to pry around, even if the gates had been open!"

"It is all part of the Florissa person's peculiar disposition!" Polly declared disgustedly. "We never have felt we were wanted within a mile of the bungalow that's just above us now."

"That's true," agreed Betty. "The other night we had an instance of that, hadn't we, Polly? I say, though, do you girls notice something that rather tells a tale up there?"

Saying this, Betty pointed aloft to the face of the perpendicular cliff that rose for perhaps two hundred feet above the entrance to the cave.

"Notice what, Betty?" questioned Helen, when she and the others had gazed critically for a moment or so.

"Look there—and there," the Form captain said, pointing. "You see a whitish mark, as if a flake of the weather-stained stone had been rubbed away?"

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove—"

"Why, it is all the way up," cried Polly, "in a vertical line!"

"As straight as a plummet," Betty rejoined thoughtfully. "In fact, doesn't it look as if something has been lowered by a rope from the edge of the cliff?"

"Direct to the cave down here!" Polly exclaimed.

"Bai Jove, geals!"

"That's what they have been doing, for a cert.," Polly said, "bringing things to the edge of the cliff and lowering them by a rope, to save the fag of bringing them all the way down, by way of their combe-path, to the shore. Cute-dodge, girls!"

"But what could they want to stow away in

the cave?" wondered Tess. "Not our business, I suppose. Only— Well, Paula?"

"Bai Jove! My gwacious! Geals, an inspiwation has seized me! My bwain—"

"Be careful, dear," advised Polly. "Your poor brain—"

"Yes, wather! However, I must tell you," Paula went on, tremendously proud of her idea.

"Geals, I have a swange pwesentiment that there is smuggling going on—what? Madame Florissa is a smuggler!"

"Piffle!" derided Polly unhesitatingly. "The days of smuggling are over, Paula."

"Are they?" demurred Helen. "It does sound incredible, certainly. And yet—"

"Ah, yes!" Polly herself exclaimed, changing her tone. "It is a fact that a mysterious load of something or other arrived at the bungalow after dark one night by lorry."

"Then theah you are!" Paula said proudly. "My theowy is cowwect. I trust you will give me cwedit, geals, for having had a bwiliant stwoke!"

"Well, don't do it too often, dear," Polly advised sweetly, "or you may end in having a stroke of a very different kind."

"Yes, wather!" And Paula, passing a hand across her brow, looked as if she was herself slightly concerned. "We Cweels are not as a wule wenowed for our bwains—no. Beauty, not bwains, is what our family wuns to. Howevah—"

"Then there is the powerful wireless set that has been installed at the bungalow," Betty broke in gravely. "That, too, might be for the purpose of smuggling. Only—"

"Well, what?" some of her chums asked.

"Somehow, one cannot associate Madame Florissa with a game of that sort," Betty said. "She is tremendously rich."

"Yes, wather!"

"Reech!" exclaimed Naomer. "Dolores is never tired of spikking about their reechness!"

"And we know that madame's husband is some big political johnny in San Fernando," Polly added. "So would they—would they be mixed up in a sort of smuggling trade?"

"I wealise," Paula drawled, losing her sense of triumph, "the case pwesents some obstacles to the acceptance of my theowy."

This phrase, a big one even for Paula, drew the smiling comment from Polly:

"She is coming on, isn't she, girls? Obstacles to the acceptance of her theory! Oh, Paula, what a scream you are!"

"Well, what else could a geal say?" protested Paula. "The case bwistles with mystewy, anyhow—what? And I, for one, do not pwopose to gwapple any further with it at present."

They all sauntered on again, doing more thinking than talking. Smuggling! Was that really the solution to all the mystery that had been gathering around Madame Florissa's tenancy of the bungalow on the cliff?

Betty and Polly could not forget—nor could the others, who had been told all about it—that during a night of storm, just recently, madame and her daughter and the servant, Marcilla, had been caught by the tide whilst busy in the cave.

What had they been called upon to do in the cave by night that could not be done by day?

With thoughts like these besetting them, it was inevitable that the girls, when they had left the seashore to go up a steep path, through a ravine, to the top of the cliffs, should give more than one glance to the bungalow.

There it was, the really delightful seaside residence that Madame Florissa had only rented, one would have supposed, for the charm of its position.

A low, snug building, set on one of the highest headlands along this part of the coast, its windows commanded glorious views in all directions. Sunshine and sea breezes it enjoyed to the full. It was, in fact, an ideal holiday home for anyone who liked absolute solitude.

But was it only a holiday haunt for Madame Florissa, or was there indeed some secret purpose in her having rented the place?

The girls only gazed at the bungalow from a short distance away, whilst they padded across the springy turf of the headland, making for the main road. They had no desire to go prying closer to the fence that bounded the couple of acres of land which went with the bungalow. If they had indulged any curiosity, they could have been sure of finding their presence resented by the lady of the place.

And now, suddenly, something occurred to take their minds off the bungalow and its strange tenant for the time being.

Just as the chums gained the winding highway that ran between Morcoove School and Barncombe, they heard the familiar "trurring" of Cora Grandways' motor-cycle. She was coming on at the usual terrific pace, punching away at the horn to give a warning "Trump, tr-rump, trump!" All this term Cora had been mad on motor-cycling. Time after time she had been cautioned by the mistresses about the pace at which she went, but what did she care?

A moment more, and the girls had her flying figure in sight. Round a bend she came, and they knew she was going to fling them a reckless look of pride. She always did, and one of these times—

But that time had already come!

Even as the flyaway girl looked aside at her schoolfellows, something happened to the speeding machine. It swerved violently, and the tune of the engine changed. Cora tried to steady up, and held on for a moment or so longer. Then—crash! She and the motor-cycle were all over the road, and cries of horror at the catastrophe were coming from Betty and the rest.

"Oh, how dreadful! She is hurt!"

"Killed, perhaps! Look—look!"

"Come on! See what we can do!"

For Cora, where she lay, was giving not one sign of life.

Madame is on Her Guard.

IN the gravest state of alarm, Betty and her chums rushed to the victim of the accident.

Prone and still, she was lying upon the highway, her very face in the dust. They gathered around, and first one and then another knelt to take a closer look at her.

At first they were afraid to touch her, lest the slightest movement of this figure that looked so utterly broken might make matters worse.

"She's unconscious—utterly," Betty commented in a whisper at last. "But—"

"Feel her heart," Madge advised. "Well?"

"It is beating," came from Betty. "Shall we move her then, or do nothing, except get help, an ambulance from the school?"

"The way she is lying," Helen remarked in a relieved tone, "does not suggest broken limbs. But what a crash she came!"

"Dreadful!" groaned Paula. "Geals, I knew it would happen sooner or later!"

Two or three of them did their best, together, to turn the senseless girl over very tenderly. Her face was ungrazed, and rapidly the belief gained ground that altogether she had had a most marvellous escape from injuries of any sort.

The girls knew something about first aid, and they were still extremely cautious.

"Bring her round, and then, if she complains of pain; we shall know better," Polly urged suddenly. "And who will run to the school to tell them?"

"I will! And I!" Helen and Tess said together, and they were off in a flash.

"The bungalow is close handy," Betty suddenly remembered. "A glass of water—"

"Yes, wather! I'll wun—"

"Half a sec.!" Polly exclaimed. "Look, she is coming round now!"

"Bai Jove, then pewhaps, geals—"

"Sh!" Betty bent over the victim, whose eyes had flickered open. "Cora, is there any pain?"

"Pain? Yes, all over me," was the moaning complaint. "Oh, my head! Where am I?"

"Lie quiet. They've gone for help."

Some of Betty's companions were now combining to drag the wrecked motor-cycle off the highway. When this was done, they came back.

"What do you think? Shall we move her?" Betty took counsel of them all. "Carry her across to the bungalow?"

"Yes, yes," Cora herself entreated feebly; "I can't lie here. Oh, find me somewhere to lie better than this!"

In the end, they very carefully and tenderly raised her up and carried her on to the grass. Then Polly ran off to get a glass of water at the bungalow.

Darting in at the wicket-gate, she continued at a run along the path to the main door. Her finger stabbed at the bell-press to give an urgent summons.

"Yes, what is it?"

Madame Florissa herself was the questioner, as she opened the door, a moment after the bell had rung.

Polly breathlessly explained. Another girl had met with an accident on the road; help had been sent for. Meanwhile, could a glass of water be provided for the victim?

"She has been unconscious—"

"And you theenk to breeng her here?" madame broke out, with a sudden look of resentment on her handsome face. "I not know that it is possible. We have no room here for hospital cases. But you shall have the water. I get it."

There was no asking Polly to step inside to wait a moment. On the contrary, Madame Florissa seemed to be afraid lest Polly, whilst one's back was turned, would step in unasked. The lady, in fact, did not fetch the water herself, after all.

Instead, she called towards the kitchen, giving some order in Spanish to Marcilla, the elderly woman servant, and then came back to the doorstep.

"Tell me, you," she said to Polly imperiously, "what is ze injury, then?"

"We hope there are no injuries. We cannot find signs of any. But—"

"Ah! So?" the foreign lady exclaimed, knitting her fine, dark brows.

She said no more, and Polly was left to wonder what madame's thought had been. A suspicious one, apparently.



HER OWN FAULT! Splash! Backward into the pool of seawater went Dolores, while Naomer did a sort of Dervish dance of triumph on the margin of the pool. "He, he, he!" she laughed, and even Betty Barton & Co. could not help smiling at the disaster which Dolores had brought upon herself.

Marcilla came forward with the glass of water, and Polly would have taken it from that stern-visaged old soul, but Madame Florissa interposed: "No, I shall carry it! I shall come to see what is all ze matter!"

Then it flashed upon Polly—perhaps this mysterious lady had a suspicion that the accident to Cora Grandways was a mere ruse! A ruse to get her brought into the house, so that those in attendance upon the supposed "victim" could do a bit of prying!

"Well, you are much mistaken, that's all!" Polly thought indignantly, as she accompanied madame to where Cora had been laid out upon the grass. "You'll soon see whether it is a sham accident."

Watching Madame Florissa closely during the next minute or so, Polly felt convinced that all the evidence of a genuine accident was serving to relieve the lady's mind, rather than to distress her. Evidently, then, she really had suspected a ruse.

The glass of water proved a great boon to poor Cora. She revived considerably after she had sipped at it. And then Betty poured some of the water on to a handkerchief, and improved matters by using the wetted bit of cambric as a cold compress.

"Better now, Cora?" one or another of them would ask from time to time, and the girl either nodded or answered:

"Yes, thanks!"

She was soon so much herself again as to remark sulkily:

"You are going to have the laugh of me about this, of course! I know you!"

"Cora—"

"You yourselves were partly to blame, anyhow," she cut short Betty's soothing murmur. "I came to grief because you were taking up all the road."

The chums were not going to start bandying words with her about that. It was grossly untrue, but what was the use of entering into arguments with Cora at the best of times? They could only treat her unjust remark as a satisfactory sign that she would soon be all right.

Madame Florissa seemed to feel there was no need to bother any more. She took back the tumbler from Betty, and moved off in the direction of the bungalow.

"She will be all right now, yes?" was her airy remark, in farewell. "That is good!"

After watching her tall, slim figure until it had passed through the wicket, the girls looked at one another, and some of them grimaced.

"Um!" said Polly. "The sort of thing one might expect from her!"

"Bai Jove, a funny lady—what, geals?"

"Funny!" echoed Madge witheringly.

Nor had they quite got over madame's callous behaviour by the time some Morcovians appeared, with the school ambulances in their midst.

Miss Redgrave had come along with this party of girls, which included Helen and Tess. The youthful mistress satisfied herself that Cora could quite safely be removed before a doctor had seen her, and in five minutes the far from amiable victim was being wheeled towards the school.

The rest of the girls were bidden by Miss Redgrave to go back with her, except Betty and Polly. To them fell the task of getting the motor-cycle to some safe place before dark.

"You had better get it across to the bungalow, girls," Miss Redgrave had advised before leaving the scene of the accident. "Madame Florissa will surely not mind you dumping it at her place. There may be a shed, or somewhere like that."

The Study 12 couple, however, as soon as they were alone, smiled to think how little Miss Redgrave knew the grand lady at the bungalow.

"Can't you see madame wishing us and the motor-cycle at the other end of the world, Betty?" grinned Polly. "The way she looked at me when I turned up for the glass of water, I might have been a burglar!"

"Still," said Betty, "I like her better when she is openly hostile, than when she is all false sweetness. Like that night we had to sleep at the bungalow, with her sweet smiles at supper-time."

"Exactly," agreed Polly. "And all the while you felt she was just mad with rage. Betty dear, if the other girls think madame and her daughter a queer couple, what ought we to think them? That listening-in at three in the morning on the bungalow wireless, Betty!"

"I have not forgotten, Polly," was the subdued answer. "That was a queer bit of business, and no mistake. What can one hear at three in the morning on the wireless, except Morse from ships at sea, or—"

"Or America!" put in Polly softly. "Well, you know what I said we must do, dear, if only we get the chance. Listen-in at that unearthly hour at the school, if—if only we can get to know the wave-length madame is working on."

"A big 'if,' Polly! Meantime—" And Betty returned her attention to the motor-cycle.

It was in a sad state unquestionably, but the two girls found that it was not unwheelable. The damage was to other parts. They never could have wheeled it as far as the school, however, for they could not get the back wheel to run free of the engine.

This meant that it required all their strength to push the crippled machine along, the back wheel being still in gear. Ten minutes had passed before Betty and Polly got to the wicket-gate with the once smart-looking "twin-cylinder."

Time had flown, and the sun was now sinking fast towards the sea's level horizon. With the thought of how soon night would be here again, and of how near they were to the lonely abode where Madame Florissa did her dead-of-night listening-in, Betty and Polly felt exasperated.

If only there could be a chance of finding out to whom it was that Madame Florissa listened-in at three o'clock in the morning! If only one had the means of finding out what wave-length she used! But it was no use wishing.

So the two girls were soon thinking, as Madame Florissa came out to them at the wicket-gate. She chose to be very sweet to them this time. Leave the damaged motor-cycle here for the night? Certainly! They could wheel it to the shed that stood near the back door. But madame did not invite them indoors.

It was tantalising to be so near and yet so far, as it were. On the chance of getting left alone for a minute in the room that held the big valve set, Betty and Polly had been learning all they could about wireless. Who knows, they might—yes, they might have made some lucky discovery if only there had been a chance! But no, it was not to be!

Madame Florissa merely directed them to the shed, then hurried within doors again. Marcilla was not in evidence, and so the two girls came alone with the damaged motor-cycle to the shed.

The sun's level rays shone into the lumbered up outbuildings when Polly set the door wide open. She and Betty were manoeuvring the heavy cycle in under cover, when simultaneously they held still, gazing at a coil of pliable steel wire.

Its highly polished strands were gleaming in the light of the setting sun, and Polly whispered: "You can guess what use that has been put to, Betty?"

"Yes," was the equally subdued answer. "For lowering things over the edge of the cliff, down to the cave. And—look, Polly, look!"

It was a spade that Betty was pointing at now. The blade of it shone like silver in the sun's last rays, and not a doubt had either girl as to how the steel had been brought to such a burnished stage.

The spade had been used, and recently, too, for a lot of digging in dry sand.

"And the floor of that cave would be all sand, as we know is the case with the other caverns," Polly ruminated guardedly. "Betty, whatever it is they have lowered into that private cave of theirs—"

"They have buried it at once—yes," Betty nodded, sharing her chum's look of suppressed excitement. "Buried it in the sand. And why, Polly—why?"

"Ah, I wonder!" murmured Polly. "Why?"

At Dead of Night.

THAT night, Betty was suddenly roused out of deep sleep by a gentle shaking of one shoulder, whilst a familiar voice whispered in her ear:

"Sh! Don't make any noise, Betty! Quiet, dear!"

It was Polly who stood there at the Form captain's bedside, her night-gowned figure looking quite spectral in the moonlight that was flooding into the dormitory.

"Sh!" "What's the matter then?" Betty whispered back, sitting up very quickly, and yet without a sound save the cautious voicing of that question.

Polly's lips went to one of the other girl's ears again.

"Dolores—she has got up and gone downstairs. Her getting up must have awakened me, I suppose. She doesn't know that I woke up, though."

"But—goodness," breathed Betty astoundedly, "has she gone off to her mother's bungalow, then?"

Polly instantly shook her head. "Can't be intending to leave the schoolhouse, Betty; she is only in a dressing-gown."

"How long gone, Polly?" "Only a minute—hardly that. I say, you didn't mind my waking you? I felt—well, perhaps there is something in this."

"There must be," Betty averred, and next moment she was out of bed. "We'll hurry down after her, Polly!"

"That's the idea!" In a flash they had their dressing-gowns on and were slipping stockinged feet into felt slippers. Their room-mates still slumbered on, never dreaming of what was taking place at this hour of the night.

And what hour was it? The strange thrill it gave Betty and Polly to hear, all at once, the school chimes sounding bong—bong—bong! Three o'clock in the morning!



THE TRESPASSERS! Suddenly the room door was opened and, flashing her torch before her, Dolores entered in an obvious panic. "Come away—quick!" she cried to her mother. "There is somebody coming. We shall be caught!"

The very hour, strangely enough, at which Madame Florissa was known to have listened-in on her wireless at the bungalow!

Was it something to do with listening-in, then, that had made Dolores Florissa get up and go off downstairs?

So sure were the two girls, instantly, that it was so, they felt as if they had been told where to seek Dolores at this moment. In the school's wireless-room!

Silently, stealthily, downstairs they went, without wasting a moment to see if by chance Dolores had only gone to her study. The wireless-room!—that was the place to seek her, without a doubt. And this sense of absolute conviction very nearly caused Betty and Polly to blunder upon Dolores in the most disastrous manner.

They had gone down to the ground floor, and were intending to pass direct to a certain passage that led to the wireless-room, when each stopped dead and gripped the other's arm.

Dolores was not anywhere near the wireless-room! She was quite close at hand in another passage, but what she was doing it was impossible to guess. But Betty and Polly realised that they had very nearly overtaken her.

Still as statues the two girls held themselves, feeling all too close to Dolores to be safe from discovery, and yet afraid to turn back.

Suddenly, a tell-tale sound came upon the deep silence of the dark schoolhouse. A door-bolt had been drawn back.

She was going out then, after all, even though she had only been in her dressing-gown when she left the dormitory!

No; that was not the case, either. Whispering was what the chums now heard, and then they knew!

"My word," Polly breathed into Betty's ear, "she has let her mother into the house!"

Betty nodded. She was going to whisper a bewilderment: "Why?" But suddenly a thought came that made her pluck Polly by the arm.

"Quick, come on, Polly. The wireless-room—quick!"

"You mean—"

Betty, however, would not stay there to answer. She fluttered round into the passage that led to the wireless-room, and, of course, Polly went with her, just as quickly and noiselessly.

Into this spacious room they darted, where half a hundred girls at a time could gather to enjoy the loud speaker, when concerts or other interesting programmes were being broadcast.

The school authorities had spared no expense in providing a receiving set suitable for such a big establishment. It was one of those big valve sets which will "get" America. Only a question of waiting up until the small hours to be right with American time! And it was three o'clock in the morning now.

"Don't you see," Betty exclaimed softly, the instant she and Polly were inside the wireless-room with the door closed behind them, "madame has got her daughter to let her in, so that the school's outfit can be used to-night. They'll be here in a jiffy!"

"Phew! The set at the bungalow has gone wrong, perhaps?"

"Must have. But where to hide, Polly—that's the question?"

Polly pointed excitedly.

"That cupboard—it will take us both, easily!"

Nor was it more than five seconds later that the cupboard held them both. There they were,

huddled together behind double doors that they were pulling shut in front of themselves.

Not a moment too soon, either.

Already the mother and daughter had come stealing into the room, as some very stealthy footfalls evidenced. Betty and Polly rather expected to see lines of light break out in front of them, as either a room-lamp or a pocket-torch was switched on, but for the moment apparently the mysterious couple were going to rely upon the moon to give them sufficient light.

The very faintest of whispering now ensued between mother and daughter. It was all in Spanish, but the hidden girls could tell that the couple were in the greatest state of guilty uneasiness. Their nerves were on edge, and the least sound from the cupboard would have caused a sudden alarmed hushing of those stealthy voices.

The chums, however, were scarcely breathing. It was quite painful, keeping so awfully still, but it was worth it!

Madame Florissa must have whispered her daughter to go outside and remain on the alert, in case of danger, for Dolores stole back to the door and vanished. All this the chums divined from what they heard. They could see nothing at present, although they hoped that presently, when madame had the headphones on, it would be safe to open the cupboard doors a mere half-inch or so to peer out.

At present she had to adapt the wireless set to her requirements. The chums could imagine her going to the cabinet, opening it, and then connecting one of the pairs of headphones that could be used at any time instead of the loud speaker.

During the next minute or so the faintest of sounds came to the listening girls, telling them that madame was manipulating the valve set with a practised hand.

Then suddenly they heard her exclaim to herself, in a tone no louder than a sigh:

"Ah! SF! SF!"

Unmistakably it was a gratified exclamation now that she had picked up the wanted wave.

Polly nudged Betty, and Betty nudged back. In that mute way one excited girl was saying to the other:

"SF—that is something to go upon. SF—San Fernando!"

Heard on the Wireless.

THERE had been nothing more for the straining ears of Betty and Polly to hear—not a sound of any sort—for at least two minutes, when suddenly they detected a faint click.

Then a line of light revealed the vertical chink between the closed cupboard doors. Madams must have clicked on a torch that she had brought with her.

Polly happened to be nearer than Betty to the chink of light. By moving her head but a few inches, she brought the light glimmering upon her face. In other words she was doing her best to get a peep at what was going on.

At first she was baffled. By giving one of the cupboard doors the merest touch, however, she obtained an aperture wide enough to see out of effectively. And what did Polly's first glimpse afford her?

She saw Madame Florissa, with headphones affixed to her head, seated in front of the wireless cabinet, notebook on knee.

Once again, at this significant time of three in the morning, the mother of Dolores was jotting down every word to which she was listening-in.

For what reason? Why this imperative neces-

sity of getting a certain wireless message that was only sent out at this significant hour?

Rather than miss the message—because, as was obviously the case, the installation at the bungalow was out of order—Madame Florissa had been compelled to enlist her daughter's aid—had been compelled to enter Morcove School in the dead of night!

Surely there was something in all this more than mysterious? It was sinister!

Suddenly, by the ray of light coming from the torch, Polly saw the room door flash open. Dolores stood revealed, gesturing in the most panicky way to her mother.

"Come away—quick! Someone is coming! Out of this!" the girl's agitated signs as good as said. "We shall be caught!"

The panicky alarm took hold of Madame Florissa. She sprang up, and it was a marvel how she did so without making a noise.

She snatched off the headphones with one hand, catching up and switching out the torch. She kept hold of the suddenly closed notebook. And now Polly's heart beat faster than ever. Madame was looking at the cupboard, as if wondering if she could hide in it.

But Dolores beckoned wildly—"No, not there; come away!"—and instantly the alarmed mother let the girl's will prevail. She flashed across to Dolores at the doorway, and next moment both were gone, and the door was drawn shut behind them.

Then, whatever the consequences might be as regards herself and Betty, Polly pushed the cupboard doors wide open and boldly stepped out into the moonlit room.

Betty followed, shrewdly guessing what had happened that only her chum had witnessed.

"Who is it, Polly? One of the mistresses?" she whispered.

"I don't know, and I don't care!"

With that, Polly caught up the headphones which Madame had been using only a second or so ago. The instrument was still set for the particular wave that Madame Florissa had been getting. Polly was an attentive figure all at once in the moonlight, listening-in!

Betty trod across to the door, listened, and came back. She had heard nothing. Polly made an imploring gesture for pencil and paper.

"Quick—quick!" she fumed. "Oh, I want to write!"

All Betty could do at such short notice was to snatch up a printed book and lay it in Polly's lap as that girl sat down. There was a pencil ready to hand on a table near the instrument. Polly flung the book open at the fly-leaf, grabbed the pencil from Betty, and began the jotting down.

Again Betty nipped back to the closed door. She could now hear the faintest sounds of someone trailing about the house, but not a voice could be heard.

Evidently Dolores and her mother had dodged whoever it was had come down to prowling around with the belief that all was not as it should be.

Then Betty realised that there was a key in the lock. She softly turned it.

Polly, even whilst she was engaged with the exciting task of jotting down, saw what Betty had done, and nodded approval. They were going to carry on for as long as they could, be the consequences what they might!

What sort of a message was the girl taking down, however? That was the wondering thought that made Betty turn away from the locked door. She was going to steal across the room and peer

over Polly's shoulder, to scan the moonlit fly-leaf of the book.

Only a couple of returning steps had Betty taken, however, when she suddenly noticed a scrap of paper lying upon the floor. It had not been there when she and Polly first stole into the wireless-room. Boldly it was showing up now upon the carpet, in the full light of the moonbeams.

She stooped and picked it up. A scrap of paper that might have been carried between the pages of Madame's notebook, and so perhaps it had fluttered free, unnoticed by the woman, when she made her panicky flight.

And so it was—a small square of stout paper, with symbols on it. A code!

Betty's brain whirled.

Luck! Was there ever such luck? She had in her hands the key of some secret code, whilst Polly at this very moment was listening-in!

The Form captain could hardly contain her excitement. She darted close to her chum and brandished the paper.

"Code—key to it!"

"What? Oh, how splendid! This is Morse, Betty. I can transcribe all right, but it makes a lot of nonsense. Still—"

"We are all right now."

"Surely! Even if the message comes out in Spanish, we—"

"Sh!"

Betty signed to her chum.

The outer handle of the door had been tried.

After a moment the locked door was rattled.

"Who is in there?" the voice of Miss Redgrave demanded with quiet sternness.

Should they answer? They wanted to reply, and yet they were reluctant to act too impulsively. Before they could decide, Miss Redgrave could be heard going away.

"She'll fetch Miss Somerfield out of bed now, for a cert," Betty said, more to herself than to her occupied chum. "And then—"

"Finished!" Polly suddenly breathed, with conviction, and she whipped off the headphones. "Half a sec, though!"

So saying, she gave a very close scrutiny to the instrument, memorising its exact setting at this moment, so that she could adjust it for the same wave-length another time.

Then, smuggling the book in the folds of her dressing-gown, she faced Betty with an expression of mingled excitement, amusement, and triumph.

"Well? Back to bed, I suppose!"

"If we can—yes!" was Betty's immediate decision. "But I shouldn't be surprised if the whole place is on the point of being awakened. We'll try, though."

As cautiously as ever, they padded across to the door, and Betty silently turned back the key. Then they listened.

Not a sound to be heard from anywhere on the ground floor. But very faintly from overhead came a murmur of voices.

Miss Redgrave evidently had gone up to the headmistress, and now those two were debating matters in guarded tones.

Polly suddenly nudged Betty in a roguish way, and nodded towards the foot of the secondary staircase, which was at the end of the very passage on to which the wireless-room opened.

"We'll do it yet, Betty."

"All the better if we can, perhaps," whispered back the other girl, hurrying with Polly towards the secondary staircase, "and leave all the explanations until the morning."

Even if they evaded Miss Somerfield and Miss Redgrave by slipping back to the dormitory by means of the side staircase, what about Dolores?

Had she herself got back to the dormitory by now, after succeeding in letting her mother out of the house and bolting up behind that fugitive figure?

There had been no sounds to suggest that Dolores had been caught downstairs, and this left the chums quite prepared to find Dolores in the dormitory, awaiting them, for she would have been certain to notice their empty beds. Never mind! Let the girl say or think what she liked, she was not to know that they had the code, and had also taken down some portion of a message.

The dormitory at last, and now—was she here, awaiting them in a state of furious rage?

No. Betty and Polly, the instant they passed into the moonlit room, did a sudden caper of delight. They had got back in advance of her. Neither she nor anybody else was out of bed, and three beds were still empty.

Two of those beds had their rightful occupants before another five seconds had sped. And under that pillow upon which rested the head of Polly Linton there reposed a certain book on whose fly-leaf certain nonsensical symbols were jotted down.

A minute later the dormitory door silently opened again, and someone came creeping in. Dolores Florissa!

Two girls who were pretending to be fast asleep watched that stealthy figure with their half-closed eyes. Anxiously she peered this way and that, and then let her breath go freely in a big sigh of relief. It was all right—so, at any rate, she was saying to herself!

Quickly, after that, she dived back into her own bed and drew the coverings up to her ears. She might have been fast asleep when, five minutes later, the door again opened.

So might Betty and Polly—but they were not!

They saw Miss Redgrave and the headmistress standing together, just inside the dormitory, to see that everything was as it should be. They saw the two dressing-gowned figures depart at last as quietly as they had come. And there in their respective beds Betty Barton and Polly Linton lay suppressing their laughter.

Naomer Comes in Handy.

UP to Study 12 rushed Betty and Polly, as soon as breakfast was over; next morning.

"Now!" said the more boisterous of the two inseparables, sending the door shut with a slam. She came to the table to pull open a drawer and take out a certain book.

"First of all, Betty darling—the code! Your scrap of paper—"

"Here we are!" was the exuberant response. "But how it can be a code, after all, Polly, puzzles me!"

"Codes are meant to puzzle people!" was Polly's smiling comment. "My word, though," and she looked glum, "it does seem so—so feeble!"

"That's the trouble," grimaced Betty. "If we were in for a lot of mysterious signs and things, it might drive us crazy, but at least we would be certain that it must be a code. This might be nothing—and yet, Polly, I'm sure it fell out of Madame Florissa's notebook."

"Let's get down to it," proposed Polly; and she seated herself at the table and laid the scrap of paper in front of herself. Betty stood by, frowning in a puzzled way as she, too, gazed at what the paper held.

In one line were written out the letters of the English alphabet, thus:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ

Nor was there much else besides; only another line, giving the alphabet in reversed form:

ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFEDCBA.

"Um," Polly exclaimed, after a minute, "I learned to say all this—both ways, yes—ages ago! Well, there is a cypher in it—a code. All the harder, perhaps, for looking so bald!"

"No!" Betty suddenly cried out excitedly. "Oh, I see—I see! Polly—"

"Well?"

"Don't you see?" rushed on Betty. "One line of letters is exactly under the other. 'A' on the top line is over 'Z,' and so on."

"Yes!"

"Then supposing each underneath letter is the code one for the letter just above it?"

"That is to say, they are using a reversed alphabet?—Hooray, I believe you've got it, Betty! Z, on the wireless, stands for A; Y stands for B, and so on to the finish! Where's the book with my jottings, anyhow?"

As she took hold of the book and laid it open at the fly-leaf, Polly remarked jubilantly:

"What a lucky thing we girls once learned Morse, as Girl Guides. It came through slowly, too, last night, so I was all right."

"I don't suppose madame could transcribe very fast, and the person transmitting would be aware of that."

Then there was deep silence, whilst Polly got busy with a pencil. She was still absorbed in the exciting task, with Betty standing by and checking the penillings, when the door opened.

"Weal, geals—"

"Whoa! You keep quiet. Over there, you!" Polly said, jerking her pencil in the direction of the best armchair. "Not a word, or out you go!"

"Bai Jove! Howevah, all I weally came for was a bit of peace and quietness," Paula said, seating herself. Under her breath, so as not to disturb the Study 12 couple, she said to herself: "Dweadful life! Dweadful!"

Polly suddenly looked up at Betty.

"How do you think it looks, Betty? Might it be a message, do you think, in some foreign—"

"In Spanish—yes, surely," was the Form captain's enthusiastic answer. "You have certainly spelt out something that looks like that."

"Then the next thing is—Naomer," Polly said excitedly. "Paula, you run and fetch Naomer—quick, please!"

"But, my gwacious, I have just been driven out of that study!" lamented Paula. "It is perfectly dweadful alweady, this morning. Doloves is in a most dweadful wage!"

Polly chuckled.

"In a paddy, is she? Don't wonder, do you, Betty? But we must get Naomer to— Hallo! Hooray! Come in, dear!"

For the door had flashed open, and the dusky scholar of the Fourth Form stood revealed.

"Ah, bah, that Dolores!" Naomer burst out, slamming the door behind her. "She ees like zis, zis morning!" The speaker illustrated her meaning by gnashing her teeth and glaring. "She is ready to tear me by ze hair! But am I afraid?"

"No," said Polly promptly. "Certainly not. Perish the thought! You are a queen, Naomer!"

"Yes, and I love you!"

"And you know Spanish, don't you?" Polly came to the point in an off-hand way, getting up from the table. "If I wrote out some words in Spanish, Naomer darling—"

"I read them, oo yes, queek and easy!"

"Then, dear, perhaps you will tell us what— But, now, who is this?" Polly broke off, with a sigh, as the door again opened.

Madge and Tess came in, bringing Helen with them.

"We are rather wondering," said Madge, in explanation of this early morning call, "what you girls think of the rumour that is going round the school?"

"Rumour?" said Betty and Polly.

"Wumour, bai Jove?"

"Then you haven't heard? It can only have started in the last minute or so, or we would have got it during brekker," said Tess affably. "Some girl or other has been told that Miss Somerfield went downstairs in the night, and found evidence

say— But where did you get thees? Why you look so strange?"

"Read it, Naomer, read it!" groaned the Study 12 couple frantically. "We know we look excited. It is enough to make us."

"Bai Jove, geals—"

"Quiet!" Polly silenced Paula, who simply curled up in the armchair in a terrified way. "Now, Naomer, darling, whatever it says, do—do read it!"

"In English, then, which you say I spik so beautiful, not like Dolores—"

"No, dear."

"That daughter of a two-a-penny president—"

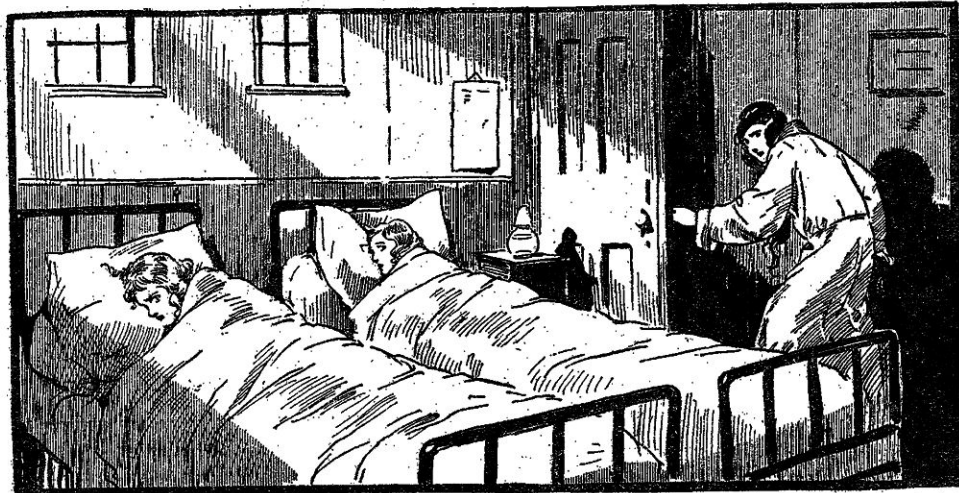
"Yes, dear! But do—"

"All right; I am reading him," pouted Naomer, and she returned her gaze to the paper. "Listen, then! 'Green light every two minutes—'"

"Bai Jove!"

"Sh! What else, Naomer?"

"'Thirteenth,'" that girl read on, in a wonder-



THE PROWLER RETURNS! The dormitory door opened silently, and Dolores Florissa came creeping in. Betty and Polly, who were pretending to be fast asleep, watched that stealthy figure with half-closed eyes. But Dolores did not know that. She was congratulating herself that her absence had not been noticed.

of someone's having been in the wireless-room to listen-in!"

"Gweat goodness, geals! What for?"

"For America, it's supposed—and for fun!" Helen answered lightly. "Miss Somerfield won't like that sort of thing, of course, and we may hear more about it yet. Wonder who it was!"

"Um!" said Polly. "Well, one question at a time. Naomer, you were going to say what you make of this, in your beautiful English, dear."

Thus appealed to, Naomer joyously looked at the sheet of paper which had been handed to her, and scanned the writing.

"Ooo!" she instantly exclaimed, with a comprehending nod and smile. "Yes, I read him. He is Spanish, but—"

"But in English, Naomer, darling—in English!" Betty and Polly clamoured excitedly. "Well?"

"He say—he say— Ha, ha, ha! But eet is so funny! I not understand!"

"Oh, Naomer, never mind! Read—read!" Polly implored, looking ready to tear her own hair.

"Ver' well, then I shall read him—yes! He

ing tone, whilst the others now held their breath, so intently were they paying heed, "or first fine night after."

"Yes, yes? What else?"

"But I not understand."

"Naomer, darling," Betty said tremulously, "we none of us understand yet. But we hope to in the end. Read the rest, dear."

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove, geals—"

"There is no much more," Naomer resumed, shrugging. "He only say, 'Success certain if you do your part.' That is all."

"Thank you, darling! You shall have a kiss for that!" Polly said, and bestowed it with great heartiness. "Hurrah!"

"Bai Jove, geals! I mean to say—"

"Hooray!" the madcap cheered again softly, at the same time doing a pas-seul between the table and the door. "What do you think of it, Betty?"

"I am wondering what these girls think of the pair of us," said the Form captain, observing the blank amazement in the faces of Paula, Madge,

Helen and Tess, not to mention Naomer's mystified expression. "You heard what was read out, girls?"

"Yes, wather!"

"And did it seem a lot of nonsense?"

"Yes, wather! At least—"

"No!" the others said in one breath. "Treating it as part of a message—only part of one—"

"And that is just what it is!" Polly broke out, nodding.

"Then you can see some sense in it," came from Helen. "What have you two girls in this den been picking up, on your crystal set, from some ship at sea?"

"Ship at sea!" chuckled Polly. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, that about a green light every two minutes," pleaded Helen, "surely that applies to some shipping business?"

"And that word 'Thirteenth,' it means a date when a ship may be expected, surely?" reasoned Tess. "I suppose this sort of wirelessing is going on all day and all night. But 'First fine night after,' that sounds a bit romantic."

"Ah!" said Polly, and she winked at Betty. "Now you are getting a bit nearer, you girls. But you are still a long way off it."

"Bai Jove, why don't you relieve our minds, you two," Paula complained, in her amiable way, "instead of subjecting our brains to such a tewwific stwain—what?"

"I not understand a leetle beet," Naomer confessed. "Bet ees seelly. I think you pull my leg—yes!"

Then Polly went to the study door, opened it, and looked out, to make sure that the coast was clear. She drew in her head, and closed the door again, with every appearance of being satisfied.

"The bell is going for school," she said quickly, "but we have still one minute. Girls, now listen. Betty will tell you—"

"The green light every two minutes is to be watched for by Madame Florissa!"

"By Madame Florissa!"

"Yes, girls, and there is no need to say on which night, either. The thirteenth—it can mean nothing else but the thirteenth of this month."

"Gweat goodness!"

"Or the first fine night after," Polly took up the talk softly. "There you have the meaning of the message, as Betty and I reckon."

"But—"

"Yes, wather! Geals, geals—"

"How do you know all this?" Helen questioned breathlessly. "How do you know that Madame Florissa is the person concerned?"

"Come to that," exclaimed Tess astoundedly, "how did you get the message?"

Then Polly, with a laughing look at Betty, answered serenely:

"How do we know? How did the message come into our hands? Because, girls, we were in the wireless-room last night—oh, and with the best of excuses, too! And whilst I listened in Betty had the luck to find the code, and there you are! And now let's all go down to school, and talk about it later."

She moved towards the door, but suddenly whisked about to voice one last word.

"And remember, all of you—Naomer, you included—not a word, not a single syllable, about all this to Dolores, or you will simply spoil everything!"

(END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

It is a great discovery indeed which Betty & Co. have made, and it is to lead them into adventures of which, as yet, they dream nothing. You must not miss next week's long complete tale, which is entitled: "The Mystery Ship of Morcove!"



COOKERY HINTS

Rhubarb Tartlets, Delicious Custard.

YESTERDAY morning Miss Grill gave us a special lesson on cooking rhubarb.

Rhubarb, in addition to being a most delicious fruit, is a complexion beautifier, and the girl who partakes, in the spring, of rhubarb dishes will quickly notice an improvement in her looks.

Rhubarb Tartlets.

Required: Short paste, rhubarb, brown sugar, a few strips of lemon-rind, and cold water.

For the short pastry we used four ounces of flour, two ounces of margarine, half a teaspoonful of baking-powder, and cold water for mixing.

For a richer pastry more fat can be used, but very rich pastry is not so easily digested as a plainer one.

Preparing the Rhubarb.

Whilst I was making the pastry, May prepared the rhubarb. She cut the ends and green leaves from the fruit, washed the fruit in cold water, and then cut it in small portions about an inch in length.

She next put four ounces of brown sugar and one gill of cold water in a saucepan, and dissolved the sugar over a slow heat, stirring the mixture occasionally. The fruit was now put in the pan, a few strips of lemon-rind added, and then simmered until the fruit was soft, but not broken.

Meanwhile, I had lined some patty pans with the paste, pricked the bottoms of the tartlets with a fork, and then baked them in a moderate oven until crisp. The tartlets were removed from the tins and filled with the rhubarb in the following way.

May carefully removed the rhubarb from the syrup—without breaking the fruit—and covered the bottoms of the tartlets with it.

Then she re-boiled the syrup until it thickened and poured a few spoonfuls into each tartlet. The lemon-rind was removed from the syrup, being used for flavouring purposes only.

Delicious Boiled Custard.

This is a delicious custard for serving with either rhubarb tarts or stewed rhubarb.

Required: Half a pint of milk, one egg, one ounce of white sugar, and a few drops of vanilla flavouring.

Put the sugar and milk in a saucepan and stir them over a slow heat until the sugar is dissolved and the milk hot, but not near boiling. Beat the egg and add it to the milk, with a few drops of vanilla. Pour back into the saucepan and allow to boil. Turn into dish and allow to cool.