

THE BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF ALL SCHOOLGIRL PAPERS!

The Schoolgirl's Own 2^d



**" DIDN'T
YOU
SAVE MY
LIFE ? "**

(A dramatic moment from the fine long complete tale of Morcove School inside.)

A Splendid Complete Morcovz tale in which Dolly Delane learns that she has been—



CHEATED BY HER CHUM!



By
**MARJORIE
STANTON.**

Even while Grace Garfield is wondering desperately how she can preserve her guilty secret, the chum whom she has wronged is coming to a realisation of the truth. What will happen now?

Her Luck Still Out!

IN the Fourth Form class-room at Morecovz School there was the orderly silence of lesson-time.

Row behind row, the many scholars were wrestling more or less strenuously with that least attractive subject, maths. At her own desk in front of the class, Miss Redgrave was proceeding with the correction of some of the work done overnight.

Suddenly she raised her eyes from one exercise-book that had received copious correction. She looked towards a certain scholar, who happened just then to be gazing vacantly around the room.

"Paula Creel!"

"Yes, Miss Wedgwave?"

A quiet beckoning gesture from the mistress caused elegant Paula Creel to come away from her desk and stand in front of Miss Redgrave's.

"I have just been going through your last evening's preparation, Paula. You don't improve."

"Er—you don't think I do, Miss Wedgwave?" said Paula.

This from any other girl but the duffer of the Form might have sounded like cheek, but Paula, as usual, was only being polite.

"No, Paula; on the contrary. Your spelling—everything—"

"I wealise," allowed Paula, now that she was being shown red-ink corrections, "just wecently, perhaps, I have not been in gweat fowm. Miss Wedgwave. Howevah, you will wecollect that I was away fwom school for a week or so."

"That was ten days ago or more, Paula."

"Yes, wather! Howevah—"

"The other girls were also absent. The whole Form was in quarantine, owing to the fear of an epidemic, which, happily, did not take place."

"Pweccisely!" agreed Paula. "It was a gweat welief to me, I am sure, that the illness was strictly limited to two geals. Pwersonally, Miss Wedgwave, if I had had the illness, I am sure I

would have been a sewious case—most sewious, yes, wather! Not being stwong, as you will wecollect—"

"That, Paula, is beside the point. You have lost no more schooling than the rest. They have all picked up. But your work—look at it!"

"I gweatly wegwet the cwows in spelling," pleaded Paula, with adorable simplicity. "Howevah, pewhaps it wather suggests that I was wather in need of more quawntine than the west of the geals? Not being stwong—"

"Paula, the fact is—"

"The after-effects of quawntine, Miss Wedgwave—"

"Don't interrupt, Paula!"

"No, Miss Wedgwave. I am merely wemarking—"

"You can do better if you try!"

"Twy! I twy and twy—"

"Less of the armchair out of classes, Paula," smiled Miss Redgrave, hitting the nail on the head. "After this warning, I shall expect a speedy improvement. Go back to your seat now, and you might tell Dolly Delane to come here, please."

"Thanks, thanks!"

Paula retired, and in a few moments homely Dolly Delane stood before the Form-mistress.

"Well, Dolly! You feel all right?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Redgrave!"

Dolly Delane was one of the two girls who had been really ill with a slight fever, from which they had now convalesced, or, of course, they would not have been back in class to-day. All the same, Miss Redgrave was anxious that neither of the recent patients should be over-taxed.

"You are working all right, Dolly, I am very glad to see. But I was given to understand, just before the class assembled this morning, that Miss Somerfield has had a letter from your people."

Dolly's brows went up.

"The headmistress will probably be sending for you, Dolly. Meantime, it is as well to let you know, the idea is that you should go home for a week or two. Your people have a farm in a beautiful part of Hampshire, and that is your native air. It should certainly reinforce the convalescence."

"But—but I'm quite all right!"

"You would not be in class this morning if you were not," smiled the mistress. "Wouldn't you like to go home, though, just to—well, have an easy time?"

"Home?" The sparkle in Dolly's eyes showed what the word meant to her. Never was there a

girl more fond of home. "I shall love it, Miss Redgrave! Only——"

A tall-tale shade of anxiety suddenly clouded the bright face.

"I know," nodded Miss Redgrave feelingly. "I was thinking of that, Dolly. You wanted to enter for that special exam. at the end of term. to see if you could pull off the Gillingham Grant. But I am afraid, Dolly—— It's awfully hard luck, but you could never sit for the exam., never prepare yourself in time."

"Not if I—if I worked extra hard, Miss Redgrave?"

"Your illness has been such a big interruption—a handicap that cannot be allowed for. No," was Miss Redgrave's compassionate murmur; "this time, Dolly, I am afraid, you must give up all hope of sitting for that inter-school contest."

Dolly Delane pursed her lips to keep back a bitter sigh. If possible, she would not let her looks betray the sad disappointment that meant.

It was not that she was one of the brilliant girls who must have a shot at every special contest, for the sake of the glory. In her case the Gillingham Grant—in other words, a prize of twenty guineas—meant a great deal. Her people were tenant farmers, going through very hard times just now, and what Dolly could do to lighten the expense of her education she always wanted to do.

"Very well, Miss Redgrave," she said at last, with a resigned smile that touched the heart of the mistress. "That ends it, of course."

And back she went to her place in class—brave Dolly Delane, so little deserving such a bit of hard luck!

Several of the other girls looked up from their work to flash her a smile. They all loved Dolly—"Dolly the Doormat," as she had been dubbed long ago—because of her obliging, self-effacing disposition.

"Anything the matter, Dolly?" she was asked by a near-by girl in a whisper, as she resumed her seat.

"No, nothing, except that I think I am going home!"

"Going home!"

"Bai Jove, Dolly——"

But that was as far as the talk was allowed to proceed. Miss Redgrave reminded the girls gently:

"No talking, please! If you, Paula, will concentrate on your work, perhaps we shall see the improvement that is so desirable!"

And Paula, with an inward groan, returned her eyes to maths.

"Concentration, bai Jove!" she exclaimed dismally, coming out of class with the rest, ten minutes later. "When I have wacked my brains until——until—— Wee!ly, it's dreadful! Miss Wedgwave doesn't realise that I am not stwong. That's the twouble, geals. Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Healp! Dwp it, Naomer!" squealed Paula, now that impish Naomer had taken a flying leap on to her—Paula's—back. "My hair—my fwock!"

But Naomer, with her usual tenacity, hung on. She would either have what she called a "piggy-back" or cause Paula to flop down in despair. Paula flopped, and it was great fun to some of the girls, as they followed from the class-room, to have to steer clear of Naomer and her long-suffering victim.

Betty Barton, the Form captain, came to Dolly's elbow.

"What were you saying about going home, Dolly?"

"My people want me back for a week or two, and it seems that Miss Somerfield is keen for me to go——"

"For a sort of change of air, after your illness?" Polly Linton took the speaker up astutely. "Well, that's all right for you, Dolly!"

"Oh, I'm not grumbling!"

"Surprising if you were!" was Polly's amused reply. "I sometimes have a grouse. Paula—well, she is one big grumble. But did anyone ever hear the Doormat complaining? What do you say, Grace? You are Dolly's study-mate, so you ought to know!"

Grace Garfield turned her eyes upon Dolly as with great affection.

"She never grumbles at me, which is saying something!" laughed Grace. "I'm not tidy, and Dolly is. Still, we get along all right. But I shall miss you fearfully, Dolly, if you do go home!"

"We shall all miss her. But, there," cried madcap Polly, "she hasn't gone yet! Give us fair warning, Dolly!"

The lightly-spoken words took emotional effect upon Dolly. They were a hint that when the time came for her to pack a bag the Form would get busy, so as to give her a right good send-off. If time permitted, they would hold a farewell spread—another order for the Creamery—and that sort of thing was going to be rather upsetting.

It was only to be expected that going home at a time when other girls were still in full swing at the school was going to make her feel a little unhappy.

Straight from the class-room, most of the girls were dashing out to the games-field. But Dolly was now asked by one of the parlourmaids to report to Miss Somerfield—why, everyone could guess.



SOMETHING NEW! "Queek, queek!" shrilled Naomer, round the door. "Tea!" But Paula waved her away. "Do not twy to distwact me, Naomer. I am wswolved. Wild howses shall not dwag me fwom my work!"

She hurried away, and Grace Garfield, who had been staying in talk with her, was left alone.

"Coming out to games, Grace?" one of the others called, speeding for the open air.

"Yes—at least, I'll see," Grace hesitantly answered, and in the end she mounted to the Fourth Form quarters, there to pass into the study which she shared with Dolly.

These were days when Grace Garfield stood very high in the esteem of the rest of the Form. She had become, in fact, quite the heroine of the hour. This was not because of the marvellous windfall of five thousand pounds which had dropped into her lap just lately.

Sudden accession to riches did not count for much in Morcove's eyes. But the reason for which Grace had been endowed with the money—that counted for a great deal!

For by now it was known that the nice little fortune was simply the reward made by the grateful parents of a certain girl whose life she had saved last summer.

The facts of the case had not been revealed, but, in spite of Grace Garfield's own becoming reticence, Morcove had found out this much—that she had performed a heroic deed, saying nothing at the time. And so she was being admired, and was being made rather a heroine by all.

An enviable position for a girl to be in, anyone would have said. Why, then, were there times when she felt she could not stand the popularity? They would have welcomed her at this moment on the games-field, and yet—she had come apart from them all, like this! Why?

It was a question that she had no need to ask herself. Only too well she knew. Only too often was conscience telling her that there could be no real happiness, but simply fits of reckless liveliness, whilst she was enjoying what should never have come to her!

The reward and the esteem alike were not hers by rights! Presently Dolly Delane would come to this study, and so Grace Garfield would be confronted once again with the very girl to whom the five thousand pounds was due. And then, once again, Grace Garfield would want to own up!

For the great reward had come by mistake to a girl who was by no means devoid of a better nature. She was no ruthless, crafty girl who had schemed to cheat another.

Looking back, she marvelled at the fateful way in which the fortune, once dropped into her lap, had been allowed to stay there.

At the same time, she knew that because everything was in her favour, and she seemed to stand no chance of being found out, that did not excuse her silence. It was all the more up to her to speak out. Only—**FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS!** And she had become used to thinking of the money as being her own, her very own, for life!

The door flashed open, and Dolly walked in. "Well, it's settled," that girl announced, with another of her resigned smiles. "I've got to go home to-morrow."

"Aren't you glad, Dolly? You must be!" exclaimed Grace, feeling so very glad herself.

"I shall love seeing them all at home, of course," was the quiet answer. "But it means I can't hope to sit for the Gillingham. And you know, Grace, I—my people—if I could have pulled off the Grant, the money would have been so useful. Still!"

The sight of that homely face, charged with such cheerful resignation to the hard luck, was more than Grace could bear. She walked to the window and looked out.

"You couldn't have swotted up for the exam., even if you had stayed on at school, Dolly. They wouldn't have let you—not after the illness."

"N-n-no, I'm afraid not. Or else," said Dolly wistfully, "I would have written home, begging them not to have me back, although I know it's because of their love for me. Perhaps—"

Grace faced round.

"Yes, what?"

"Perhaps, after all, I could cram for the exam. at home!" was Dolly's sudden desperate thought. "I don't know if it's possible, but I might try. I know I shall feel awfully fit, after being about on the farm all day. I shall take some books, anyhow."

Never yet had Grace suffered worse in her conscience than now. Unwittingly, this other girl was displaying such pluck, such stoicism, urged on as she was by absolute need.

Need! And by rights she should have been enjoying to-day the fortune of five thousand pounds!

Truly there was fate in it all; fate in their being study-mates like this; fate in Dolly's being so very hard hit just at present. She had been the only girl, except one other, to fall ill. That illness, whether she went home or not, had spoiled her chances for the end-of-term exam.

"It—it's a shame, Dolly! Awfully hard luck!" Grace felt bound to exclaim huskily. "But don't grieve about it."

"I shall try not to, Grace. Only, you are not like me. That Gillingham prize is twenty pounds, and that seems a fortune to me!"

She added, with a queer little laugh:

"I'm not like you, Grace; I haven't come into a fortune of five thousand!"

Grace did not answer. After a pause, she went from the room rather quickly, lest the other girl should see the tell-tale pallor in her cheeks.

Just Like Dolly.

"**P**AULA! Ooo, queek—queek!"

"Wun away, Naomer!"

"Then you must come, too! Queek—queek!"

"Don't wowwy me, Naomer! How do you suppose, bai Jove, I can concentrate on all this dweadful wovk when you come wovping in like a wetchel lunatic? Yes, wather!"

It was close upon tea-time. Paula, for once, was in her own study. More remarkable still, although she had but recently come out of afternoon school, she sat at the study table with an array of exercise-books and primers in front of her.

Naomer, amazed at this unwonted industry, almost yelled incredulously:

"You not going to do ze prep. before you have ze tea?"

"I am," was the solemn response from the elegant one, delivered in the hollow voice of one suffering a stern martyrdom. "Do not try to distwact me, Naomer. Do not wemind me of the approach of tea-time. I am wescolved—yes, wather! Wild howses shall not dwag me fwom my wovk!"

"But why?"

Paula heaved a big sigh.

"Theah is a distwessing weason, Naomer, deah! I am the victim of a gwave miscawwage of justice, bai Jove! Miss Wedgwave, I wewget to say, wewards me as a delibewate twifler."

Naomer's only comment on this was to march round and attempt to tip Paula out of her chair, as the first step towards a move for Study 12.

"You come along—queek, queek!"
 "Naomer, no! Pway dwoop it, Naomer, for I am firm, I am woused! I am also dying for my usual afternoon cup of tea," Paula said pathetically. "But I will be wvave. I will wather wovk until I dwoop than have it said that I do not try my hardest!"

"Ah, bah, what does eet matter?" advised Naomer, starting to shut up all Paula's books. "You feel better after tea!"

"Do not tempt me, Naomer. No, I am afraid, I am greatly afraid that tea will have a denoualising effect upon me. I shall wecline in the arm-chair, and then Miss Wedgwave says I am too inclined to wecline, if you understand what I mean?"

"I do not!" laughed Naomer. "I zink you are a bigger duffer than ever, that is all!"
 And she whirled out of the room.

Paula sadly resumed her seat at the table. Sadly she opened all the books again. Then she took out her pocket-mirror and comb and fiddled with her hair, which Naomer had certainly ruffled for the fiftieth time that day.

When Paula had satisfied herself that she looked all right, she took a kind of shuddering peep at one of the questions set for prep. Then she groaned.

"Cwuel, positively cwuel of the wetches, whoever they are, to pwinz such problems! Howevah, I will not give in. If I sit here fwom now till midnight, I will turn in pwep, that does me cwedit—yes, wather!"

Then the door flew open again. This time it was madcap Polly who bounced in.

"What's this nonsense about prep. before tea, Paula?"

"Ah," sighed Paula, "that is my wigid wvolve—"

"You silly goose, come along and join our tea-party!"

"Polly, deah, I gweatly wegweat—"

"Have you forgotten that Dolly Delane is off first thing in the morning, and that we are giving her a sort of farewell spread in Study 12? What shall we do without you, Paula?"

"You will have to cawvy on without me some day, you geals," was Paula's doleful response. "When I have been weduced to a nervous bwac-down, when I have been cawried out of the school on a stretcher— And you needn't laugh, Polly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am pwefectly sewious, Polly. Do show a little pwoper spiwit when you see a geal like me being wongly wvarded as a shirker. I do not shirk the wvork. You know vevy weal, Polly—"

"Yes, we'll have all that after tea!" interrupted the madcap. "You shall sit in the arm-chair—"

"Nevah! Polly, nevah again will I be pwevailed upon to wecline in any armcheah! When I am woused, bai Jove, I am woused! Leave me—"

"It's going to be a jolly tea," remarked Polly. "The cream-buns are extra special to-day, and they've sent along some of those lobster patties which you—"

Paula could stand no more of such beguiling talk. She heroically plumped down into her chair at the table, thumped her elbows on the table, and covered her ears with her hands. At the same time, she began to read out loud, in a desperate tone, the problem which was harrowing her:

"If four bwicklayers lay five hundred—"

"Doughnuts and jam tarts!" Polly interrupted, dinning the words into an ear from which she had

dragged away the screening hand. "Swiss roll, Paula! Come on!"

"No, Polly!"

"Yes, Paula!"

At this moment Naomer reappeared.

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

Then, to make short work of Paula's self-imposed labours, both the madcaps proceeded to carry her out of the study, chair and all, much as if she were a guy on Guy Fawkes Day.

At first Paula's sensations were mingled ones. She felt alarmed, because at any moment she was liable to be capsized out of the chair. She also felt indignant, as this was a downright refusal on the part of her chums to let her go on being a heroine.

But as she was borne closer to the wide-flung door of Study 12, and caught the aroma of fresh-brewed tea, as she was carted into the study and beheld the really gorgeous spread, she had pleasanter sensations.

"Yes, wather!" she was already beaming, whilst mischievous Polly and Naomer carried her in. "Under protest, geals. I weally intended to stay away. I had wovk to do. But I wesigned myself. I wealise you weally want me, and so I will—Wovp!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

For Polly and Naomer had suddenly tipped the fatuous one out of the ordinary chair into the armchair.

"Theah's a silly thing to do!" justly complained Paula. "Then Miss Wedgwave wonders why I can't spell! How can I spell pwoperly when I'm always being spilt all over the place?"

Leaving the oft-teased one to make another hurried use of mirror and comb, Polly and Naomer now joined with Betty in receiving invited guests who were drifting in.

Another minute found the study fairly packed with all those girls to whom it was a favourite rendezvous. Madge Minden and Tess Trelawney were here, and so was Helen Craig, Trixie Hope, joining in the chatter, seasoned her remarks with as much alleged French as usual.

Then there was Grace Garfield, whose own contribution to the spread was such a lavish one. She had wanted to pay for the whole thing, but Betty & Co. had said a firm "No!" to that.

The girls had, however, seen no objection to Grace spending rather a lot on this farewell tea to Dolly Delane, as became one who was now so well-off, whilst being Dolly Delane's own study-mate.

"Hurrah! Come on, Dolly!" Polly led the genuine applause, as the home-going scholar rather shyly appeared. "The Doormat for ever!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Yes, wather!"

"If you were going away, not to come back, we just couldn't bear it," said Betty. "But the week or ten days will soon pass, Dolly. You'd like to sit next to Grace, of course?"

It was a moment for Dolly to feel how fond the girls were of her and she of them. This occasion was totally unlike any of her frequent inclusions in a Study 12 tea-party. Amidst all the frivolous talk there ran a current of genuine sentiment. It was their love for her making itself felt under all the frivolous gaiety. She felt greatly moved.

All the time she was secretly puzzled about Grace Garfield. That girl seemed to be just as sincere as the rest about the coming loss of her—Dolly—for a week or so. Yet there were moments when

something would, as it were, flicker in Grace's looks, suggesting uneasiness.

And so, against all her own generous inclination, Dolly was bound to experience again the horrid doubt that had assailed her often of late in regard to her study-mate. It was very distressing.

Dolly wanted to feel a complete faith in the other girl, but there was this nasty misgiving. More than that, there was a kind of suspicion, a sort of grave theory in regard to Grace's recent windfall, which troubled Dolly greatly.

The result was that Dolly did not heed one half of the pleasant remarks made about her during tea, and she had to force her spirits.

Perhaps Betty and the rest attributed her slight moodiness to the coming departure, but it was not that. It was something even worse than the loss of all chances for the Gillingham Grant that oppressed poor Dolly. It was this uneasy feeling in regard to Grace, summed up in the one word: **SUSPICION!**

Tea over, madcap Polly suddenly jumped up, pushing her chair in close to the table.

"Come on, girls! Hands round for 'Auld Lang Syne'! We will!"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

"Give us the tune, Madge!" cried Helen, laughing.

"I've no piano!"

"What about this?" grinned Tess, catching up the famous ukulele, to hand it to Madge.

There was loud laughter, but then, in all earnestness, the girls ringed round the table, with hands joined crosswise. One of Dolly's hands had to rest in Grace's, as that girl was next to her on the

right, and a very cold hand was Grace's, Dolly thought.

"Should—!" Polly herself led off, whilst Madge struck up on the ukulele.

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot—!"

The singing swelled to a terrific chorus:

"And never brought to mind!"

The entire school must have heard the rest. The second time Study 12 began to dance round the table, and, altogether, things were at their heartiest, when the door opened.

Corra Grandways looked into the room.

"What are you idiots up to now?"

The offensive interruption made no difference to the chums. They had "once round again" for luck, and then gave ringing cheers.

"Good old Doormat! Hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

"And now, what do you want?" Polly inquired of Corra Grandways, with icy politeness.

"Only to see what all the row's about."

"You have seen, and so—hop it!"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

"Allez!" chimed in Trixie. "Allez-vous, tout de suite!"

Corra made a face, and then made her exit, whereupon Paula, for one, flopped into the easy-chair and got out her comb and mirror.

"You can go and do your prep, now, Paula," said Polly, sweetly.

"Er—"

"Or would you like to stay and clear away?"

"Er—"

"Let me clear away!" proposed Dolly, and there were shrieks of laughter.

The old obliging disposition had popped out just then.

"On reflection," said Paula, "I will have a rest before resuming my dweadful labours. I realise that I shall grapple with that problem about the wretched bwicklayers wather better if I just sit—"

"Not here!" decreed Polly, tilting the duffer out of the chair. "Pass out, please! More room down the car!"

"Polly—"

"Mind the step!"

And with that flippant injunction from the madcap, Paula found herself thrust with more speed than elegance into the passage.

She drifted away, but in five minutes she was back.

"Geals, if it takes four bwicklayers—"

"It won't take me two ticks to come for you, if you don't buzz off!" threatened Polly, briskly helping to clear up after the party.

"Are you geals going to do wpep?"

"What did you think? That we might be wanting to do yours?"

"Yes, wather! Er—I mean to say, if you were a weal bwick—"

"It would take more than four bwicklayers to lay me—yes, wawthah!" chuckled Polly. "But I'll be along in a jiffy, Paula, to render assistance."

"Oh, thanks, thanks!"

And Paula retired to her own den, greatly comforted. Pending the appearance of Polly, she reclined in the easy-chair, sighing blissfully. Miss Redgrave would have no fault to find with the work to-morrow!

"Well?" Polly cried, suddenly sailing in, true to her word. "Those bothersome bwicklayers—where are they?"

"You are extremely good, Polly!" exclaimed Paula, jumping up and advancing to the table.



TO SPEED DEPARTING DOLLY.

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot," sang the girls with a will, while Madge accompanied them on the famous ukulele. Dolly's eyes were misty at this show of their affection for her.

"Heah we are—yes, wather! You just wead the pwoblem, then see what you make of it!"

Polly did so. With a sort of careless contempt for such mental gymnastics, she read the numbered paragraph.

"Obviously," she said, "the answer is a lemon!" And went out.

"Heah——"

Slam!

"Dweadful, dweadful!" groaned Paula.

She tore at her hair. Then she took out the comb and mirror, and set it to rights.

"Bai Jove," sighed Paula, sitting down again to resume her own unaided studies, "haow I wish I were the one to be going away for a west-to-morrow! This life I'm led at Morcovoe School is getting wowsse and wowsse. I declare! A little more, bai Jove, and—— Hullo, Dolly, deah! What do you want?"

The Doormat, entering quietly, closed the door.

"That bricklayer problem seems to puzzle you, Paula. So let's see if I can shed any light on it!"

Hard Times at Home!

NEXT morning, the moment breakfast was over, Dolly had to run and get her things on for the journey. Her train was the eight-fifty from Morcovoe Road.

"It's a pity we can't all come to see you off," deplored Betty; "but we daren't ask to be excused from first lessons. Hope you have a nice journey, Dolly!"

"Yes, wather!" beamed Paula, floating in to join the batch of chums who meant to attend Dolly down to the car for the station. "And come back soon, Dolly, pway do!"

"I will, girls, as soon as I can, you may be sure!"

"It is extremely unfortunate that you are going away," sighed Paula, her face falling. "The assistance you wendered last evening—thanks, thanks! Those wretched bwicklayers had no tewfows for me after you came in. Wather not, bai Jove! Good marks for me, this m—— Owp!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fivoolous cweature, Naomer!" complained the oft-teased one, hoisting a sleeve to look at that part of her forearm which had been pinched.

"I give you ze good mark to go on with—yes! And you mind I do not tell Miss Redgrave—ha, ha, ha!—that Dolly Delane do all ze prep. for you last——"

"Sh! Here comes Miss Redgrave!" cautioned Polly, whilst Paula, turning faint, breathed tensely:

"Howwows! Naomer—Naomer, don't betway me! Not a wovd!"

The Form-mistress merely paused in the doorway to address a kind remark to Dolly:

"I have given Grace Garfield permission to see you off at the station, Dolly. Sorry I cannot let the others go with you, but work must be done—mustn't it, Paula?"

"Er—pwocisely! Yes, wather!"

The mistress passed on, leaving half a dozen of the girls with handkerchiefs to their faces, stifling laughter. Paula, for her part, looked most indignant.

"I don't see what there is to gwin about!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Then Grace wandered in, looking greatly pleased, most of them thought, at being allowed to go to the station.

"Did you have to ask permission?" asked Betty.

"Oh, no; Miss Redgrave told me! But—but I—I'm awfully glad, of course!" declared Grace, with



HER SECRET OUT! "I pasted this letter together and learned everything," said Cora. Grace made a wild snatch for it. "Give it to me! It's not yours!" she gasped.

rather overdone heartiness. "When you are ready, Dolly!"

She was ready now, and so madcap Polly suddenly grabbed hold of the Doormat's bag, to porter it down to the car. Naomer dashed away, found the ukulele, and came back, thrumming it furiously.

In the end, Dolly went downstairs and across the hall, escorted by a batch of high-spirited girls whose attachment to her was unmistakable.

She began to shake hands with one and another in the open air, but suddenly Naomer insisted upon kissing and hugging, incidentally casting away the ukulele as a momentary encumbrance. After that Dolly had to kiss and be kissed by all, except Grace. That girl was already in the car.

"Bye-bye, then, Dolly!" sang out Polly, when the Doormat had taken her seat. "Pleasant journey! Mind you write!"

"Yes, wather!"

"My love to all the pigs and ducks and things!" cried Helen.

"And don't get doing too much spring-cleaning!" was Madge's half-serious advice. "Good-bye, Dolly!"

"Good-bye, all!"

"Good-bye!"

And the car whirled away.

"Lucky geal!" sighed Paula. "As for me, nothing but wovk, wovk, wovk!"

The train, as usual, was alongside the platform, for Morcovoe Road Station was the terminus of the tiny branch line.

The chauffeur put Dolly's things in a third, saluted, and would have gone off instantly, but Dolly stepped up to him shyly, offering a tip. It

was only threepence, but, somehow, the man seemed to sense that here was one of the few needy scholars, and his "Thank you, miss!" was as if she had been a juvenile millionairess, conferring a sovereign.

Meantime, Grace had dashed to the booking-office and secured a first-class return, with her own money.

"Your ticket, Dolly!"

"Oh, Grace!"

"Don't be silly! I want to pay for your journey. I've—I've all that money, and—it's only fair!"

Fair! When she—Grace—was cheating the other girl out of the entire five thousand pounds!

True enough, Grace had wanted to pay for the journey, but only to quieten her conscience, if she could!

So the luggage was transferred to a first-class compartment, into which Dolly stepped with a sensation of awe. The train was signalled out. She closed the compartment door, then let down the window to exchange a last good-bye with her study-mate.

It suddenly flashed upon Dolly that they ought to be kissing, since the other farewells had been so specially affectionate. But—no, she could not offer to kiss Grace. This girl was different from the others. This girl was—what?

The lurking suspicion again!

"So long, then, Dolly!" the girl on the platform said brightly. "You'll soon be back!"

"I hope so. It's horrid, missing so much—getting dropped out of the school as I have been this term." Dolly spoke musingly. "One thing seems to have led to another. I fell ill, and had to stay in the san. I was still in bed when you others, who had only been in quarantine, were set free. I missed all the fun you had."

"Yes, Dolly."

"I missed seeing that girl, Daphne Cranford, the day she came to the school—Daphne, the daughter of the people who gave you the five thousand pounds. I'd have liked to see her, Grace."

"Yes, it was—hard luck," consoled Grace, whilst she thought: "What wonderful luck it was for me!"

There was a pause, cut short by the engine's whistle.

"Good-bye, Dolly!"

"Good-bye!"

Dolly said it like one in a dream. At that moment, when her train was gliding away, she was under a strange impulse to lean out and scrutinise the other girl's face closely—to see whether there was real sadness at the going away, or relief!

Was there relief—was there? Dolly could not be sure, and, like the generous-minded girl she was, she instantly gave her study-mate the benefit of the doubt.

As the train fussed along to Barncombe, winding amongst the little valleys of the moorland country. Dolly sat so that she could be sure of getting at least one or two last glimpses of the school.

Presently the line was running close to the familiar high road, and she could see a certain spot that was associated with very vivid memories.

For it was just there, last summer, that she had saved an unknown girl from a runaway farmhouse.

As if it had all happened only yesterday, Dolly recalled the sudden horror and alarm of the short-lived scare. She and Grace were strolling together when, all in a moment, it had been up to her—Dolly—to stop the runaway. Grace had

been able to do nothing, for she had wandered up a high bank to pick a few wild scabions.

From that day to this, she—Dolly again—had never seen or heard aught of the girl whose life she had saved. The girl had been very shaken and upset, and had gone upon her way after confusedly saying only a few words in heartfelt gratitude.

Nor was Dolly the sort of girl to have looked for any better reward than the rescued one's own simple thanks. Only—and here was the gist of that unpleasant suspicion which had forced itself upon her lately—was it possible that Grace's five thousand pounds was a reward gone astray?

In other words, was it possible, Dolly had been compelled to ask herself over and over again of late—was it possible that Daphne Cranford was no other than the girl saved from the runaway horse last summer?

Did it mean that Daphne Cranford had caused her parents to reward the wrong girl, simply because of some confusion of memory?

Anyhow, was it not a very strange thing that Grace had been rewarded for a heroic deed about which no details had been revealed?

At Barncombe there was a train waiting to take Dolly Delane upon the next stage of her journey—to Exeter. From the latter fine city she went on again a little after midday, speeding across all the glorious countryside of Devon, Somerset, Wiltshire, and at last her own beloved Hampshire.

She changed again at a rural junction, and once more it was a shabby local train that rattled her along. She would soon be home now! The scenery was becoming as familiar to her as that around Morcove. She had an eye for the spring crops, and hoped earnestly that dad's were looking every bit as good.

It would be such a blessing if they had a good harvest this year! Times were hard enough for farming folk in any case, without any need for setbacks like a spoiled crop.

Suddenly the train whistled round a curve and clattered towards the station at which she must alight.

Dolly lugged her one bit of luggage from the hat-rack, gave a pat or so to her hair, and then her head went out of the compartment window so that she could look ahead in the hope of seeing someone who had come to meet her.

"Dad! Coo-ee!"

She was waving gaily all the time the train was crawling to a standstill. Then her own dear father was whipping open the door, and she fairly jumped out into his arms.

"My little girl—got here safely, and that's all right!" murmured Mr. Delane, as he kissed his schoolgirl daughter. "I've got the pony-trap here, and you'll soon be home and sitting down to the late tea that you must be dying for."

A youthful porter touched his hat to Dolly before taking her ticket and carrying out the bags. There was a buxom cottage woman going off by the train, with a basket of produce, and she, too, became all smiles at seeing the Delanes' daughter.

As for Joe, the pony, his delight was manifest when Dolly went to him and stroked his white nose and patted the sleek neck.

"Good old boy; good Joey," murmured Dolly. "He looks well, dad!"

"Aye, but he doesn't get the oats he should, my dear," regretted Mr. Delane, mounting after her into the trap. "All my live-stock could do with better feed than they are getting. But this is a lean time of the year, and precious little money coming in."

"Never mind, dad; it's going to be a grand summer for the corn! You'll pull through!"

Thus the girl who had been cheated out of five thousand pounds comforted the father whose appearance bore witness to the strains and the wear and tear of a struggling existence.

He was not by nature a grumbler—far from it. As they bowled along in the old-fashioned pony-trap, sheer joy at having Dolly home again made the tenant farmer very cheery. He agreed that the fields looked very promising, and, anyhow, complaining was of no use.

A mile or so along the prettiest of country lanes, and then they turned in at the farm gateway, to find Mrs. Delane running out with glad cries.

"Me in my apron still, as late in the day as this," laughingly exclaimed the farmer's wife, after a prolonged exchange of hugs and kisses. "But I have just been making butter—"

"I know!" nodded Dolly, going towards the old-fashioned porch with her loving mother. "Well, you must let me make the butter to-morrow, and it shall be a gold medal brand! I won't lose you any customers!"

"Dear child, I am sure you won't," was the fervent reply. "Let's have another look at you, Dolly. You're thin—"

"Oh, mother, I'm awfully fat! I'm gaining every day now. And wait till I get at the clotted cream! Oh, here's old Bouncer! Hallo, boy!"

And now, at the doorstep, Dolly knelt to pat the shaggy sheep dog who had grown very, very old in the family's faithful service.

Next, Dolly had to renew her acquaintance with the tabby cat, just then walking about with a kitten in her mouth. From the dim parlour, where the happy-hearted girl was to sit down to her late tea, came the lusty song of a canary.

Later, she roamed out to get a look round the old place before nightfall. The twilight was lingering because of a clear sky that held a new moon. The silvery sickle hung low in a lemon-yellow sky, and Dolly could count on a fine day to-morrow.

She peeped in upon the cows, all placidly chewing the cud after their evening feed, and then had a look at the latest calves. Not so many as there used to be—a bad sign! It meant that dad was having to sell his young stock, to get ready money, instead of being able to "run them along."

But all round the place there were these signs of hard times. Ricks had been threshed and the corn sold, whereas dad always used to wait for that time which brings the best prices.

The stables held monster Shire horses who were old friends. She spoke to each one softly by name. Handsome creatures—but it was a horse just like one of these from whom she had saved that unknown girl's life. Dolly came out of the stables, thinking of that affair all over again.

The lonely farmyards were darkening at last; but she felt she must sit for a minute on the top bar of a field gate, to watch the silent owls winging by, whilst the young moon set behind the hills. She was glad to be home again, and yet not glad. She felt free from all loneliness when she saw the homestead's lattice windows glimmering through the gloaming; and yet she was lonely, very lonely, when she thought of Morcove.

"Dolly, darling!"

"Yes, mother, I'm coming!"

Down she jumped from the high gate, and sauntered towards the age-old farmhouse. Before going indoors, she stood to take one last look round.

Home! Nor could home be dearer to any other girl than was this rural habitation to her. Up

there was the dormer window of the very room where she had been born. Would her parents have to give up in the end? If they did, it would only be because they were ruined. Nothing but black ruin would ever make them sever their connection with the place. They loved it so. Supposing, then—supposing there was a poor summer, and prices went from bad to worse?

"And yet some people seem to have so much money!" Dolly pondered, half-aloud. "The girls I know at Morcove whose parents are so rich! And think of Grace Garfield, coming into that windfall of five thousand pounds—all for herself! If I could have come into a fortune like that— Oh, but what's the use of thinking such things!"

And she added, in a suddenly altered tone of cheerful pluck:

"I brought my books with me. I'm going to stick at them, this evening—yes, I am! I'm going to see if I can't sit for the Gillingham after all, when the time comes!"

The brave, self-reliant girl, so richly deserving better luck than had been hers of late!

But perhaps some guardian fate was to watch over Dolly's interests after all? She was to receive her reward in the end—perhaps!

Better to be Dolly than Grace!

IT had been a very jolly after-prep. gathering in Study 12 this evening.

The girls were dispersing now, for in a minute or two the bell would be ringing all Morcove School down to the bedtime assembly. Grace Garfield, coming away from Study 12 in talk with Helen, Trixie, Madge, and two or three others, looked as light-hearted as any.

Nor was she having to force her spirits. Ever since Dolly went home, a few days ago, Grace had felt wonderfully easy in her mind. It seemed to have made all the difference in the world to her, to have the cheated girl no longer always confronting her.

"Oh, Grace Garfield—just a sec.!"

She turned round surprisedly. It was a sudden hail from Cora Grandways, and what Cora should want with her it was impossible to imagine.

"Well?" Grace asked, declining to turn back in the passage.

"I want a word with you. Private!"

Whatever was Cora driving at? With an annoyed look, Grace felt compelled to go back after all, turning the corner at the end of the corridor to follow Cora into the latter's study.

"It's like this, Grace; I thought I'd ask you if you'd come out with me to-morrow afternoon, as it's a halfer?"

Cora's manner, although so sweet, seemed to be tinged with something threatening. She was smiling, but whether out of liking for Grace or in mockery, that girl could not quite tell.

"No!" Grace refused, quite bluntly. "Haven't I let you see plainly enough, Cora Grandways, that I've no time for you, any more than the other girls have?"

"Wait a bit," said Cora, suddenly putting herself between Grace and the closed door. "That answer—"

"It's the only one you'll get. Why do you persist in thinking that just because I have come into money, I would make a nice crony? I am not the least inclined to—"

"But I am—see?" Cora retorted, with her wide grin. "I frankly admit, Grace, I could

do with a friend, and, after all, we used to get along all right."

"That's going back to a time I'm ashamed to think of now!"

Cora laughed.

"If you have nothing worse than that to be ashamed of, Grace— Look here, think it over. Isn't it worth while joining up with me and having a few treats, instead of getting nothing but games with the Betty Barton crowd? You're like me now—got money to spend—"

"Never you mind about the money, Cora."

"I'm afraid I do mind, Grace. I'm afraid I've been wondering about it a good deal lately. Wondering," said Cora, her handsome eyes looking straight into the other girl's, "how you will feel when you have to give it up!"

There was a sudden deathly pallor in Grace's face. She stood utterly struck back by this fearful blow from a totally unexpected quarter.

If Cora's words meant anything at all, they meant that she knew—she knew!

"Yes," that girl said, as if reading the other's very thoughts, "I know all about it, Grace. The school imagines that you have refrained from giving details as to why you came into that money, out of pure dislike of having a fuss made of you. And instead, the reason is that you never did perform any heroic deed!"

"How dare you say so?" panted Grace desperately. "I—"

"Bluster won't shut me up," was Cora's blunt retort. "I say what I know to be true. It was Dolly Delane, not you, who saved Daphne Cranford from a runaway horse last summer. If Dolly had not been in hospital when Daphne came to the school on a flying visit the other day, you would have been found out! Daphne made a big mistake in naming you to her parents as the girl who should be rewarded. Daphne doesn't realise, even now, but she has caused the wrong girl to be rewarded. You did nothing towards saving her!"

There was a great pause. Grace took out her handkerchief and wiped her lips, then walked wildly about the room as if she were in a trap. "I deny it, Cora!" she gasped out at last frantically. "You—you have jumped to wrong conclusions. It's horrid of you—the sort of thing you would do! I did deserve the reward!"

"You did not, Grace! You have known for some time now that it should have gone to Dolly Delane. You must have known when you first heard from Daphne Cranford. She wrote a letter explaining why you had been given the money by her parents. This letter!"

So saying, Cora suddenly pulled open a table drawer and took out a peculiar object.

It was a small pane of glass, on to which had been neatly pasted the scraps of paper representing a torn-up letter.

One wild glance, and Grace saw that every tiny scrap was in its right place. Cora had fitted the scraps together like a jig-saw puzzle.

"See?" smiled Cora, taking up the sheet of glass to show the other side. "It's all here; you can read both sides of the letter, because I used glass. Do you want to read the letter, Grace? Shall I read it aloud for you?"

"No! I— Cora—"

"Let me refresh your memory, anyhow," the Grandways girl said, enjoying her triumph. "Look at this postscript, where Daphne speaks of another girl being with you, that day last

summer—Dolly Delane. If this letter did not upset you at the time you received it, why did I find you moaning about in the grounds, as gloomy as could be?"

"Give me that letter—it's not yours, it's mine!" burst out Grace wildly. "I'm going to have it back. You cheat! Give it to me—"

"Not likely!" laughed Cora, adroitly dodging away from her schoolfellow. "But I am quite willing to hand it to Dolly Delane, when she returns to school! She ought to see it—"

"Cora, listen! Oh, let me explain," broke from Grace, as a miserable acknowledgement of her guilty silence up to now. "I never wanted to enjoy a reward I hadn't earned. I never schemed to cheat Dolly or anyone! It just happened—this mistake that Daphne made—"

"Because her recollection of the hairbreadth escape was such a confused one?"

"Yes; that's how it came about. And I—I admit, I did realise at last that the money should have gone to Dolly. But by that time I had grown used to spending freely. I wanted to give up the fortune, but I couldn't. Besides, what would the school think of me?"

"Not much, that's certain," grinned Cora. "You mustn't mind my laughing, it does seem so very funny. I mean to say, you have been very chummy with Betty & Co. lately! You would have nothing to do with me. I was ready to be friends, but you kept me at arm's length. Grace, that was a mistake! I make a good friend, but a very bad enemy."

Helpless to say anything in response to this stinging remark, Grace again stood away from Cora, wild-eyed and despairing.

"Still!" resumed Cora, softening a little, "I am not so spiteful as to want to show you up, Grace. It's no joke to be in your shoes now. You'd have to leave, or else remain to be shunned by the rest of the school. Sooner or later, you simply must, let Dolly have the money. But supposing, for the present—well, supposing I let you go on enjoying the money?"

"Enjoying the money!" echoed Grace, on the verge of tears. "A fine lot of enjoyment it has been to me!"

"Oh, come! You have had some jolly times, even if your conscience has been troubling you. The mistake has been, Grace, for you to be chummy with Betty and the rest, whilst doing a thing like this. You should have chummed up with me!"

The guilt-stricken girl returned her sombre eyes to Cora's handsome face.

"Are you wanting me to—to do that now?"

Cora shrugged.

"You know what I am, Grace—always fed-up with this life at Morcove. I've no use for games or girls who play games. I like getting about, and it's not surprising that now and then I feel I'd like to have someone sharing the fun. I never go down on my knees to ask a girl to be chummy. But—"

"You think you can compel me!"

"I rather think I can—don't you?" was the smiling retort. "But why force me to turn nasty? Here I'm offering to be quite chummy, treating the whole thing as rather a joke. Come out with me to-morrow afternoon, and you needn't imagine that I shall be twitting you about the money. I shan't say a word."

Cora suddenly gave heed to the bell that was ringing downstairs.

"Time to go down to assembly, Grace. So you just think it over. You go along now, whilst I put this letter away, and to-morrow—it's grand weather now for motor-cycling—you come for a run in my sidecar!"

In a crushed and despairing way Grace went to the door and opened it. On the point of casting a look back at her schoolfellow, she refrained. It would have been an imploring look that would only have amused Cora. There was no hope of mercy there. All that Cora offered was either an alliance suited to her own wayward nature, or—exposure!

Grace's slow step took her towards the main corridor. Then she checked. The thought had seized her— Could she get hold of that patched-up letter and destroy it?

But what use would that be? None! Cora knew the facts, and so, even if the tell-tale letter were destroyed, Cora would always have it in her power to make a statement.

"Then I must own up before the whole school, that's all!" was the guilty girl's despairing

thought. Cora only means that Betty and the rest will be grieved. To own up about the fortune means that they will be scornful, furious with contempt!"

Suddenly, the wretched girl felt every fine impulse forsaking her again.

She could see nothing but reasons for drifting on and on, in guilty possession of the fortune. Even now, Cora alone knew what a mistake there had been. Apart from Cora, Grace was as safe as ever! And all Cora wanted, in return for silence, was a companionship that would end her loneliness.

Tragically, Grace realised that this was the hour when she, the cheat, must make her choice. Which was it to be, then—which? The fortune still hers, with a possibility of its remaining hers for life? Or—fairplay for Dolly?

Far into the night she lay wakeful upon the bed that had so often been a sleepless one, just lately. Which—which should she choose? A blind continuance along the path of secret guilt, trusting to luck to save her always, or—the straight and narrow one?



BACK HOME. As Dolly and her father turned in at the farm gateway, Mrs. Delane ran out with a glad cry. "Me in my apron as late as this!" she exclaimed, as she kissed her daughter. Dolly nodded. She knew the need of constant hard work on the farm.

decision. "It's no use, I simply can't go on—I won't! Sooner or later I have got to do the right thing by Dolly!"

For a few moments she felt herself to be nerved for the dreadful confession. Now, to-night, she would make a clean breast of everything! She would get hold of the headmistress even before the assembly took place.

But Grace had only to encounter Betty and some of the others, a few seconds later, to falter in that fine decision.

She found herself amongst these trusting, admiring chums of hers—girls who put fairplay before all else! How could she forfeit their friendship? How bring herself to stand disgraced before them and the rest of Morcove School?

And yet—

Was it not going to put her in disgrace, to ally herself with Cora?

That question was quickly answered by the weak side of Grace's character. "Not a tithe of the disgrace that the other means! To go about with

Her choice was made before she slept.

And the following afternoon she was out and about with Cora.

As Fate Decees!

A FINE motor-car, with a great quantity of luggage strapped to the grid, came purring along the main road from London to Southampton.

It was a perfect spring day, and the three passengers were enjoying to the full the loveliness of this part of the journey. The countryside could not be prettier than it was just here, in the heart of Hampshire.

Daphne Cranford, as the car ran by a finger-post by-road, gave a sudden excited cry.

"Dad—mother! Oh, can we stop for a bit? Do let's stop, please!"

"Why, my dear?"

"That finger-post; it said: 'To Fallowfield Farm'—and that's where the girl Dolly Delane lives! I know, because one of the Morcove girls

mentioned it. I would love to call and ask if she is quite well again. Her parents will know, for certain."

Mr. Cranford, most indulgent of fathers, promptly gave orders to the chauffeur, and they manoeuvred round on the main road, then ran back to turn down that side lane.

"We've plenty of time," commented Daphne's father. "Our boat for Havre doesn't leave until late this evening. And this is a delightful spot, anyhow, for a pull-up. Pity the girl herself won't be at home, Daph!"

"Yes, dad. It will be nice to find out, anyhow, how she has gone on. You know she was ill in the school san., that day I visited Morcove."

Mr. and Mrs. Cranford nodded, and whilst the car lumbered down the rough lane they chatted with Daphne about that flying visit of hers to the school.

Five minutes later the car was at the farm, where the lady and gentleman genially introduced themselves to Mrs. Delane, explaining the motive for the call. Mr. Delane was away at market, and as for Dolly—

"She's at Morcove, of course!" was Daphne's taken-for-granted remark. "What, not at school?"

"No, miss; it so happens we have had her home for a week or two—"

"Oh, do you hear this?" Daphne joyfully turned upon her parents. "Dolly Delane is at home! We can actually see her!"

"She can't be far away," said Mrs. Delane confidently. "If you are in a hurry and want to get her—"

"Yes, I do! Let me run and find her!" exclaimed Daphne, a-dance with joyful eagerness. "I didn't see her at the school that day. I don't want to miss her this time!"

"My daughter is not in the dairy, making butter, so I imagine that you'll find her out in the home-

meadow, amongst the poultry sheds. Our Dolly is seeing after the rearing, and—"

But it was no use saying more. Daphne was off!

Gaily she whirled away from the farmhouse, to flash across a cobbled yard, and then through an open gateway, into the first meadow. Some cows looked up, then resumed their grazing. One corner of the field was given over to poultry-sheds and runs, and Daphne saw a girl just there, stooping over a coop.

Swift as ever the youthful visitant sped across the emerald grass. She was quite close before Dolly Delane heard her and, after looking round, straightened up.

Daphne approached, greatly enjoying the pleasant surprise that it was to mean for the other girl.

"Dolly Delane? How are you, after all this time? You've got over that illness, anyhow! But—"

And there the speaker paused, for Dolly had let fall the metal jug with which she had been giving water to a mother hen. The jug had dropped from a nerveless hand. Amazedly she cried out, at last:

"Why, you—you are the girl—last summer—"

"Daphne Cranford, yes," nodded the owner of that name, herself turning pale as a shock went through her. "And you— Oh! Aren't you the girl who—who saved me from the runaway horse?"

"I— Yes, I did happen to—to be the one," faltered Dolly, in great agitation. "Have you been thinking that—that Grace Garfield was the one?"

"Of course I have!" cried out Daphne, dismayedly. "Or, why should I ever have got dad to give her that reward! You know—five thousand pounds—it was simply to reward the girl who saved my life! And I gave dad the name of Grace Garfield!"

"Then you made a mistake, Daphne Cranford. I have wondered a good deal—have been forced to wonder—whether there had been a mistake."

"Did a girl ever make a more awful blunder!" was Daphne's distressed outcry. "Oh, how terrible! But I can only say, Dolly, there is a lot to account for the mistake. I was so upset at the time of the accident; we didn't remain in talk for long. You remember?"

"Yes!"

"But, if this is the case, what has that girl Grace Garfield been about, to stick to the money?" Daphne rushed on, in sudden great indignation. "Mind you, when I visited her at the school, I got a shock then. I felt that although the name was the one I had meant, the girl herself was not the one! But I decided that everything must be all right."

"Naturally," Dolly nodded, becoming strangely calm, whilst Daphne's distress only increased. "So I concluded that there could have been no mistake, or Grace would have corrected it."

"Yes! One trusts people. Surely one would expect a girl to speak out! And that is just what Grace has not done! Oh, how shameful, how mean and cruel!" panted Daphne. "The unfairness to you—a chum of hers, I think?"

"I have always thought that she and I were chums, yes," assented Dolly sadly. She picked up the jug. "Oh, well! But how on earth did you chance to turn up like this, Daphne Cranford?"

"I don't feel I can trouble to explain that," was the sighing answer. "I and my people were motoring down to Southampton, to catch the boat for France. A finger-post put me in mind of your

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home address, for some of the girls had mentioned that you lived in Hampshire, on a farm—Fallowfield Farm. So I got dad to come along here. Dolly, the point is—you ought to have had that five thousand pounds!"

With the fluffy day-old chicks prettily running around her, Dolly stood silent, her homely face by no means charged with sudden great joy at the prospect of being rewarded after all. She must have had thrilling thoughts of what the fortune could do for her and her people. But there was this sad thought of how her schoolfellow and study-mate had cheated her like this!

Daphne, in a real passion by now, resumed: "I am going to have the thing set right, Dolly! My parents are indoors, with your mother. We'll go in and explain straight away! That girl at Morcove—oh, if I had her here! She is a little fraud, a cheat!"

"But there was the temptation," murmured

if some day Grace Garfield owns up of her own accord?"

"All Morcove will be happier," was the steady answer. "And Grace herself, by owning up in the end, may even escape lifelong disgrace! Oh, Daphne, you are not a Morcove girl; but if you were, and had the school's name to think of? If you were in my place, Daphne—wouldn't you want to be silent, for the present at least, giving Grace a chance?"

"Yes, I suppose I would!"

"Then you will let me, won't you?" entreated Dolly emotionally. "Surely, if I want to do this thing, you will agree to do your part? It only means being silent for a bit!"

"Then you don't mind being without the money a little longer?"

"The money! If I didn't see how greatly it would help dad and mother, I would say, let Grace keep it for ever, rather than have her shown

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Dolly. "Let us remember that. She never schemed to cheat me. The chance came, and—it was too much for her, I suppose."

"How you can talk like that!" Daphne exclaimed, admiring the other's restraint. "She doesn't deserve the least pity. Who can forgive a girl for cheating—a chum?"

"It has been most unfair of her; a thing I could never have imagined a Morcove girl doing," sighed Dolly. "That's what I have to think of; she's a Morcove girl. And if we show her up—"

"There's no 'if' about it, Dolly Delane. I am going to see that you have that money! Come on—"

"No, wait!" exclaimed the Morcovian, gesturing earnestly. "Goodness knows, Daphne, I can do with the money. At least, my parents can. For times are very hard in the farming world. And I suppose I can feel entitled to—accept the money, although it seems such a lot. But do nothing to-day, Daphne—please!"

"Not tell my people?" This time to-morrow they and I will be on the Continent! Dolly, you must—you must let me—"

"No, I don't wish it—please!" was the supplicating cry that left Daphne agasp at Dolly's forbearance. "I think of things that you can't be expected to bear in mind. Morcove School—Grace Garfield's position—"

"Only what she deserved!"

"That may be so," allowed Dolly sadly. "And yet, much as I want the money, I do feel I must— Oh, how shall I say it! Be patient; give her a chance—yes, Daphne, a chance to own up, instead of being denounced!"

Daphne stood mute and very still, suddenly impressed with the full meaning of the other's generous words. Her eyes dwelt upon homely Dolly, in her simple cotton frock, with intense admiration.

"You mean, Dolly, you'll be so much happier

up! But fair's fair, and I am going to have the reward your people so generously gave, for my people's sake," Dolly said, her eyes aflash. "Only, let's wait awhile, Daphne! Say nothing to-day!"

"What a sport you are," came from Daphne, after a little pause. "Very well, then, I agree to what you ask. Perhaps, in your place, I would feel the same. I hope I would, anyhow! For the sake of the school!"—she held out her hand, so that a firm clasp might seal the understanding—"we are going to say nothing at present!"

"That's right," said Dolly simply. "For the sake of my school! And," she added, with a sudden note of great anguish in her low voice, "for Grace Garfield's own sake, too!"

In silence, after that, the two girls walked off in the direction of the brown-tiled farmhouse. It seemed as if not another word was to be said; but suddenly Daphne halted, voicing the uneasy thought:

"Supposing it doesn't answer—your giving Grace Garfield this chance? Supposing she doesn't own up? The longer the time she has been given, the worse they will all think her to be!"

"She must own up," Dolly said, with quiet desperation. "If, when I get back to Morcove next week, Grace does not speak out of her own accord, then I shall know what to do. Somehow or other, I shall simply make her!"

And, whether or not Dolly Delane was forced to carry out that fine resolve, our next story will show!

(THE END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

Things are getting more and more exciting where the wrongly-bestowed fortune is concerned. Will Grace own up, or leave it for Dolly to make her do so, some way or other? You cannot afford to miss a word of next week's fine complete Morcove story. It is "The Silence of Dolly Delane."