

MAGNIFICENT FREE GIFT GIVEN AWAY INSIDE!

# The Schoolgirl's Own 2<sup>d</sup>



**GIVEN FREE**

*With This Issue*

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*S lovely  
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(This photo is made to stand up)*

**THE GIRLS SHE THOUGHT WERE FRIENDS!**  
A dramatic incident from the grand long complete Morecove story inside.

A Magnificent Long Complete Story of the Chums of Morcove School.



# POLLY LINTON'S DISCOVERY.



By MARJORIE STANTON.

Homeless, their old school in the hands of foreigners, the Morcove girls, are in a sorry plight. Then Lady Evelyn comes along, and with her coming the finger of Fortune, which has been so much against the Morcovians, swings round in their favour.

### Someone to the Rescue.

"FIVE o'clock in the morning! It will soon be light now, thank goodness!"

"And then perhaps we shall know where we are!"

"Yes, wather, geals! Bai Jove, I vewy much doubt if Miss Somerfield herself knows wheah we are at present! Oh, deah, what a night!"

"Weary and worn and sad!" some girl said with exaggerated dolefulness, and then some dry straw rustled as she flopped down upon it. "A memorable experience, Paula darling!"

"Memorable expewience, bai Jove!" was the groaning response from Morcove's fastidious Fourth-Former. "A night to wecollect, Polly deah, with feelings of howwow. I wish I could find my comb!"

There was some chuckling at that, emanating from a good few of this crowd of schoolgirls whom the coming dawn found sheltering in a great old barn.

"You feel untidy, do you, Paula?" jested Polly Linton.

"Untidy! I shall nevah get to wights again," lamented Paula Creel. "Simply dweadful! And haow about bweakfast? Is there going to be any bweakfast, geals?"

"Why, that reminds me!" exclaimed Polly, and the straw rustled again as she sat up sharply. "I packed a bit of cake before we cleared out of Sawnton House in the middle of the night. Gather round, my hearties! Someone blow the bugle. Cake—plum cake! If I can only find it!" the mischief one added rather anxiously.

As yet it was still dark in the barn—or it would have been, but for a glimmer of lantern light here and there.

Wherever the feeble rays of the few lanterns lit up the strange scene they revealed girlish figures huddled together beneath the doubtful shelter of the old tiled roof, in different groups and clusters.

Straw was all over the place. Girls who had fallen to sleep after the weary tramping that had followed the midnight flight from Sawnton House

were fast asleep on straw. Other girls were lolling about in the straw as they communed in tired tones. Straw rustled about the feet of any who got up to go to the opening in the sliding doors of the enormous barn to look for the first streaks of dawn.

Betty Barton and her chums of Study 12 had found a corner for themselves, close by the doorway. Here it was that Polly Linton now knelt, feeling about for the plum cake that she had dropped carelessly awhile back—in the straw!

Here, too, lay little Naomer Nakara, curled up like a pretty dormouse in her own little nest of straw. She was fast asleep, and they were not going to awaken her. Let those who had been lucky enough to get to sleep, sleep on!

So it was a very subdued "Hurrah!" that Polly Linton gave, as she at last rummaged out the cake in its burst paper wrappings.

"Yes, this is it," she declared, after a rather dubious look at the pulverised cake by the dim lantern light. "It won't exactly need cutting up, girls. If you can see to pick up the crumbs—well, go ahead!"

With that she set down the ragged wrappings that held the broken cake. It is safe to say that if there had been only half a dozen currents, Polly would have insisted upon sharing them round.

"I'm not a bit hungry," Madge Minden said, in her usual staid tone. "Thanks all the same, Polly darling."

"Oh, but you must be, Madge! Excuse fingers!" laughed Polly, and next second she had conveyed one small fragment to Madge's lips. "Open your mouth and shut your eyes! Ha, ha, ha, I can't help laughing!"

"It's a treat to hear you laughing, Polly deah," came from Paula. "My spiwits will wequire a cup of tea to westore them. Tea, girls! Oh, the relief it would be—a nice fwesh, stwong bwew—"

"Silence!" Helen implored, in a heavy voice. "Who dares speak of tea at a time like this? I say, it is getting light, girls!"

"Yes, wather! Hooway, then!" Paula said, helping herself, along with the half-dozen others, to the cake crumbs. "Healp will soon be at hand!"

"That's Naomer's share, in case she wakes before any rations roll up," Polly said, screwing up a few bits of cake in a bit of paper. "Poor little Naomer, she stuck it well. That midnight alarm, when we thought Sawnton House was going to fall about our ears—"

"And then the march out—"

"Yes, wather, geals! Miles and miles and miles, bai Jove!"

"Think so, Paula?" smiled Betty. "You'd be surprised if I said I don't believe we have come more than four miles in all?"

"Surpvised, hai Jove! Four miles, Betty? Impossible!"

"Yet Betty must be right," said Tess Trelawney, "For we did not go a very long way after we tramped past the gates of Morcove School. This barn we are in—I have an idea that it is the one that—"

There was a sudden interruption.

The young lady who was the Fourth Form's popular mistress had come picking her way amongst all the girls who were lying or squatting around, to where Betty & Co. were grouped together.

"Morning, girls!" she greeted them, with a sort of desperate cheerfulness. "I won't ask you if you have had a good night. But you are still all alive, anyhow!"

"Going strong, Miss Redgrave," Polly said, with all that jollity which never succumbed even to the most trying conditions. "Have some—er—cake?"

"Oh, you've found something to eat, have you?" the mistress commented delightedly, whilst she declined to make one more mouth for the slender fare. "I was just going to tell you—Miss Somerfield hopes to get some tea made at the farmhouse as soon as it gets lighter."

Paula gave an anticipatory smack of the lips.

"Ah, tea! Meantime, Miss Wedgware, you haven't a comb and miwwow? I feel such a weck, you know! If only I could bwush my hair once again before I pewish!"

"Slow music," grinned Polly. "If I had a comb I'd give you some comb-and-paper music right enough. Miss Redgrave, can you tell us what's going to happen, please?"

"Oh, don't ask me!" was the helpless answer. "We really are in a desperate plight now. You may trust Miss Somerfield to make immediate arrangements for you to be taken in somewhere."

"Not at Morcove School, I hope?" Betty spoke up very gravely. "Better anything—I still say it!—than that we should give in to those hateful foreigners, the Lupinas!"

"Hear, hear!" Polly said heartily, whilst others murmured to the same effect. "It would be just too awful to give them the crow over us. So let's hope that Miss Somerfield, whatever she does, will not—"

"Hooway, I've found my comb!" was Paula's sudden joyful interruption. "That's bettah, bai Jove!"

"Oh, of course, that's everything!" Polly twitted the fastidious one. "No need to worry now. Paula's found her comb!"

"Yes, wather, haw, haw, haw! But, geals, I haven't found a miwwow, pway remember!"

"Then it's probably lying about in the straw,

broken. Seven years' bad luck for you, Paula darling!"

"My gracious, don't talk such wubbish! I'm quite unlucky enough as it is, geals. The weally tewwible life I am led at times— And now here's Naomer waking up!"

"Good-morning, Naomer!" they gaily greeted the royal scholar, who was their own special pet. "You—"

"Naomer deah, you haven't a miwwow by any chance? No, of course not," sighed Paula, busy combing away at her hair. "My usual luck again!"

"Good-morning, everybodies!" came from dusky Naomer, along with a broad smile that revealed two rows of very fine teeth. "No school this morning—no!"

"That's a blessing, anyhow!" declared Polly. "Oh, we are all right—keeping the flag flying, anyhow! We said we would not go back to Morcove School, even though the roof fell in at Sawnton House, and—"

"And it jolly well did fall in last night, apparently!" was Betty's laughing rejoinder. "Whilst that gale was raging, the whole ramshackle house looked like tumbling down. Feel all right, Naomer?"

"Spiffink, I zank you!" her Serene Highness answered blithely. "He, he, he, this is what we call ze jape, yes?"

"Ask Paula what she calls it!" chuckled Polly. "But I am going outside to have a look round now that it is—"

Polly broke off there. Not only was she suddenly struck to silence; in the act of getting up from the straw she kept quite still, peering excitedly.

Her chums, wondering what this meant, peered in the same direction towards the wide opening formed by the sliding doors of the barn.

There, in the ghostly light of early dawn, was a figure that did not belong to the hapless army of homeless schoolgirls. It was neither scholar nor mistress whom Betty & Co. could see so dimly. A girl it was—rather older than Morcove's oldest scholar, yet younger than the youngest mistress. Harder than ever the chums gazed, and then—

"Why—"

"Good gracious!"

"Bai Jove—"

"Oh, I say—"

"Lady Evelyn!" the astounded chums began to cry out in chorus. "Lady Evelyn, from Barncombe Castle!"

For a moment she had been standing uncertainly just inside the barn entrance. Now that her name had been called out, she came with a quick and dainty step towards the chums.

She was close to them, with hands outstretched in a passionate manner, whilst the girls were still struggling up from the straw.

"Lady Evelyn! Oh—"

"Betty—Polly—all of you!" was her heartfelt exclamation. "Fancy you poor things having to undergo all this!"

"But fancy your being here like this!" was Polly's gasping retort. "Where—how—when— who told you, Lady Evelyn?"

"Oh, it's just too sad for anything to see you!" the newcomer spoke on in her deep compassion, giving her hand first to one and then another. "Naomer—poor little Naomer! Never mind—"

"Oh, I not mind—I love it! Eet is a good jape, this—yes?"

"Bravo, if you can say so," young Lady Evelyn

commented, stroking a hand over Naomer's glossy dark hair. "But it should never have happened; and—oh, how glad I am to be here—to be able to do something for you!"

"Bai Jove!" beamed Paula, brightening up still more. "That's bettah! Lady Evelyn—"

"I'll tell you—it won't take a moment," she continued eagerly. "Last evening I returned from town to Barncombe Castle. My parents had to remain in London for a bit. A little while ago I was awakened by a maid knocking at the door. She said that the chief constable wished to report something."

"And it was about us?"

"He appears to have heard about the plight you were in from some out-of-work fellow who was on the tramp during the night. The chief constable came up to the castle, thinking that my father was there. He never intended that I should be called up, but, of course, I am very glad I was fetched out of bed, otherwise, I wouldn't be here now!" the good-hearted young lady wound up thankfully.

She added quickly:

"Is Miss Somerfield about? I must see her at once!"

"To tell her that the police know?" conjectured Betty, and the answer came promptly:

"To tell her, girls, that you and all your school-fellows must be housed at Barncombe Castle!"

The beautiful daughter of the Earl and Countess of Lundy was smiling as she said it. In a moment she was looking as if she had never been so happy in her life as now—now, when these Morcovian chums of hers were standing dumbfounded by the startling change in the situation which her sudden appearance had wrought.

#### Bad News for Cora.

**BARNCOMBE CASTLE!**  
This, the next move for the homeless schoolgirls! They were to be housed at Barncombe Castle!

After enduring such trying conditions at ramshackle Sawnton House, until the place was almost falling about their ears, they were suddenly—magically, it almost seemed—to have the very reverse from discomfort.

"Barncombe Castle, bai Jove! Haw, haw, haw!" Paula started her most pleased simper of contentment. "That's bettah—what? Geals, geals—"

"Lady Evelyn—"

"But look, I see Miss Somerfield now!" Lady Evelyn exclaimed, and away she flashed, only too glad, no doubt, to escape the chums' fervent cries of gratitude.

The joyful news was passing from lip to lip in the dawn-lit barn. Girls were being roused out of sleep now to be told the very latest. Young Lady Evelyn had turned up like a sort of fairy god-mother to them all! She had decreed—and her word was law!—that Barncombe Castle should be given up to them. Hurrah! Hooray! What could be better?

"When the Lupinas hear!" chuckled Polly. "Oh, wouldn't I love to see their faces when they know that we have dropped in for this bit of luck!"

"Yes, wather; haw, haw, haw! There'll be a good cup of tea for all of us at Barncombe Castle, geals! And I shall be able to get myself to wights at last! Geals—"

"Queek, queek; I want to go to ze castle at once!" was Naomer's excitable cry. "Qoo, how we shall love it there!"

Such eager talk as this went on whilst the homeless scholars bustled about, intending that the word to be off should find them quite ready. The daylight rapidly strengthened, and it revealed everybody in the greatest state of excitement.

During the night there had been just a few girls whose discontent had come to a head. They were girls who had been losing heart whilst the school, as a whole, was putting up such a fine stand at Sawnton House against the trying conditions there. When the midnight flight from that apparently doomed house had taken place these malcontents had adopted an "I-told-you-so!" air.

But now all grumbling was at an end. There was no Cora Grandways on hand at present to foster discontent. Even if that mischief-making member of the Fourth Form had been here, instead of sleeping comfortably in her bed at Morcove School, she would have found it hard now to



#### THE POSITIONS CHANGED!

"Morcove School is ours again," Miss Somerfield declared passionately. "The deeds you hold are forged, Madame Lupina. This document proves it! The law is on our side—now!"

egg on Grace Garfield and others to rail against the conditions.

Simply thrilling it was for the girls to know that as quickly as possible they were to be within the stately old walls of historic Barncombe Castle.

And how enraged Cora Grandways was going to be when she heard how the entire school had been suddenly saved like this from its awkward plight!

Heartless, treacherous Cora Grandways—it had been her delight to get an excuse for spending the night at Morcove School with the Lupina family

whilst her schoolfellows were without any proper rest at all. Now, as the day crept on, she was curled up in her warm bed, and the smiling set of her red lips seemed to suggest that she was dreaming of the misery that Betty and the rest were in.

Always a malicious joy to handsome Cora Grandways to see Betty & Co. in trouble, and to make trouble worse for them if possible!

The Lupinas were not early risers, and so the scholar who had been their guest for the night was left to have her full measure of repose. Cora only awakened at last because it was well past the usual getting-up time at school, and even then this great schoolhouse was still perfectly quiet.

She turned upon her back and lazily stretched up her slender arms, then let them fall flop to the coverings. Her lazy yawn was followed by a slow smile.

"Well, I wonder what sort of a night Betty and the rest have had?" she grinned to herself. "We know they had to clear out of Sawnton House all at once because the gale was fairly bringing the old place down. What's happened to them since, I wonder?"

Again she yawned and tossed in the warm bed, revelling in its luxury. Presently, however, even the delight of taking as long as she liked in bed began to wane as she thought of a better one.

"I'll get up and see what I can find out to tell the Lupinas," she decided. "Don't suppose any of them are about at present."

The room she had been given was a very nice one, and Cora had every means of making a very fussy toilette. This was as pleasing to her as the soft warm bed had been, for she particularly wanted this morning to look at her best.

She knew that the Lupina girls were nothing if not over-fond of fine clothes. That was one of the many things that Cora, with her own love of display, liked about the sisters. But she did not like them to think that they were better dressed than she!

Before going downstairs then the handsome girl, who was the bane of her Form at school, finicked with herself in front of the glass. Cora's parents were the sort of people who believed in "showing the neighbours!" and now she wanted to show the Lupina girls.

At last she had done with pinnetting in front of the glass, and with a well-pleased expression she passed from the bed-room, giving herself the usual grand air as she made her way downstairs.

Even now not one member of the South-American family was about to wish her good-morning. The foreign servants were getting to work, and Cora, as she let herself out into the open air, hoped that they would not be long about getting breakfast. These autumn mornings were nippy.

The gale had raged itself out in the night, and now a dead calm was falling. Cora roamed around, familiar with every inch of the ground she trod. This was Morecove School—or it had been up to the end of last term!

The old school, so familiar to her, so dear to all but her! She could gaze around now, taking in all the dignity of the great buildings, marking the spaciousness of the gardens and playing-fields. A magnificent schoolhouse and grounds, of which the staff and scholars had been dispossessed at the beginning of this term by the Lupinas—and Cora was not a bit sorry. She was only perversely glad!

"What a game it has been!" she grinned to

herself. "There's the old hockey-field. Betty & Co. don't get much hockey these days! And jolly well serve them right! I hope to goodness they—Hallo, the postman!"

She instantly set off to meet him on his way up the drive, not to shorten the distance for him, but to ask if he had any news of the homeless scholars. They had been adrift in the night. Where were they now? It was quite likely he could say!

"Morning, missy!" the worthy old fellow greeted her affably. "I've a few here for Mr. Lupina—"

"I'll take them!"

"Thankee, missy; it do save me and my legs. Beg pardon, missy, but you are one of the Morecove scholars?"

"I'm Cora Grandways, yes!" Cora said haughtily.

"Ah, many's the letter I've brought to the door up yonder for you and your schoolmates, eh?" the old postman remarked sadly, as he handed over the Lupina batch. "It do make me heavy at heart to come here every morning now with nothing like the old big bagful for the school. By the way—"

"Yes, I was going to ask you!" Cora broke out, eagerness getting the better of airy dignity. "Do you happen to know how the others are going on this morning? They had to clear out of Sawnton House in the middle of the night."

"Ay, I know they did, miss! All Barncombe's got the story by now, missy. As for me, I passed 'em a couple of mile back, and they give a cheer, they did, at seeing me. All hearty, they were—"

"Happy?"

"You'd ha' said so, missy. As if all their troubles were a hind them. Come to that, they aren't going to do so badly now. They're on the way to Barncombe Castle."

Cora emitted a gasping: "What!"

"Barncombe Castle, missy. The young Lady Evelyn, seemingly, she's had 'em took in out o' pity. So there they were just now, being driven in charries and lorries as I come along this way. Cheering like mad—ay!"

Down to zero went Cora's spirits.

There was a nice thing; the entire school having Barncombe Castle given up to it!

"Bother it!" she fumed to herself, after turning away from the postman to walk towards the schoolhouse. "The Lupinas will not be glad when I tell them this!"

The whole school fairly in clover at Barncombe Castle! That would certainly not suit the Lupinas' plans.

Nor was there to be a chance for Cora to keep the South Americans in ignorance of the latest development.

Even as she was seized with the crafty idea of keeping the news to herself, Jose and Zilla Lupina came running out from the schoolhouse porch to meet her, whilst up from the gateway came Betty and Polly!

#### When Polly Drove!

It was a moment for the mischief-worker of the Form to feel at her wits' ends. The South-American sisters were all smiles as they came prancing towards her. They were calling to her in their excitable way:

"Cora Grandways, you get up too early for us. We meant you to have the breakfast in bed!"

At the same time, Betty and Polly, from the opposite direction, were calling:

"Cora Grandways, we have been sent with a message for you!"

And Cora could guess what the message was.

Frowning and tight-fisted, she could only stand and let both couples come up with her. Now that Jose and Zilla saw the two other girls their handsome faces were assuming black looks. The elder sister, Jose, drew herself up very haughtily, looking down her nose at the two Morcovians. Zilla, who had not her sister's proud reserve, burst out hotly:

"Well, what do you want? Some breakfast, is it, after sleeping under the trees all night? We do not give away food to beggars!"

"We want nothing to do with you," Betty said scornfully. "Our business is with Cora here. Cora, you are to rejoin the other girls at once—Miss Somerfield's order!"

"Bother Miss Somerfield!" Cora flared out. "She didn't say at once, I'm sure!"

"She said at once! We were told to come here and fetch you," the Form captain explained coldly. "You have a motor-cycle and sidecar. Polly and I will ride in the sidecar, and you are to drive us straight to Barncombe Castle."

"It's broad daylight now," Polly added, "so you can't make any excuse about having no carbide for the lamps, Cora. That was the excuse last night, we know, for getting slept at Morcove schoolhouse!"

"I want some breakfast—"

"Of course you must have some breakfast!" Zilla cried out, taking a stride that placed her between Cora and the Study 12 pair. "You—bah! You go away; we have no breakfast for you!"

"Zilla," Jose spoke at last stiffly, "do not speak to those girls. Cora will come indoors with us, and—"

"Cora will do nothing of the sort," Betty interrupted sternly. "There are dozens of us who have had no breakfast yet. If the rest of the school can go without for the present, so can Cora. You will do as you are told, Cora!"

"Will I?" snapped the spitfire. "You take your orders—"

"It is Miss Somerfield's order," Polly reminded the always refractory scholar. "And, anyhow, we are not going to be kept waiting longer than we need for our brekker whilst you get yours!"

"Are you coming?" Betty asked, as if there was an ultimatum in the words.

"No!"

"No, she is not coming," jeered Zilla, snapping her fingers at Betty and Polly. "She will please herself—see?"

At that the Study 12 pair turned on their heels and walked away, going in the direction of certain sheds that used to house all the cycles. They counted upon this action of theirs luring Cora and her "dago" cronies after them, and so it did.

Cora, indeed, followed very closely, suspecting that Betty and Polly were going to see if they could find her motor-cycle and sidecar. If they did, what was their intention?

She was soon to know.

The famous "outfit" had only been run under cover overnight. Making a run at it, the Study 12 pair showed the calm intention of starting the engine. Polly put the clutch out, Betty flooded the carburettor—and there was Cora, drawing close, to protest angrily:

"You dare! Leave my motor-bike alone!"

The only answer was a sudden roar-r-r! of the engine as Polly "kicked off." She was not astride

the saddle yet, nor, of course, was the engine yet in gear.

"Think you are the only girl who knows how to drive a motor-bike?" Polly cried at Cora above the roar of the engine. "My brother has had one for ages, don't forget! Come on!"

"Into the sidecar, Cora!" Betty chimed in, with a look that showed her to be thoroughly roused. "Get in!"

"I won't! I— Oh, you dare lay hands on me! Jose—Zilla—"

But those two girls seemed to be daunted. Theirs were nervous natures, and perhaps they felt half-afraid of approaching the outfit now that the engine was whirring furiously.

To have come to Cora's aid they would have had to act instantly, for it was but an instant before the rebellious girl was being bundled into the sidecar by the Study 12 pair.

Quite overwhelmed, down she had to flop in the roomy sidecar, and in a flash Betty was clambering after her. She pulled shut the low door as she sat herself down heavily upon Cora's lap, and it was too late then for Cora to struggle. Betty, by far the stronger of the two, held her fast, whilst Polly sprang astride the cycle saddle.

"Stand away!" Polly yelled at the South-American sisters. "Hold tight, Betty!"

"Right-ho!"

And they were off!

Away glided the "combination," Polly triumphantly blaring at the horn as she steered the machine towards the drive.

Not a glance had she to spare for the South-American girls now. But Betty, as she kept her tight hold of Cora in the sidecar, saw Jose and Zilla start in pursuit.

Too late! All in vain the foreign girls' threatening attitude now that the machine was off! Polly skilfully drove faster—faster.

Down the old familiar drive, out through the old familiar gateway, and so along the main road to Barncombe—on they sped. There was no other traffic, but Polly could not resist the fun of punching away at the horn, trump, trump, tr-rump! every other minute.

Half an hour later a man in uniform at the entrance gates to Barncombe Castle gave a broad grin as he saluted some fresh arrivals in a "twincyn" and sidecar. Such a roguish Morcovian she was who sat astride the saddle.

In the grand courtyard Polly skilfully pulled up. She was no quicker out of the saddle than Betty was out of the sidecar. Polly made a mocking bow to disgruntled Cora.

"Your machine, I think, Cora? Did I drive all right?"

"Don't forget, you are to report to Miss Somerfield," was what Betty had to say to the sulky girl. "As for you and me, Polly—"

"Breakfast!" nodded the madcap. "High time, too!"

And off they went together.

#### No Hops for the Headmistress.

A FOOTMAN in the Lundy livery entered a spacious sitting-room where Miss Somerfield was alone with the youthful Lady Evelyn.

"Will you see one of your scholars, madam?" he addressed the wan-looking headmistress. "She is one who has been told to report to you, I understand."

"Ah, that will be Cora Grandways," Miss Somerfield realised, speaking very softly. "Yes,



**THE SURPRISE VISITOR!** Lady Evelyn came forward, her hands outstretched, while the girls were still struggling up from the straw. "You poor things!" she exclaimed compassionately. "Fancy you having to undergo all this!"

Let her come in, please. Lady Evelyn, you need not go; I shall soon be finished with the girl."

So the happy-hearted daughter of the place merely moved apart to a window-bay, whilst the footman first held the door wide open to let Cora Grandways come in, and then withdrew.

She was the other Cora Grandways now, all meekness and innocence. Demurely she said "Good-morning, Miss Somerfield!" and blandly added:

"You wanted to see me, I was told."

"Yes, Cora. Stand to attention when I am talking to you."

The girl, who was all insolence and insubordination behind the headmistress's back, instantly pulled herself together.

"Last night you stayed at our old schoolhouse with the Lupinas, Cora? I received a message that you could not get back to Sawnton House because you had no carbide for the cycle lamps."

"Yes, Miss Somerfield. I am very sorry, but you remember I went off in a great hurry on that errand for you, and—"

"It is about that errand I wish to question you," the headmistress spoke on, rather sternly. "You had an urgent note of mine to take to that surveyor in Barncombe. It was to ask him if the house was really safe enough for the girls to stay in. Did you deliver that note?"

"He had left for the day when I got to his office at Barncombe, so I posted it to his private address at Exeter."

"You did not let me know you had done that, Cora."

"How could I, Miss Somerfield, when I couldn't get back to you?"

"Nonsense! A servant of the Lupinas came with a message to say that you were staying the night there. You could have let him report—"

"I'm sorry. I—I didn't think—"

"Very well, Cora," sighed the headmistress, with a weary gesture of dismissal, as if she was too worn out and over-tried to go further into the matter. "But another time I shall be very loath to send you upon an errand. You say you did not think. I do not like to say what I think, Cora. You may go!"

Young Lady Evelyn did not come away from that far corner of the room until she had heard the door click shut behind the scholar who had escaped with such slight censure.

"That girl!" Miss Somerfield exclaimed, with intense sadness. "I am bound to say it, Lady Evelyn; in all this bother and trouble that the Lupinas have made for me, nothing had distressed me more than the knowledge that one of my own scholars has been friendly with them."

"Cora Grandways?"

"Yes. It is impossible for me to acquit her of being entirely on the side of the very people who have dealt so wickedly by me and the school in general. In a desperate extremity, last evening, I had to entrust Cora with a message. That was the result—she found an excuse for staying the night with the Lupina family. Nor is that all!"

Greatly agitated, Miss Somerfield took a turn or two about the room.

"It has been my great sorrow, Lady Evelyn, to discover that disloyalty to me has been fostered by that girl. I can only hope and pray that she will realise the enormity of her conduct by-and-by. There is not the least doubt that she would have liked all the girls to agitate for my capitulation to the Lupinas."

"Don't let it grieve you too much," was the soothing response. "For every girl like Cora Grandways you have a score who would rather die than be disloyal to you. Girls like Betty Barton and Polly Linton, Paula Creel and Madge Minden—"

"Yes, indeed—the other extreme, if anything!" Miss Somerfield exclaimed, with a sudden wan smile. "They would have me submit them to any amount of discomfort, rather than pay the price that the Lupinas have fixed. But—"

She shook her head and sighed resignedly.

"That price will have to be paid, Lady Evelyn. My mind was quite made up about that before this unfortunate exodus from Sawnton House came about. But for your marvellous kindness—"

"Oh, Miss Somerfield, nothing of the sort!" laughed the girl. "It was a small thing to do!"

"It has been a great and timely blessing for all my dear scholars. But for you, Lady Evelyn, I would have had to send them to their homes to-day, with the result that other schools would have had to be found for them. As it is, Moreover's scholars still remain together under one roof—the roof of Barncombe Castle. That means everything! For when I have gone from their midst—as I mean to do within a few hours—they will return together to their old schoolhouse, and all their troubles will be over!"

It was Lady Evelyn's turn to look deeply distressed.

"Miss Somerfield, don't carry out this resolve to resign!"

"I must! It is the one stipulation the Lupinas have made. Manuel Lupina only got possession of the school for the sake of striking at me. He has put it in writing—when I have resigned, when

I have undergone the heart-breaking wrench of parting with my dear scholars and severing my lifelong association with Morcove, his vindictive spirit will be gratified. So, then, I must go—I mean to go!”

“There are many girls whose hearts will break, too!”

“Ah, I know there are,” sighed Miss Somerfield. “But this must remain my inflexible resolve. I must go, so that Morcove School may carry on!”

She added, after taking a moment to wrestle with her emotions:

“After all, there are many women with qualifications as good as mine. Morcove School will easily find another headmistress to—”

“It will never know and love another headmistress like you,” Lady Evelyn exclaimed, drawing towards the hapless victim of Manuel Lupina’s vendetta. “I have known these girls too well, not to realise how they look up to you, think of you as Morcove itself. Without you— Oh, Miss Somerfield, you must—you must take more time! Let Barncombe Castle be the school for as long as—”

“You would say for as long as ever we like? But, ah—”

“My parents would say just the same. After all,” urged the great-hearted girl, “Lord Lundy has a great interest in Morcove School. He is a governor!”

“One of those who have done their best to dissuade me from resigning,” Miss Somerfield put in gently. “Your father has indeed been most considerate.”

“No one could be more annoyed than he is, I know, at the way this Manuel Lupina wretch got possession of the place. My father says it was sheer trickery!”

“And so it was!” the headmistress exclaimed tensely. “The law is on Manuel Lupina’s side, but only because a whole bundle of documents dealing with the original conveyance of the property to the governing body is missing.”

“So I have heard my father say,” nodded Lady Evelyn. “It is all the more maddening to him because the property was once part of the Lundy estates. Manuel Lupina seems to have bought the property just recently from a former owner who really had no interest in it at all.”

“Manuel Lupina is a millionaire,” Miss Somerfield said bitterly. “Unlimited money alone has enabled him to indulge this vendetta against me. He chanced upon someone who could offer him certain documents at a price—forged documents, as we contend, but we have not been able to prove that. If only we could prove it—”

“By producing the ones that you say have been lost?”

“Exactly!” Miss Somerfield nodded vehemently. “If only—ah, if only those documents would come to light, how different the position would be! But our lawyer cannot lay hands on them. What has become of them no one can suggest. And papers like that, once lost, may easily be lost for ever!”

Tragically the persecuted headmistress wound up with that despairing remark. There was a heavy pause, for young Lady Evelyn was left without anything to say now, and Miss Somerfield could not say more for the sobs that were in her voice.

Picture of suffering and martyrdom that she was, she sank into a low chair and sat staring dully before her. And Lady Evelyn, gazing at her in great pity, could tell how inflexibly indeed

the self-sacrificing spirit of the woman was holding to that sublime resolve: “I must go—resign! It is the only way to regain Morcove School for my scholars!”

Suddenly, impulsively, the girl who was one of the noblest born in the land, and yet one of the most democratic, stepped up to Miss Somerfield, bent over her and kissed her.

“Dear Miss Somerfield, a little longer—you must!”

“No! To-day—in the next few hours—I must be gone from their midst. Don’t try to turn me from my purpose, Lady Evelyn, there are too many of my dear scholars only wanting to do that! You, like those dear girls, must let me pay the price!”

A deep sigh came from the listener to those tragic words. She suddenly kissed Miss Somerfield again on her whitening hair, and then went from the room—in silence and in tears!

#### Morcove in Clover.

**B**ONG, bong, bong!  
Bong, bong, bong, bong—bong!

The morning had flashed by. In the great dining-hall of Barncombe Castle the enormous gun-metal gong was calling Morcove’s scholars in to lunch.

As they came trooping in they talked amongst themselves in rather awed tones. The impressive grandeur of the stately place was a thing they could not get over. Again and again some friendly batch of girls loitered to gaze at some feature of the architecture that witnessed to the great age of the castle, or paused in front of some



**EXPOSED AT LAST!** “Clear out of here,” said Cora Grandways. “We shall go when we have told you what we think of you,” answered Betty. “We know that you have been a traitress all along!”



dark canvas or other relic of the past adorning the solid walls.

"Wonderful place," was Madge Minden's staid comment, as she came towards the dining-hall with the rest of the Study 12 chums. "I came upon a harpsichord just now, and played it!"

"Bai Jove, weally?" beamed Paula. "My discovery was a howwible miwov of wavy glass—a gweat twearure, they tell me. But when I looked at myself in it—"

"Just to put your hair to rights, Paula?"

"Pweicisely, Polly deah, and I don't see what there is to gwin at in that! One must be respectable at Barncombe Castle! That wavy glass, though—I got a fwight when I saw myself in it, I tell you!"

"Was there ever such a difference?" smiled Helen. "This grand old castle, after poor old Sawnton House?"

"Still," said Polly. "Morcove School for me, if I could have my choice!"

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove, geals, what a welief it would be if only we could look forward to returning to Morcove some day or other! But those Lupinas, the wetches—"

"Ooo, I would love to knock their heads together—so!" said Naomer, making the motion with her hands. "They not play ze game, and—ohé, ohé," she lamented, using the wailing sigh that was native to her own barbaric country, "Mees Somerfield will go, and we shall be so sad!"

Betty Barton suddenly moved on again, and Polly saw how deeply distressed her chum was looking. She stepped to the Form captain's side and plucked her gently by the sleeve.

"You have heard something, Betty?"

"Must I tell you, Polly dear? The latest is that Miss Somerfield will be gone—by the end of the day!"

"Gone from us as soon as that? Oh, Betty, no!"

"Only too true, I'm afraid," was that girl's sorrowful answer. "Miss Redgrave told me."

The others had heard the depressing news as Betty gave it to Polly, and there they all stood, their happiness suddenly spoilt again. Lady Evelyn came upon these favourite Morcovians of hers a few moments later, looking as sad as ever they had looked whilst quartered at ramshackle Sawnton House.

"Why aren't you hurrying in to get a decent meal when lunch is on the table?" she admonished them blithely. But it was a rather desperate blitheness. Hadn't she herself been in tears this morning over the cruel fate that was remorselessly closing around Miss Somerfield's blameless life?

The good-hearted daughter of the earl and countess made the chums of Study 12 find room for her at their table, and she did her best to keep the talk in cheerful channels. All the time, however, she could realise how this impending departure of the headmistress was like a blight upon their spirits. Even Polly was without the heart to tease Paula. The lunch was a most tempting one, yet many a girl was too low-spirited to want to sample the lavish dishes.

Day of rare delight that it might have been for them all! But it was the day for Miss Somerfield to leave them. It would soon be the very hour for her to bid them all good-bye!

Something, it seemed to Lady Evelyn, was needed to take the girls' minds off the painful subject. So, as soon as lunch was over, she gave

out that as many Morcovians who wished to do so could have a "personally conducted tour" of the castle.

The mere suggestion of such a thing worked wonders.

"Bai Jove," Paula was beaming, as she and her chums joined the eager crowd of Morcovians that mustered in the enormous entrance-hall, "this is the vevy thing I have often longed for, geals! One needs a pwooper guide—"

"And Lady Evelyn will be that!" Polly said heartily. "She knows the place from A to Z!"

"Don't be so sure," Lady Evelyn herself demurred, putting on as gay an air as possible. "It's true I was born at Barncombe Castle, and have been exploring and learning all my life. But I still find myself picking up some bit of curious information that is quite fresh to me. We'll need this," she added, taking an electric torch from the hall table, "for some of the odd corners of the castle are very dark."

They were!

It seemed to Betty and the rest that they were soon done with admiring the stately grandeur of vast apartments in daily use on the ground floor. And as soon as these were finished with it became a plunge into the mediæval for the sightseers, with plenty of need for a torch.

Like a flock of sheep in a narrow lane the eager girls shambled after their guide as she led them along vaulted passages and up and down winding stairways.

Impossible for the girls to retain any sense of direction! When they thought they were well above ground level, Lady Evelyn amazed them by saying that they were as deep down as the bed of the old moat. Then, thinking that they had gone down more odd flights of steps than they had climbed other flights, they were staggered to find that they were quite high up.

"In fact," their chummy guide explained presently, "this is a chamber in the west tower—the largest of all the towers, you know!"

"The square one?" murmured Polly, and Lady Evelyn nodded.

"Quite right, Polly dear. If there were windows here you would have a lovely view. But the chambers in this turret are mostly without windows."

"Why?" wondered several of them.

"The bad old days—for they were bad, and I'm afraid the Lundy folk were some of the worst who lived," was the rueful admission. "Many a captive has been kept in this very chamber."

She played the bright ray of the torch around the walls, and let it rest upon one of the few bits of antique furniture that had been installed within recent years.

"You see what this part of the castle has become now," she chatted on—"a mere lumber-place for our overflow collection. The Lundys always have been great collectors. This chest—"

"What a curious one!" Madge exclaimed, peering eagerly.

"I believe a grandfather of mine brought it home from Italy," Lady Evelyn remarked carelessly. "It is supposed to be quite unique—not carved, but all that decoration is poker work."

"I say, how wonderful!" Tess exclaimed, her artistic nature captivated by the gem. "It is divided into panels that form separate scenes!"

"Yes, wather! Geals, geals, haow wemarkable—what?"

"Anything inside, Lady Evelyn?" asked Polly roguishly. "It looks like a coffin!"

"Oh, there's nothing inside—look and see, if you want to!" laughed the daughter of the castle. "You'll find the lid precious heavy, I dare say—more than one can lift."

Taking it for granted that neither Polly nor any of them wished to fiddle with the chest, the girl who was acting as guide swerved the ray of the torch towards an arched doorway through which she meant to lead them next. Barely a step or two had she gone, however, when a voice spoke in the gloom:

"There is something inside, Lady Evelyn."

"Really?" And she turned round. "Well, there, you have found out something, Polly, that I didn't know before!"

"Only papers, though," laughed Polly, standing with Betty and some others to peer below the half-raised lid of the chest. "A lot of old musty—I say, though, is that the word 'Morcove' done in thick lettering on this bundle, Lady Evelyn?"

"Where? Where?" And she was to the front of the throng of girls in a moment, shining the strong ray directly into the chest.

"There!" Polly said. She reached and took up one bundle. "Yes, look!"

"Bai Jove, geals—"

"Morcove?" Lady Evelyn jerked out excitedly. "That's strange! Morcove—yes, endorsed on this document at the top of the bundle! Just a moment—let me look!"

#### The Fateful "Find."

ALL ashake with her sudden excitement, Lady Evelyn handed the electric torch to Betty to hold, and then took the bundle of documents from Polly.

There was no need to untie the black tape. It was so rotten with age that it broke at the merest touch. Some of the documents fell from Lady Evelyn's hands, but she retained the top one, and this she eagerly began to unfold.

Those who were near enough to peer over her shoulders gave puzzled frowns as they gazed at the ornamented, large writing which headed the parchment documents. The lettering and the language were going to baffle Betty and the rest, but it was only a half-minute before Lady Evelyn gave a cry of complete understanding.

"Morcove School!" she burst out agitatedly. "A document relating to the conveyance of the entire property, in the year—"

"Morcove School?" several of her startled listeners echoed excitedly. "Conveyance?"

"Doesn't that mean the sale of a property?" cried Betty. "And in that case, perhaps—"

"There is no 'perhaps'!" was Lady Evelyn's wild cry, charged with a note of joy. "This parchment—oh, it must be shown to Miss Somerfield at once! We must take the whole bundle of papers with us. They relate to the school; they are going to prove that the Lupinas' documents are false ones!"

Polly yelped:

"Wha-a-at! Oh, I say—"

"Bai Jove! Geals, geals—"

"Ooo, queek, queek! I not understand a beet!" shrilled Naomer. "But I see eet is all-right! Queek; then—queek!"

"We'll be quick enough!" Lady Evelyn said, laughing breathlessly, whilst she folded up the document.

Some of her schoolgirl friends had picked up the other deeds. Getting all the papers together, she

started off back with the girls by the way they had come. Betty did her best with the torch, but it was such a stampede up and down the ancient steps and along those vaulted passage-ways that half the time the girls were almost falling over one another. Once Paula Creel went sprawling, and her hair was all over her eyes when she righted herself. She didn't mind!

"Bai Jove—haw, haw, haw!" Paula chuckled, dashing on with the others in that ruffled state. "Haow gwand, geals; haow wonderful—what?"

"Topping!"

"Spiffing! If—it—"

"Oh, don't say there is an 'if'!" groaned Polly. "You are certain, Lady Evelyn?"

"Quite, quite certain! Come on!"

This was the moment when Miss Somerfield, with most of her devoted colleagues around her, in the beautiful drawing-room on the modern side of the castle, was saying composedly:

"My train leaves at four-fifteen, so I think I ought to finish my packing now. I hope I have said all that is needful to you, who are going to carry on at Morcove after I am gone. I earnestly trust—"

The door flew open.

"Miss Somerfield! Miss Somerfield!"

Bewilderedly the headmistress and her colleagues started up from their chairs. Often enough had some pack of excited scholars come bursting in upon Miss Somerfield at Morcove School. But this was Barncombe Castle, and Lady Evelyn was one of the maddest of all these mad youngsters!

What did it mean?

Soon enough the wild excitement was accounted for. Whilst Miss Somerfield was scanning the parchment deed, and was saying that it must indeed be of vital importance, Lady Evelyn was phoning to the agent's office in the castle yard. He was to come up at once—urgent!—to give his opinion about some documents that had been discovered.

He came up, and a mercy it was that his professional opinion bore out the one that Lady Evelyn and others had formed, otherwise all the scholars would have had their hopes raised, only to have them dashed to the ground.

For, as good news will, there had flashed through the castle already an account of the marvellous finding of the documents. Morcove School was saved! Saved from the enemy, saved to all the scholars and mistresses who held it so dear!

Cora Grandways was one of those who heard the thrilling news as it flew from tongue to tongue. She saw and heard the girls jabbering amongst themselves, all a-dance as they did so. Now for the Lupinas! Out with them now!

What to do about it all, Cora Grandways, the girl who had been secretly allied with the enemy, could not decide at once. But suddenly the old perverse nature prompted her to try and spoil the triumph for the scholars.

Betty & Co. were in this! It was Polly herself who had looked into that ancient chest and found the bundle of papers that had been stored there, at some time or other, and then forgotten. The very fact that the Study 12 chums were to the fore in it all was enough to make Cora furious.

She thought of her motor-cycle, standing ready out in the castle yard. Perhaps she ought to ask permission, but bother all that! Out she ran as soon as her hat and coat were on, and in another minute she was beyond the castle walls, speeding away to Morcove.

## And Serve Her Right.

**E**XCEPT during her run through the old town, Cora drove as fast as she had ever driven. Roar, roar, roar! the mighty little engine went, whilst she crouched over the handle-bars. The empty sidecar bounded and bumped along the open highway. Rurr, rurr, rurr! for a few minutes longer, and she was through the old familiar gateway of Morecove School and speeding up the drive.

At the porch she off-saddled and ran to give a ring at the bell. All this eagerness came of the conviction that Jose and Zilla would be as grateful as ever to her for giving them the news. Bad news! But they would be glad to be warned in time—prepared for the coming humiliation.

The sisters came running to the front doorway, for they had heard her motor-cycle as it raced up the drive.

"Hallo, you have come back—how nice!" Zilla exclaimed affectionately. "You have not let them keep you at that silly old castle. You—"

"I have come to tell you," panted Cora, "a serious thing has happened! The girls being at Barncombe Castle has led to the discovery of some papers. There has been an expert opinion on them. They relate to Morecove School—"

"Yes, well?"

"It is said that the documents will compel your parents to clear out of here!" Cora rushed on. "Miss Somerfield may be here any minute now! Are your parents about the place?"

"They are indoors, yes," Jose said, with hard-won calmness. "But how can we tell them this? If it is true that we are beaten—"

"You had better look out; I have done you a good turn in coming to warn you," Cora pointed out rather proudly. "We have been good pals, and you have talked of having me at your place in London, in the hols., as a reward. So—"

"Reward! You do not expect any reward now, I hope!" Zilla took the schoolgirl traitress aback by exclaiming angrily. "A reward for coming here to tell us that we are beaten!"

"But—"

"And you say," Jose broke out, her eyes also gleaming angrily—"you say that the documents have been found, just because the other scholars went to Barncombe Castle?"

"Yes. They—"

"Well, then, what have we to thank you for?" Jose demanded coldly. "It seems to me that it is all through you that the papers have been found!"

"What! Oh, Jose—Zilla! How can you—"

"My sister is right!" flared out Zilla furiously. "You did all you could to get the school driven out of Sawnton House!"

"You wanted me to do all I could. Besides, I did not have anything to do with last night's upset. That was—"

"Bah! We have no more use for you, anyhow!" Zilla cried aloud, without the least shame at this sudden throwing over of an ally. "Jose, do we want this girl for a friend now?"

"She can go, and the sooner the better!" was the passionate answer, causing Cora to look more staggered than ever. "We Lupinas have no use for you now, Cora Grandways!"

"So get away! Go on, get off with you!"

With the word Zilla indulged her savage mood by rushing at Cora in the school doorway and pushing her off the threshold. The same infuriated mood was Jose's, and next second both the South Americans were letting Cora have this "reward" for all her toadying and secret aid!

Savagely they pushed her out by the front-door and hustled her to where the motor-cycle was standing. She abandoned her protesting, injured-innocent cries, and thought only of getting away. Almost in tears, she blindly got astride the saddle, and then the spiteful pair pulled her off and pummelled her unmercifully.

"You English girls—bah!" jeered Zilla. "Friends, did you think? When you only come here to tell us we are beaten! Go away!"

It was high time, too, for Cora to be off, if she was to escape a far greater calamity than this sudden rounding on her by her former allies.

Even as she again bestrode the saddle, hurriedly starting up the engine, she was confusedly aware of several cars coming along the highway from the direction of Barncombe.

Jose and Zilla, in spite of their disgusted cries of "Get away!" would still have kept her in torment, but they, too, glimpsed the distant cars. And at sight of them they lost all further desire to bully their "dropped" ally.

It was Cora's chance, and she seized it. Letting in the clutch, she drove off quickly—not down the drive, that would be fatal! Those cars were coming along to the old school; they held Miss Somerfield and others from the castle, it was certain. And were they to find her here?

Not if she could help it!

Familiar with every way out from the grounds, she drove round one side, of the great schoolhouse and steered for a gateway that opened on to a by-lane.

Meanwhile, Jose and Zilla were standing together, with panicky expressions, when their parents came out by the front door.

"What is it, Jose—Zilla?" their millionaire father exclaimed testily. "All this noise? That girl who was here—you have quarrelled with her?"

"Because— Oh, this is a bad day for us, father!" Jose said passionately. "The girl brought word that we are beaten! Papers have been found at Barncombe Castle—"

"And see," panted Zilla, pointing down the drive, "there are cars pulling up just there! Miss Somerfield and others have come!"

"Papers found at the castle of Barncombe?" Manuel Lupina said agitatedly. As he looked at his equally scared wife his fat face was going blue-white. "But we will see if it is as bad as we are told. Come!"

There was little dignity in the man as he set off down the drive. In a few moments he was on the run, his wife and daughters hurrying after him. Sheer panic was upon them now, their only hope that perhaps some game of bluff could yet be played.

It was quite a procession of cars—some private ones, others hired in Barncombe—that had now pulled up in line on the roadway outside the school gateway. Miss Somerfield and most of her colleagues, Lady Evelyn, with Betty & Co.—nearly half a hundred other girls—they were bundling out of the conveyances, to rush for the gates.

Miss Somerfield led, and in her right hand she grasped something that was going to be as effective as dynamite itself in dislodging the enemy!

Close behind her, as she reached the gateway, packed the rest of the party, the scholars themselves being nearest of all to the headmistress, such was their excitement. Polly started a ringing cheer, and it would have been taken up by her chums, only Miss Somerfield gestured for

silence. Manuel Lupina, with his wife and daughters, were now confronting them.

His blue-white cheeks a-quiver, Manuel Lupina began a blustering protest.

"Well, what is it? Have I not said I will have none of you here, unless—"

"Manuel Lupina, I demand possession of Morcove School, in the name of the governors!" was Miss Somerfield's ringing cry. "In the name of the law—"

"The law! Your English judges have told you that the law is on my side! I have shown to the judges the papers which came to me when I bought the property," Manuel Lupina said desperately. "This school—"

"Morcove School is ours again!" Miss Somerfield declared passionately. "Your documents were forged, Manuel Lupina. We shall prove—if you try to oppose us any longer—that you bought the property from someone who was handling

all over his scowling face. His heavy eyes fell away from Miss Somerfield's stern gaze; he looked hopelessly at his wife, and she gazed back sullenly at him. The two daughters stood huddled together, glaring at Betty and the other scholars.

"Your answer?" the headmistress demanded sternly. "Will you go, or are we to have you put out? My dear scholars have endured enough, of late, at your hands. I demand, for their dear sakes, that Morcove School be restored to them to-day—this very hour!"

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove—"

"Hurrah! He's going—they're throwing up the sponge!" was Polly's delirious comment on Manuel Lupina's sudden withdrawal with his wife and daughters. "Boo! Hurry up and clear out!"

"Boo! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove, geals, it's weally all wight! Before



**WHEN MORCOVE RETURNED!** The girls, left to themselves to get their own studies to rights, simply revelled in the job, and in Study No. 12 there was a great scene of activity. Only Paula was not working. She lay back in the armchair after imagining she had made herself useful. "Girls, I'm pwactically pwostwate," she complained. "An utter weck!"

forged deeds! This parchment in my hand proves it! The law is on our side now!"

The man himself was looking so flustered, as if he knew full well that he had had dealings with one who was merely trading in false documents, that his wife strode forward to draw attention from him.

"Show me, then!" Madame Lupina shriled at Miss Somerfield. "The document—let us see it! You say it is genuine; how do we know? Show me!"

"Not likely!" was the headmistress' stern and dignified answer, whilst she drew back the vital document clenched to her bosom. "If you wish to dispute the validity of this deed do so in the Law Courts. But I solemnly warn you and your husband, you had better not waste time or money in doing so! Manuel Lupina, once again, are you going to give us immediate possession of the school, or must the police come and eject you?"

He slunk back a step or so, utter defeat written

on his face. "An hour is out, bai Jove, we shall have Morcove School to ourselves again!"

"It's ours now—now!" impetuous Polly fairly yelled. "Miss Somerfield, may we—oh, please, may we—"

"Ooo, yes; queek, queek! Mees Somerfield—"

Whether Miss Somerfield meant her sudden joyful smile to be taken as an assent cannot be said. But in a flash the excited scholars were swarming forward up the drive. They sped on past the Lupinas, who shrank aside and only scowled blacker than ever. Up the carriage-way to the schoolhouse raced the girls, cheering madly.

"Hurrah! Hurrah—hooray!"

"Haw, haw, haw! Yes, wather, bai Jove! Geals, geals—"

"The dear old school ours again!" was the general cry of rejoicing. "Hurrah!"

"Morcove for ever—hooray!"

"Study 12, come on—come on!" This was

impetuous Polly, one of the first to reach the porch. "Up to the studies, girls!"

And up through the grand old schoolhouse they made their way, still laughing and cheering, fairly off their heads with the joy of this unexpected triumph of right over wrong!

#### Won Back from the Enemy!

GLORIOUS happiness that it was for the girls of Morcove School, after the trying and even tragic times they had been through, to be under Morcove's roof again!

That jubilant spirit which had seized Betty and all of them as they first set foot inside the "re-captured" schoolhouse still prevailed when, next day, the official "move in" took place.

By that time a small army of workmen and cleaners had got the fine old schoolhouse to rights again. The girls themselves were left to do most of the rearrangement of their various studies—a job they simply revelled in.

"Yes, wather, bai Jove!" simpered beaming Paula Creel, sprawling back in Study 12's best armchair after imagining she had made herself very useful. "Geals, this is a stivenuous time. I'm pwactically pwostwate—an uttah weck, bai Jove! But what a welief—wather!"

"Aha, you are not grumbling now!" teased Polly, whilst she and Naomer helped to fetch in Study 12's own old table.

"Gwumble?" Paula returned, opening her pretty eyes very wide. "Weal, I like that! Who ever heard me gwumble all the time we were at Sawnton House?"

"Oho! Paula, Paula——"

"All wight; I nevah do get cwedit for showing a bwave spiwit," sighed the everlastingly teased aristocrat. "My wecollection is that I pwoserved as bold a fwont as any of you, so theah! When the history of this affair comes to be witten, I—— Ow! Naomer, Na-ow-mer! Dwp it!"

"He, he, he, what have I done now, you dear old duffer?"

Paula, clasping a raised foot, grimaced sorrowfully.

"You dwpopped a leg of that chair on to my toes, you wascal!"

"Then what you want to say 'drop it' for again?" grinned her Serene Highness. "But I very sorry. I love you, Paula; I love everybody! So take me on your lap!"

"Dweadful!" lamented the fastidious one, as she found herself called upon to nurse the dusky one. "Don't wiggle, anyhow! Now all the stwife is over, Naomer, pway gwant me a little peace!"

Polly, suddenly coming back into the study with some other part of its normal equipment, spoke a word to Betty.

"She's there now, Betty darling—just gone to her study."

"Oh, all right!" the Form captain poddod, and with a significant look of sternness she promptly went out and round to Cora Grandways' study, followed by Polly.

Cora sprang up from an easy-chair and glared at the special objects of her hatred as they entered.

"Haven't you two got a study of your own, that you must come pestering here? Clear out!"

"We shall go, and glad enough we'll be to leave you to yourself," Betty said icily, "when we have had just one word with you, Cora Grandways.

You were absolutely friendly with those Lupina girls all the time that——"

"What right have you to say so?" blustered Cora, drawing herself up. "I—I——"

"Don't deny it, because that will be fibbing," Betty warned the girl who always had been such a disgrace to the Form. "We know it for a fact, because—well, read for yourself!"

So saying, she suddenly thrust a letter into Cora's hands.

"And keep the letter when you've done with it—we don't want it," Betty spoke on disgustedly. "It is one from Jose Lupina, addressed to me. I hope you'll realise now, Cora Grandways, the sort of girls you were friendly with!"

"Sneakish, cattish girls who could stoop to a letter of that sort!" was Polly's scornful outburst. "Not only do they write all sorts of insulting things about Miss Somerfield and all of us. They find a delight in giving away all the underhand work you did for them!"

There was a pause. Cora was glaring at the missive which her shaking hand held. Betty and Polly stood together, giving the humiliated girl time to realise fully with what base natures she had been associated.

"If we chose to show that letter to Miss Somerfield," Betty said at last, grimly, "you know what it would mean! But you can keep it, Cora—have it framed, if you like! Part of your 'reward' for helping those who were doing their best to smash up Morcove!"

"To say nothing of their longing to leave Miss Somerfield quite broken-hearted!" was Polly's bitter rejoinder. "You must feel proud of yourself, Cora!"

In a sudden burst of mad rage, that ill-natured girl tore the letter to pieces and flung them in Betty's face.

"Whatever I did I would do again!" Cora declared furiously. "I would—yes, I would, ten times over! If only because I always am, and always will be, on any side but yours!"

The Form captain and her chum walked out. When they had closed the door between themselves and that detestable girl, they drew together closely in the corridor and sauntered, arms round each other's waists.

"Anyhow, we won!" Polly said at last, with restored gaiety. "Betty, how fine the old school seems this evening!"

"The best school in the land!" murmured Betty Barton. "And this the best day it has ever known, surely!"

And, throwing wide the door of Study 12, to pass inside, they heard Paula Creel coming out with a timely and hearty:

"Yes, wather, bai Jove! Geals, geals, as soon as that basket of pwovisions awwives from the Cweamery we are going to celebrwate in dear old Study 12!"

(END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

Next week commences a grand new series of Morcove School tales, dealing with the mystery which surrounded Mary Cavendish, of the Fourth Form, and the part which Betty Barton & Co. played in it. The first story will be entitled "The Girl Who Needed a Friend," and, in addition to this tale and our usual features, a magnificent cut-out photograph of H.R.H. the Duke of York will be presented FREE!