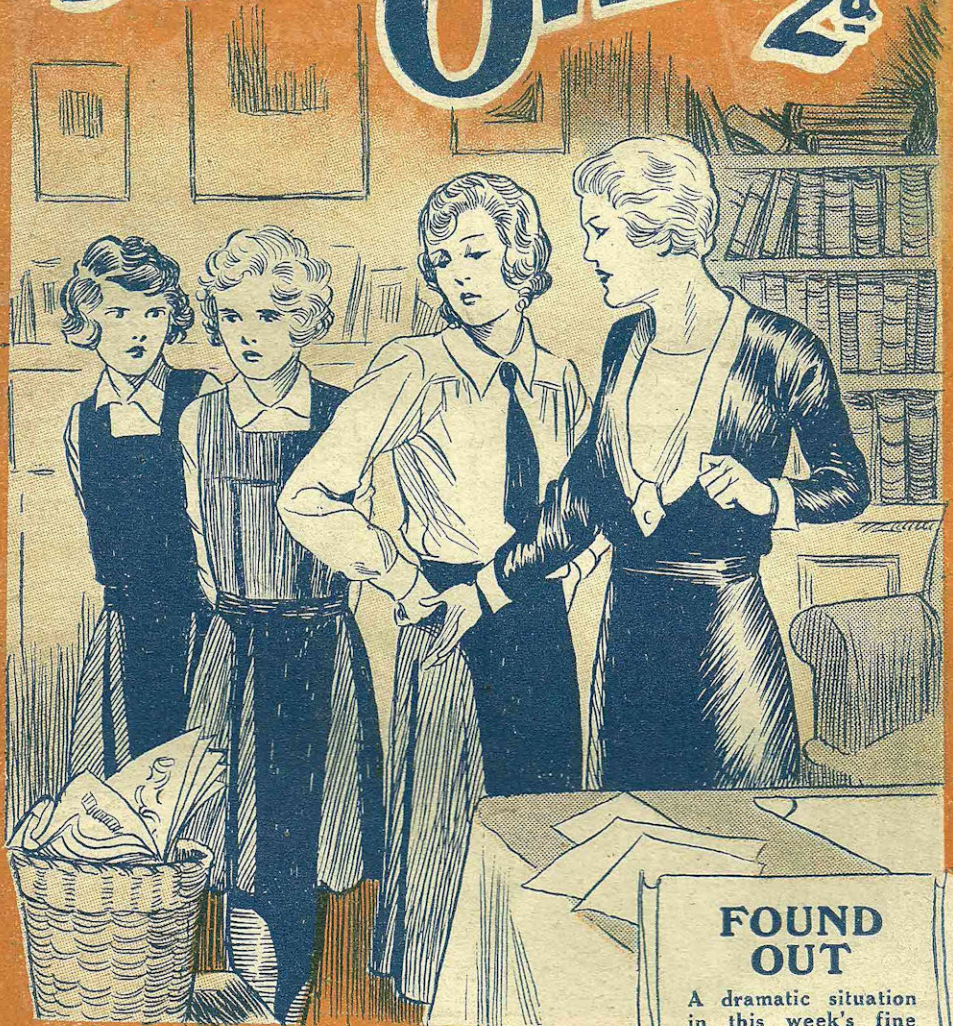


The Schoolgirls' Own Annual Now on Sale  
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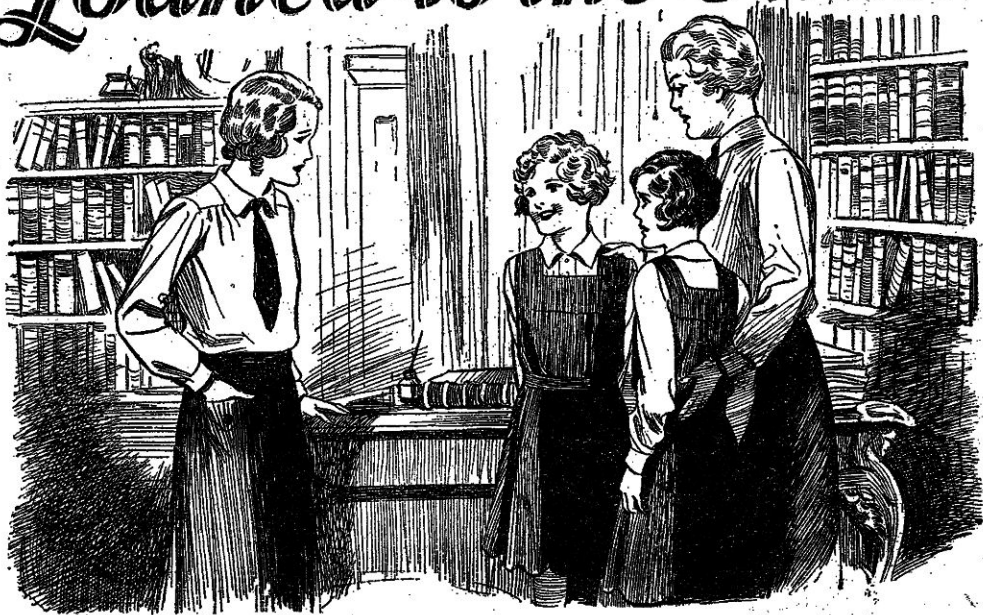
# The SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN 2<sup>d</sup>



## FOUND OUT

A dramatic situation  
in this week's fine  
Morcove School story,  
complete within.

# "Loaned" to the Sixth



*Betty Barton and Co. Feature in this, the First of a Brilliant New Series of Morcove School Stories*

THE novelty of being "loaned" to the Sixth, to help with the production of a souvenir to be called "Fifty Years of Morcove," appealed greatly to Betty Barton and Polly Linton. But while the Fourth Formers were ready and eager to "do their bit," they met with nothing but discouragement from Althea Dillon. But then Betty and Polly did not know Althea.

## A Scare In Study 12

"Is that you, Polly?"

"Yes, Betty!"

"I wondered where you were! I say—"

But Betty Barton, captain of the Fourth Form at Morcove School, did not say it immediately.

Instead, she hastened across to that book-crowded corner of the school's fine library, where made-up Polly Linton was choosing a book for herself.

It was as if Betty felt that what she had to say was so serious, it must be imparted in a whisper.

"Polly dear, you and I have got to go to Miss Somerfield. And it's about—it's about the 'Morcove Magazine'!"

Then Polly Linton, putting several books back upside down—the sort of thing Polly would do! turned open-mouthed to her chum.

"About the mag., Betty? What have we done in the mag. to cause a row?"

"Goodness knows, I don't!"

Editorial responsibility for the Fourth Form's amateur magazine being upon these two girls,

it was not surprising, perhaps, that they now looked at each other in some dismay.

"The latest number—out yesterday," Polly said anxiously; "it was all right, wasn't it?"

"I thought it a jolly good number," grimaced Betty. "Can't remember anything that could have given offence to the Head, anyhow!"

"Not in that quarter, no," Polly agreed reflectively. "Of course, we did pitch into the Fifth Form, and some of our personal pangs were stingers, but as for a word against Miss Somerfield or anybody else who matters—Is there a copy here, Betty? There should be."

"I don't see one. Perhaps that's the copy Miss Somerfield has got hold of!"

"Come along up to Study 12, then," Polly proposed feverishly. "And we'll look through a copy there. We hadn't to go to Miss Somerfield at once?"

BY MARJORIE STANTON

"She said in a half-hour's time, Polly."

It was a Wednesday afternoon; the mid-week "halfer" at Morcove School, and a pouring-wet one at that. Otherwise, Polly would not have been found in the library, just now, looking for something to read. The sudden failure of the weather to make good its promise of the morning had upset the plans of lots of girls, and the schoolhouse, accordingly, was in a fairly noisy state.

Every flight of stairs had its boisterous batch of girls, eager to draw Betty and Polly into talk, if not into some bit of impromptu fun. The same in the Fourth Form corridor, where girls seemed to come rushing out of studies the moment after rushing into them.

But Betty and Polly had got something to do now, if these others hadn't. Where was a copy of yesterday's issue of the Morcove Magazine, that it could be looked through—at once?

"Where?" clamoured Polly, starting to flounce about in Study 12, the moment she had entered with Betty: "Come on, Naomer; come on, Paula—look about for one!"

"For what, pway?"  
"A copy of the 'Morcove Mag.' didn't I say!"  
dinned Polly.

"No, you didn't!" shrilled back that dusky imp, Naomer Nakara, who was one of the four tenants of the study. "Eef you would only say what you want, zen you might get it."  
"I might find a copy, properly filed," fumed the madcap, "if we weren't always in such a muddle! What's this jug doing here?"

"He is my winter-warmer, so don't you—"  
"What's this lump of cake?"

"He is mine, too, so don't you—"  
But the madcap did! In her usual make-believe anger, she dropped the lump of cake into the jug, then handed the latter to Naomer with a withering:

"There you are; take it outside. Take it on the mat!" And then to languid Paula Creel:

"Found one yet, Paula?"  
"Weally, Polly deah; you come in like a huwricane, so that I don't know whether I am on my head or my heels, bai Jove!"

"Here we are, Polly," chuckled Betty, having rummaged out a copy of the latest issue. "Now to see!"

"Good gwacious, see what?" palpitated Paula.  
"Nothing wong, I hope?"

"If there is," said Polly with mock grimness, "it's in that article I accepted from you—as I never should have done, if I had been in my right senses! 'Beauty versus Brains'—and you took the side of Beauty. That's what's caused the row, you may depend!"

"Howwows, what wov!"  
"Either that," Polly pursued grimly, flicking over the pages of the cyclostyled magazine, "or else it is what Naomer wrote—"

"Hi, don't you say a word against my articack! Bekas I showed him to cook, downstairs in ze kitchen, and she said—"

"It isn't what cook says; it's what the Head is saying," Polly declared. "Now you've got the 'Morcove Mag.' suppressed!"

"What ze diggings! Just bekas I wrote: 'How to Make Treacle Toffee,' when you know I am an eggspurt!"

"And as wegawds any wemawks of mine on 'Beauty versus Bwains'; after all, Polly deah, we Cweels—"

"Oh, be quiet, both of you!" Polly suddenly requested, starting to take the matter really seriously. "I can see a lovely misspelling, Betty,

that oughtn't to have gone through! But there can't be a row about that!"

"Just as if! Your 'Sidelights on the Studies' was a bit searching this month," grinned the captain. "And some of Tess Trelawney's sketches for 'Fancy Being in the Fifth!' must have rattled that Form. But—"

"That's what I shall say, if there's to be a row," Polly exploded. "What's the use of a Form magazine, if it doesn't show some pep?"

At this moment, various intimate friends of the Study 12 four drifted in. They included tall Pam Willoughby, jolly Helen Craig, music-mad Madge, artistic Tess Trelawney, and quiet Judy Cardew.

"Row on!" Polly cheerfully announced.  
"Oh, is there?" was the bland response. "What about?"

"This!" Dramatically, Polly flourished the odd copy of the latest issue. "Libel action pending! In fact, Betty and I quite expect to have to go to prison."

"It's Miss Somerfield; she must have spotted something that she is going to play steam about," Betty explained. "Otherwise, would she be wanting to see Polly and me about the jolly old rag? Have you girls," the captain implored, "noticed anything?"

"To tell you the truth," smiled Pam serenely, "I haven't looked at my copy yet."  
"Thing to say!" sported Polly. "When the 'Morcove Magazine' represents the cream of the Fourth Form talent. Mean to say you haven't even read your own article, Pam?"

"No!"  
"Bai Jove, extwaowdinawy!"  
"Bekas Paula Creel has sent six copies home to her people!"

"What!" was the chorus. "Oh, Paula, Paula! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Er—merely to help the circulation, geads!"  
Polly marched up to Pam and handed her the spare copy.

"Look through it now, Pam! See if you can find a single thing that any headmistress could possibly come down on! See if it isn't a bumper number! Scintillating wit; fair comment; correct spelling—except now and then—lavish illustrating; and only one smudgy page! And all for twopenny!"

"Wiz a special articack! by me, don't forget! What ze diggings, I reckon I ought to have been paid for him!"

The girls laughed.  
"Best thing," smiled Betty presently, "go along down and find out what the row's about! You and I, Polly—"

"Come along then, Betty."  
So down they went accordingly.

They were a few minutes before their time, and Miss Somerfield was absent from her private room. But parlour-maid Ellen, who seemed to know the headmistress' arrangements, advised the two juniors to go in and wait.

They did so, and there on the large desk, uppermost upon a whole pile of papers and correspondence, lay a copy of the "Morcove Magazine."

There was just time for Betty and Polly to notice the ominous presence of that copy and to exchange glum looks, and then Miss Somerfield came upon the scene.

"Ah, yes, I remember; I wanted to see you two!"

This was said pleasantly enough; but then the headmistress was not the sort to let sourness preface censure.

"The *Morcove Magazine*'—this latest issue!" she said, and took up her own copy of it. And the captain and the madcap, standing strictly to attention, were thinking alike: "Now for it! But if anybody is to blame, we are, and that is just as well!"

### What a Surprise!

"**H**AS Miss Everard said anything to you two girls?" Miss Everard was the Fourth Form mistress.

"No, Miss Somerfield. She only told us that we were to report to you, and that it was about the '*Morcove Magazine*,'" was Betty's steady answer.

"For a certain reason," pursued the headmistress, "I made a point of going through the current issue extra carefully. I wanted to see how the thing was being run, these days; whether it did you as much credit as ever. And I am bound to say, Betty—you, too, Polly, for I am aware that you are a kind of co-editress—I think this particular number is just splendid."

Polly stared at her wonderingly. As for Betty, after a sort of dazed silence, she muttered a "Thank you."

"From cover to cover, girls, your little production outdoes, I am sure, anything of a similar nature produced by other Forms. I like to be fair, and fairness compels me to say that!"

"Er—very nice of you, Miss Somerfield," stammered Betty with a rush of colour to her cheeks.

"We thought—"

"You thought it extra good, did you?"—with a smile.

"No—at least—yes; but—er—"

"We thought there was something in it," Polly blurted out, "that had riled you—I mean, annoyed you!"

"Not at all, girls; oh, dear, no!" was the smiling assurance that lifted Betty and Polly high upon the crest of a wave of relief. "Just the contrary!"

Think of that!

"And why I have sent for you is this," Miss Somerfield continued sweetly: "It has been decided to produce a kind of printed souvenir to celebrate the successful conclusion of fifty years of *Morcove School* under the present regime. *Morcove*, of course, has existed as a school, in some form or other, for centuries, one might say. But it is exactly fifty years, this December, since the existing order of things, with a governing body, was instituted. We hope to present every scholar and all our friends with a copy when we break up. It will be called, '*Fifty Years of Morcove*.'"

"Oh, splendid title!" cried Polly. "And I can see the whole thing——" Betty began, but clipped off the rest.

"That," Miss Somerfield nodded approvingly, "is what I want; the understanding spirit, the grit for being able to tackle a big thing like this is going to be. I looked through your own little production, and I said to myself—'plus a little something, etc.'"

How Betty and Polly blushed now! To have come here expecting blame, and to have been so praised.

"Now, listen, girls," their headmistress resumed cordially. "Our souvenir is going to be the entire work of scholars. I want to be able, in my own little preface, to claim proudly that even the editorial oversight has been left to a scholar appointed for the task—a senior, as, of course, the importance of the work demands."

"Yes, Miss Somerfield!"

"We have a girl in the Sixth Form—*Althea Dillon*—who will act as editress. She came to me, having heard a rumour, asking if she might have the post. I have been shown one or two of her short stories—not in print—and I must say they show great promise. At the same time, I have to recognise——"

For a moment Miss Somerfield paused. She was looking very impressive.

"Literary people are by no means always the best ones at editing. They have not got, very often, the flair for presenting features in the



"Best of luck, you two," *Morcove's* head girl said to Betty and Polly. "You won't let us down, I know."

right, striking way. In the Sixth Form, it seems to me, there is a singular lack of that knack which you two girls seem to possess; the knack of making up a number attractively, of blending grave with gay, and so on. And, mind you, 'Fifty Years of Morcove' is not to be a deadly dull, stodgy production, to be looked at and then thrown aside."

"Should hope not!" broke out Polly. "It's going to cost enough?"

"It will cost a good deal, and I am glad you realise that," Miss Somerfield nodded. "The Board of Governors will bear the expense, of course. And, to come to the point, I have decided that you two girls had better be 'loaned' to the Sixth, as it were. I am sure you will both prove very useful as assistants to Althea Dillon, having gained such valuable experience over your own Form mag."

Betty could keep steady now, in spite of the one giddy announcement on top of another. But Polly, with her volcanic disposition, could not help giving a little skip of delight.

"The arrangement, girls, will be for part-time only, needless to say. It may be necessary now and then for you to be relieved from routine duties. But I know you are both well up in your work, and my experience is that the carrying out of such a task as this is a valuable education in itself. And now"—glancing at the clock—"where is Althea Dillon, for she should have been reporting to me a few minutes since."

Even as the remark was made, there came a tap at the door, and then a senior entered.

"Late, Althea!"

"Am I? Sorry, Miss Somerfield," pleaded the chosen editress for "Fifty Years of Morcove," with just a slight suggestion of being entitled to be late. "I was busy, writing, and didn't notice the time."

"Althea, bearing out what I was saying before lunch, here are the two girls whom I appoint to assist you—just the right pair for the job! It is a very wet afternoon; I imagine you will feel some useful time can be put in by taking Betty and Polly to your study and going into preliminaries."

The headmistress patted either junior in turn upon the shoulder.

"Go along, you two, and I know you will do your best. Althea, have you a copy of the 'Morcove Magazine'? If not, you can have this one."

"If it's anything like the 'Morcove Magpie'—"

"Oh, but it isn't," laughed Miss Somerfield. "A big difference, Althea! The chief merit about the Fifth Form's 'Magpie' is that it is rightly named. It is chatter, and little else. Now the 'Morcove Magazine'— But just study it, and see for yourself!"

There could be no mistaking Miss Somerfield's admiration for the Fourth Form production, as she handed her copy to Althea Dillon, who received it with a careless "Thanks!"

The impression made upon the minds of both juniors was that Althea regarded the "Mag." as something to be dropped, at the earliest moment, into a waste-paper basket. And, sure enough, that was just what happened to the copy presented to her.

Althea was consigning the "Morcove Magazine" to her own waste-paper basket, as she remarked to Betty and Polly on their coming after her into her study:

"I don't know that I can go into things now, you two!"

"You can't?" returned Betty. "Oh, all right; but Miss Somerfield seemed to think—"

"I know; but," said the senior, preparing to sit down to resume some writing, with a very self-important air, "I am in the midst of something of my own."

"Well, you know where to find us, Althea—"

"Oh, I can't be bothered to come after you," struck in the senior, taking up a pen. "I'll make it an appointment; say, five o'clock."

"Right-ho! And nothing you want us to do in the meantime?"

"No—except shut the door, after you."

As if they would have omitted to do that! Betty and Polly were exchanging nettled looks as they made their exit.

"Um!" grimaced Polly. "I don't know so much about it being a great catch, after all, Betty! Not with a girl like that to work under!"

"One oughtn't to say it," murmured Betty, "but I feel it's a mistake, at the very start. We know she is 'literary.'"

"In that awful highbrow way of hers, yes! Supposing we had been highbrow, Betty? Would the old rag have been what it is? See how she chucked our mag. into the waste-paper basket?"

"Oh, well, we must manage, somehow," laughed the captain. "You couldn't expect them to have left the thing entirely to us juniors."

Then, at the stairs end of the Sixth Form corridor, they ran into Ethel Courtway, Morcove's head girl. She was making for her own study, carrying a rain-sopped bag of golf-clubs.

"Had to come back," she smiled. "Pelting!"

"Caddie, miss?" Polly saucily offered.

"No, thanks," the head girl responded, with a very fond look for both juniors. "You two kids can do better work than that, I think? Haven't been 'loaned' to the Sixth as fags, have you? Well, is it all fixed up—about Althea and the 'Fifty Years' stunt?"

"Yes, Ethel—"

"Good! A word in your ears, then—not to be shouted round the school, mind!"

"No, Ethel!"

"It simply had to be Althea Dillon," the head girl confided chummily. "She is nothing, if not literary, and all that. And I shan't be able to interfere, mind—even if I want to!"

"Ethel, we only wish you were going to be—"

"I!" And she laughed. "I'd be about as much use, in a job of that sort, as this putter. It so happens, nearly all of us in the Sixth are like it. Very sad, but there it is!"

"But Althea Dillon—she simply lives for her writing, is that it?" Betty inferred.

"Oh, I wouldn't say that," smiled Ethel Courtway. "Plenty of things Althea cares about, as much as her—ahem—literary gifts, if you ask me. But it's not for me to discuss a senior with two juniors. Even though the two juniors are—two of the best!"

And suddenly Ethel's hand was being offered, first to the Fourth Form captain and then to Polly Linton.

"Best of luck, kids!" said Morcove's head girl, with her habitual goodwill. "You're going to feel awfully fed-up at times, I know. But you won't let us down—I know that, too!"

She walked on.

The two juniors stood there for a moment, looking after the tall figure of Morcove's adored head girl.

"Decent sort," murmured Polly; and Betty said:

"Always!"

## "Staff Work"

NOT a minute's peace for Study 12 at tea-time, that afternoon.

In and out, in and out were Betty Barton & Co.'s Form-mates, full of excitement and curiosity over "Fifty Years of Morcove."

It was all over the school by now; had spread like wildfire—the news concerning the projected "souvenir."

But that news was so scanty, the Form thirsted for fuller information.

As if Betty & Co. could supply it! They could and did offer to supply many a friendly cup of tea. The chums of Study 12 were no exclusive "set," and girls were free to flock in and out like this. But what neither the captain nor any of her intimates could do was to answer the multitude of questions.

In vain the eager inquiry was reduced down to a "Tell us this, anyhow!" Betty & Co. could not tell their schoolmates even that, whatever it was,

"But we shall know more, by-and-bye, girls," Betty constantly repeated. "We are to see Althea Dillon about it all at five o'clock."

"And I do zink you might let ze captain and Polly have a chance to make a good tea," was Naomer's skittish protest. "Bekas, what ze diggings, with all zis business coming along, zey must keep feet!"

Nor did the dusky one fail to look after Betty and Polly's teaplates, in the rare intervals between one lot of callers and another.

"Ze last cream-bun, and you can have him, Polly! Bekas you have got to keep your strength up now! And don't forget to pay me back, by letting me writing an articackle for-ze wonderful soup-in-ear."

That was as near as Naomer could get to the pronunciation of "souvenir."

"You shall do an article," Polly promised. "Shan't she, Betty?"

"I don't see why not!" the captain responded gaily. "I take it that 'Fifty Years of Morcove' is to contain contributions from all our writers of distinction!"

"At Morcove as a Queen, or something like that," Polly's fertile mind was ready to suggest. "By her Majesty Queen Naomer of Nakara, alias the Imp!"

"Bai Jove," chortled Paula, "I can imagine Althea Dillon letting anything like that go in!"

"But, hang it all, why ever not?" thundered Polly. "I'm sure Miss Somerfield wants the thing to be packed with—Come in!" she bawled, hearing the doorknob squeak again.

"And more hot water, somebody!"

This time it was Etta Hargrove who wished for a few words. Being a much-liked girl, she received a great welcome.

"No, I won't sit down; you're busv as it is," she declined nicely. "So, Betty! You and Polly are to be 'loaned' to the Sixth Form, as it were—"

"And me, don't forget!" shrilled Naomer. "What ze diggings," as Polly manifested mild surprise, "I am in zis, of course! You zink I can't spell, but I can! And Paula—she is going to join ze staff, too!"

"Howwows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There'll be a coloured plate of Paula," jested Polly. "We are seeing to that. 'Types of Morcove Beauty, No. 1' I suppose, Etta, you're like the rest—anxious to know if there'll be a chance for you?"

"It's all so vague at present, girls—"

"It is!" Betty agreed with emphasis. "But,

as we keep on saying, we shall know now we stand, by-and-bye. It isn't to be supposed, of course, that contributions won't be welcomed from all quarters."

"And it's a fact, anyhow, that Althea Dillon is to do the actual editing!" Etta submitted. "She will have her work out out! But it's a great honour, and I should think she will be awfully keen. They say she can write, too."

"Who can write—Althea Dillon?" the talk was caught up by Eva Merrick, who had pushed her way into Study 12, a few moments since. "They say she writes stories and reads them aloud to her cronies, at her tea-parties. Which I," said Eva, "consider awful!"

"There'll be no more time for tea-parties, either in Althea's study or in here, if you ask me," laughed Betty, jumping up. "It's good-bye to all that and a lot more, I fancy, that Althea is fond of. Isn't she the senior who queens it over a set of admirers?"

"Henceforth," said Polly, dramatically crashing down her empty cup, "the throne must make way for the printing-press; the sceptre must give place to the blue-pencil! If you're ready to go along back to her study, Betty, so am I. All I hope is, that Althea doesn't start reading one of her stories to me! Otherwise, I don't mind much what happens—so long as we're allowed a free hand, and all that!"

There was light laughter as Polly said this; and then came—cheering!

She and Betty had only to show themselves in the Fourth Form corridor, for a joyous demonstration to take place.

The "loaning" of captain and madcap to the Sixth was considered to have brought glory to the Fourth Form as a whole. Therefore, girls had turned out to double-line the way and cheer and cheer again.

It was an understood thing that they must be cheers, that would be heard in the Fifth Form quarters below—and so they were. Nor, indeed, were cries deriding the Fifth Form absent from all this clamour.

"Bekas—boo, ze Fifth; nobody good enough, boo!" was Naomer's shrill yell. "Zey had to come to us—pipooray!"

"Hear, hear! Ha, ha, ha!"

After which, it was not surprising that Betty and Polly encountered some of the Fifth Form girls, on the floor below, waiting to retaliate.

"A little present for the pair of you," said that Fifth-Former who had been chosen to offer a dictionary. "You'll need it!"

"Thank you so much," the Fourth Form captain responded sweetly; and she bowed whilst clasping the book close. "We do like to be correct in our spelling—even if others don't!"

"See last issue of your 'Magpie,'" chimed in Polly.

This generated a perfectly terrible yell from the Fifth-Formers. It had been expected that Betty would reject the dictionary with scorn. To see her scampering off with it, in Polly's company, was an added annoyance. For, truth to tell, it could ill be spared, that dictionary!

"Five striking now," Betty blithely commented, as she and Polly arrived once again at the door of Althea Dillon's study. "I say, though—"

"Oh, go on, knock!" urged impatient Polly.

"She said five, and five it is!"

So Betty tapped loudly. Her hesitation had been due to a blend of chatter and laughter audible from this study, suggesting a lingering over teacups by quite a number of girls.

"What do you want!" came the voice of Althea Dillon.

Betty opened the door and entered, with Polly at her elbow.

"Oh, you two! Oh, go away!" Althea commanded curtly, whilst the four or five other seniors who were her guests for tea looked ready to resume the merriment the moment both juniors were gone.

"But, Althea—"

"I can't attend to you now, so clear out!"

"It's all very well," Betty stiffened, "but you said five."

"I don't care if I did. These friends of mine are not going yet."

"Then you don't mind that it means wasting our time?"

"Not in the least," drawled Althea, to the great amusement of her cronies.

"We might be doing something else," Betty insisted spiritedly. "As it is—"

"As it is, you're simply letting in a draught. But you can come back in ten minutes, anyhow, and clear away the tea-things for me," smirked Althea.

"No, thanks," Betty said. "We haven't been loaned to you for that."

There was some giggling as the two juniors heeled round and walked out, causing Polly to say to Betty as soon as the door had been pulled shut:

"They would! Did you notice that Lena Grayson was one of them, and another Clarice Berkeley? Ugh! If those two are going to be always in and out whilst we're having to get on with the job!"

"We'll give Althea a good half-hour, and then go back," Betty decided. "Do you know, Polly, I feel that Althea Dillon's 'literary' claims must be a good deal of a pose?"

"All pretence," grimaced the madcap. "She puts on the air, but really we know that she can't be keen on writing, as Madge, for instance, is keen on music, or Tess keen on painting. Althea just takes dabs at the thing, to have something to appear grand about."

"She always seems to me to be too keen on pleasure to be able to do anything really well. Still, if she has swanked this souvenir job out of Miss Somerfield it must be left for her to be found out. We can't say anything, and neither can others."

They remained downstairs, simply waiting about, when they might have been settling to something useful. It seemed a humiliation to return upstairs to the Fourth Form quarters.

Presently they heard the unmistakable Madge Minden touch on the music-room piano, and they drifted to that near-at-hand spot, feeling pretty sure that Madge would be all by herself.

She was, and as she finished the piece played from memory she slewed round on the music-stool to express smiling surprise at her two chums being there.

"Althea wasn't ready for us."

"Oh!" Madge laughed. "By the way, I left Tess a few minutes since doing what seemed to me a most clever drawing for a 'Fifty Years of Morcove' cover. It was coming like lightning. I think you ought to see it."

"I'll slip up," Betty instantly decided. "We know what Tess is; she does these wonderful drawings, and then hates them to be even looked at. But this drawing she is on now might be the very thing."

The half-hour had nearly worn away, so Betty as she went out added that she would meet Polly in a minute or two at Althea's study.

The Fourth Form captain had to run the gauntlet of a good many Fifth Form girls, but as Betty was showing a business-like haste, no suspicion arose as to offhand treatment from the senior. If it had been known the Fifth Form would have been in great glee.

Betty entered the study tenanted by Madge and Tess very quietly, knowing how strung-up Tess always was when working at a drawing.

"Tess dear, may I just look at what you are doing?"

"Oh, you don't want to see!" was the inevitable mumble which Betty felt entitled to ignore.

"There will have to be an attractive cover for the souvenir, Tess, and I really don't see why you shouldn't do it. You know what the idea is; all girls' talent. Oh, Tess," came with Betty's next breath, as she looked over the artistic one's shoulder, "how awfully good; how clever!"

"It's nothing, I tell you. I just sat down, and—"

"Tess, if you fear that up I'll never speak to you again!" was the captain's playful threat. "Let me see once more."

She took the "rough-out" as Tess would have called it, although to Betty it seemed a finished picture even then, all the more effective because of strong, reliant strokes.

There, on those few square inches of drawing-paper, Tess had dashed down a most striking design for the souvenir cover.

"Fifty Years of Morcove" was done in artistic lettering that worked in most effectively with the picture of the schoolhouse, aloft on its great headland fronting the Atlantic.

Betty, smiling, suddenly backed away to the door, holding the sketch aloft.

"Before you put another stroke to it, Tess, let me show it to Althea Dillon."

"No. She'll think it rot."

"She can't, Tess. If I saw a thing like that on the bookstall I'd want to buy it. Not another girl in the school could do anything half so good, and so—"

The rest was a sudden wild flight on the part of the captain with the "rough-out." She rejoined Polly in the Sixth Form quarters, showed her the bit of work, heard the madcap give an admiring "Ripping!" and then went along with her to Althea's study.

The senior's cronies had gone by now, and Althea, seated at one end of the table from which tea-things had been put back, was writing.

"Yes, come on in," she said curtly. "I'm just getting off a letter to my aunt in time for the post. Polly, there's a spare typewriter in the school. Go and find it. I am entitled to have it for the 'Fifty Years' work. Betty, just clear away the tea-things, will you?"

The two juniors looked at each other. They were both inclined to demur. The spare typewriter was a "whacker" of the old sort, almost too heavy for one girl to carry. Nor did Betty think she should be asked to clear up after Althea's tea-party.

But if only for the sake of getting going they each obeyed, whilst Althea raced on with her letter. She was on page three.

"And now auntie darling, I have something to tell you that I am sure you'll be pleased about. The school is getting out a souvenir of 'Fifty

Years of Morcove.' It is to be a grand production, and I have been appointed editress.

"They have lent me two juniors for staff, so I think I have something to be proud of, don't you?"

"Auntie darling, I badly need a typewriter for all this special work, and so I wonder if you could send me the money to get one? I can buy a lovely little portable for eight pounds in Barncombe. Darling Aunt Kath, I would not ask you to do this, only there is no spare typewriter in the school, and I am sure you would hate for me to go without anything that can help me to make a big success of the job."

"Don't shake the table!" snapped Althea, although Betty was doing the clearing away in tiptoe, careful manner.

"Sorry."

Then just as the senior was gumming up her letter there came a battering-ram thump against the closed door.

Betty flew to admit Polly, who staggered in under the weight of a forty-pound typewriter. Just as she had used the monster as a knocker for the door so she crashed it down upon the table—thump!

"Here, Polly, slip down with this to the post before it's forgotten."

"Dash it all, Althea."

"Do as you're told. You're here to help me, aren't you?"

Spinning the letter at Polly the senior rose up grandly. She glanced at herself in a little mirror on the wall and seemed to feel better then.

"Er, Althea," said Betty presently.

"Yes, what?"

"I'd like to show you this sketch that Tess Trelawney has hit off. It's in the way of being a suggested cover for our souvenir."

"But I haven't asked for suggestions."

"No. But still—"

"I don't like the lettering, anyhow."

"You don't, Althea?"

"No. And what's that supposed to be, behind the lettering?" sneered the senior, eyeing the rough-out with extreme distaste. "A picture?"

"I don't know much about art, Althea, but I should have thought anybody could see. Tess has sort of combined a view with a design and the lettering, so to speak. Er—"

"It's evident how much you know about these things."

"We see railway posters and magazine covers worked this way, Althea?"

"The souvenir is not a railway poster," said the senior with a smile at her imagined cleverness. "It's not a rubbishy magazine, either. I can't see anything in that sketch."

"Well, I can," sighed Betty, gazing at it afresh. "I can see Morcove. It seems to me to mean all that Morcove stands for. See where she has worked in the school badge, down in the corner. All like part of a design for the whole."

"Rubbish! A photograph would be better. Besides, there's no room for type. How am I going to get my name on the cover as Editress?" Betty gasped.

"What!"

"But we won't argue," Althea ruled loftily. "I wouldn't dream of having that for a cover, or anything like it. I could do a better one myself. Did Tess really think—"

"Tess is the last girl in the world to push her own work. I had to take it away from her or she would have torn it up most likely."

"Pity she didn't. Does she want it back?"

"Althea, I shall hate having to take it back to her. I felt so sure that you would—"

"Well, I don't. And so the best thing—let it go there."

And the appointed editress of "Fifty Years of Morcove" dropped that suggested cover into the waste-paper basket.

### This Won't Do

POLLY LINTON came back into the senior's study just in time to see Betty Barton retrieving the condemned sketch from the waste-paper basket.

"When you fetched this typewriter, Polly," cried Althea, "why didn't you dust it! Look at all the fluffy keys."

"Oh, it works!" Polly shrugged. "That sketch."



"Do let me show this picture to Althea!" pleaded Betty. But "temperamental Tess" was diffident. "Don't be silly, Betty! She'll think it rot!"

You—you don't mean to say that you have turned it down?"

"Of course I've turned it down."

"Then I think it a shame!"

"It doesn't matter in the least what you think; get that into your heads, both of you, at the start. Which of you is the better one for typing?"

"I suppose I am a bit quicker than Betty," said Polly. "I've used the machine rather more than she has, over the Form mag."

"Then sit down and I think I'll start by dictating an article for the souvenir. Betty, I really don't know that you need hang about. There's nothing for you to do."

"But, Althea—"

In spite of a resentful stare Betty went on:

"Isn't it best to get out a sort of dummy of the souvenir? Isn't it usual to do that, so as to plan out the pages for space?"

"That's how we always go to work over the Form mag," Polly chimed in.



"Oh, the form mag.! I'm sick of hearing about that stupid little rag!" snapped Althea. "I want to dictate an article whilst I'm in the mood."

"Then you are beginning" said Betty flatly, "at the wrong end. It'll end in a muddle. We must know what we have to work to. Get out a dummy—"

"I'm not going to get out any dummy."

"I am sure Miss Somerfield will expect to be shown one."

"Look here," stamped Althea, "am I in charge or are you?"

"Oh, you are," said Polly, getting up from her seat at the typewriter to draw off to the door: "And it's a pity, I think."

"What you think! There you are again! Here, come back!"

Slam went the door, with Polly on the outer side of it.

Althea flew across, whipped the door open, and commanded:

"Polly Linton!"

But Polly still walked away. Like that, was Polly.

"Here, Betty, don't you go then," the senior fumed, turning back into the study. "You sit down to type what I dictate. But Polly must not think she is going to—"

"Really, Althea, you can't expect either of us to stand for it."

"Stand for what?"

"This treatment. We can see how it will be. You'll make a muddle of the whole thing, and Polly and I will get left with the blame. We don't want to boast, but after all, Miss Somerfield chose us because—"

"She didn't choose you two girls to edit the thing; she chose me. So that's enough. Sit down."

Betty sat down. There was the difference between her and Polly; restraint, forbearance in Betty, or she never would have been captain of her Form. That such restraint had nothing to do with lack of spirit, the Fourth Form knew, or again she would never have been the captain.

Althea started to walk about, composing her mind.

"It is my proud privilege," she began to dictate, and the keys clicked under Betty's deft fingers, "as editress of this—er—booklet—this—er—little brochure— No, strike that out, Betty."

As fast as she could Betty hammered the letter X across the couple of lines, clicked up the roller and was ready again.

"For fifty years," Althea began heavily, feeling that this was a grand-sounding, impressive start, "Morcove School has stood—er—has been—er—Morcove School."

"Full stop?" asked Betty.

"What? No! But strike all that out—look sharp!"

At this instant the door opened, letting in Lena Grayson, who stood smiling brilliantly whilst Betty crossed out that other false start.

"Getting on with the good work, Althy?" purred Lena, when silence came. "I say, shall you be going into town to-morrow?"

"I think so; yes—why, Lena?"

"Oh, I was just thinking—"

"Betty, clear out now," said the appointed editress of "Fifty Years of Morcove." "And look here, we can't do any more this evening. I'll let you know."

"Right-ho!"

And Betty marched out.

She came upon Polly Linton almost immediately. As before, they felt too irritated to want to return to Study 12.

"Let's go down to the class-room, Polly, and we might go into things on our own?" Betty suggested.

"But what's the use? I tell you, she doesn't know the first thing about getting out a booklet such as Miss Somerfield has in mind," Polly said, heatedly. "Seems to me, Althea wants to do the whole thing herself, her own way, and I say—let her!"

"We can't do that, Polly. Come along, dear. Look here, you and I get out a dummy, to show her in the morning? Then she will begin to see, perhaps!"

"But that's teaching her what she ought to know, since she put herself forward for the job. Oh, all right," Polly sighed, with a lift and fall of the shoulders, "we'll do that, Betty. Then she won't be able to say, anyhow, that we haven't done our best."

The class-room, as usual at this hour of the autumn evenings, was deserted and in darkness. They switched on sufficient lighting, then got some new and unruled exercise-books from the stationery cupboard, and sat down together at one of the desks.

First, they decided what would be a nice size for the printed souvenir, and then, with a ruler and penknife, they trimmed down the edges of the exercise-books to that size.

"Half a sec."

That was Polly, as she ran to get Miss Everard's pastepot and brush.

Returning, she took Tess Trelawney's rough-out and laid it, cover-wise, upon the dummy book that had been formed by putting some three exercise-books together.

"There, Betty!"

"Fine, of course," was the captain's approving murmur. "And yet she threw the sketch in the waste-paper basket. Have it on, Polly!"

So the Tess Trelawney sketch was pasted on as a front cover, and instantly the dummy looked more like the real thing.

For an hour after that, Betty and Polly worked away together in complete harmony. Ideas for features were pouring out of their heads, and what they did was to allocate space in the dummy for these proposed features, and to do all that clever fitting-in which only comes of experience in the production of printed matter.

They became so amused and so enthusiastic over their task, it was with reluctance that they had to break off at last, to repair to Study 12.

"All this might have been done, under Althea's supervision," Betty remarked, taking up the dummy to keep it in Study 12 for the time being. "We're not so silly as to suppose that all our ideas are just the ones. But—"

"Course not!" snorted Polly. "But working on these lines does give you a start; that we know. Yet she'll have a fit when we show it to her, you see!"

It was now the very quietest time of the lengthy evening, most girls being at "prep" in their studies. This, to Betty and Polly, was a relief, for they could not get rid of the feeling that they were going to look silly, having nothing definite to say about the projected souvenir.

"I'll have to look in on Tess, Polly dear, about the sketch. And I don't think I shall say how it was rejected outright. Too unkind!"

"No, don't you!"

They both called at the Minden-Trelawney

study, finding the two girls at work. There was, of course, a chummy readiness to break off and enjoy a chat with the callers.

"Have you two been with Althea all this while?" smiled Madge. "Useful spell, surely!"

"Hallo, got a dummy there? May I see?" Tess asked, with an extra eagerness due to her artistic nature.

But she frowned as soon as she saw her own "rough-out" pasted on as a front cover to the dummy booklet.

"You shouldn't have let Althea see that, Betty! Now, if I'd known that she wanted a cover got out, I'd have done something better, I hope."

"Can't believe you could do a better one than that, Tess," said Betty. "The fact that it came in a flash is all to the good, I reckon."

"Lovely," Madge murmured, bending nearer to look.

Tess lapsed into one of her frowning silences, whilst turning the leaves of the dummy. Betty and Polly had pencilled in "headings" here and there, and now and again Tess nodded in a very understanding and appreciative way.

"I tell you what," she said suddenly. "When does Althea want this back?"

"Oh—she—er—as a matter of fact," Betty laughed feebly, "she hasn't seen it yet."

"It may as well be said," Polly burst out grimly. "Althea is a washout. It was simply a waste of time whilst we were with her. Betty and I have got out that dummy since we left her."

"She asked you to get out a dummy, did she?"

"No, Tess—oh, no!" said Betty. "But we mean to show her that one in the morning. If she doesn't like it, she can do the other thing."

"It will look more like the real thing—strike her better, especially as she isn't used to 'make-up,'" Tess said crisply, "if I just letter-in some of these titles of yours. Make a picture-heading, here and there—"

"Oh, Tess, if you would!" cried the captain. "But I'm afraid it may let you in for a disapp—"

"Rot! I shall do it for fun. Though, mind you," Tess added quickly, "I think some of these titles are jolly good. She'll be sticking to them, of course?"

"Will she?" Polly grimaced dubiously. "How do we know! Oh, hang; if you will be so good, Tess, as to do that, then do it! Let's not think of Althea, but of—the school!"

Tess nodded.

"As soon as I've knocked off prep," she said, "I'll start in."

This did her credit; but it was to prove another waste of enthusiasm. She might just as well have left everything until her first free hour next day. For Betty and Polly would have been well able to leave the dummy in Tess' hands for the whole of that day.

They could not get so much as a minute with Althea, either early or late. The Study 12 pair thought it right to "report for duty," as it were; but Althea was engaged with friends.

From one point of view this was all right. Tess could have the dummy all that second evening and do some really fine work. Betty and Polly were only unhappy in their minds, because Althea had not had any say in the matter.

If only she had given the "go-ahead"—what a sense of real progress there would have been then! On the second morning, just before school, Tess strolled into Study 12 to return the dummy, and when Betty and the rest looked through it they were simply entranced.

"Thought I had better stop there," Tess threw out, turning away to the door. She wanted to escape, before any chorus of praise started. Up to this last minute before morning school had she devoted all spare time to the task.

"Tess—hi, don't go away!"

"No, bekas, jolly good; gorjus!" shrilled Naomer. "Ooo, and you have done a lovely picture of me in zat heading!"

"Bai Jove, Tess, admirable wovk, weally! Ewvay page bwhitened up—yes, wather!"

"If Althea," burst out Polly—"if Althea doesn't fall for this, then I really shall resign! What do you say, Betty?"

"Oh, but she will—she must!" Betty declared. "Could we hope for anything better? You should be on the staff, Tess! Look here, we must get Althea to engage you as art editor."

"Don't you do anything of the sort," frowned Tess. "You know what I am. There'd be frightful rows."

"There are going to be rows, in any case, if you ask me," said Polly.

"I'm willing to do anything that is in my line, if I can deal with you two," Tess stated, and then walked out.

"There's no time now," said Betty to the others. "But Polly and I must get after Althea at break. We can't have another day like yesterday—nothing done by her!"

So far the pair of them had given no hint outside the walls of Study 12 that Althea was simply letting things slide, and that even when she did get down to the work she was certain to prove a failure.

But this silence could not go on much longer. Fourth Form girls were wondering why details were not forthcoming, so that they could know what was wanted and have a shot at submitting something for editorial consideration.

It was the same in other Forms. Nobody expected to be commissioned to do features for the souvenir. But it was known that "Fifty Years of Morocco" was to be entirely scholars' work, and scores of girls were waiting for a lead.

Study 12 at this time was receiving frequent visits from would-be contributors who had called at Althea's study in vain.

There was an idea in the school that Betty and Polly, at any rate, knew the wishes of the editress. So those two juniors were in a most embarrassing position—one that was doing them no good in the eyes of schoolmates.

At any moment, as the "loaned" juniors realised, they might be suspected of withholding information for selfish reasons.

However, at break on this Friday morning something happened that was likely to render all the girls aware of how Althea was going on.

Betty and Polly the moment they were out of class for the mid-morning rest made for Althea's study. And they found quite a small crowd of other scholars hanging about the senior's closed door.

Some of these girls even had with them manuscripts which they were ready to submit.

"She isn't here yet," Betty and Polly were informed. "Are you two girls seeing her?"

"We hope so," was the best that Betty could say. She had the dummy under one arm.

"Nothing definite," commented one would-be contributor testily. "I do think we might have been told something by now."

"Hear, hear! Three of you on the job," grumbled another girl, "and the rest of the school all in the dark."

"Shame, so it is!" cried a third. "I expect I've only wasted my time writing this little feature. But hang it all, one expects—"

"Here's Althea."

She came sauntering along from the stairs, trying to appear resentful over the crowd about her doorway. But it was obvious that she felt flattered.

"What on earth do all you kids want?"

A babel answered her.

"We want to know something about—"

"Yes, Althea, it's not fair."

"Althea, would you look at this?"

"And this, please. It mayn't be a bit suitable, but then—"

"You haven't let the school know the lines on which—"

"Althea. Would you read this, too, and if it's not the thing, just explain the sort of thing you do—"

"Now look here, I can't have this!" cried the senior, refusing to handle one of the offered MSS. Oh, you girls are a nuisance! You must wait. Betty, take their scribblings and put them on my table."

"Then you will read them, Althea?" clamoured several of the youthful aspirants.

"If I've time. Now beat it."

Murmuring, they drifted away, whilst Betty and Polly followed Althea into her study. Both juniors had collected the submitted contributions which they stacked carefully upon Althea's table.

"Now you can go as well," she said.

"But, Althea—"

"Well, Betty?"

"Don't you want to see us about the souvenir? Don't you want to tell us how we can push ahead? This is Friday, and—"

"Not now," the senior decreed airily. "I've other things to do. Besides, you seem to think I'm doing nothing. It's all here!"—tapping her forehead.

Polly took a stride that set her closer to the official editress.

"Will you let us read through some of those other girls' efforts and see if—"

"You give a decision!"

"I didn't mean that," Polly answered hotly.

"I meant that Betty and I might give them a first reading, and set aside the possibles. There must be some good ones amongst them."

Althea curled a lip.

"I don't suppose for a moment there is a line fit to read, let alone print. No, they must wait. It won't take me five minutes to decide about them when I do begin."

"Well then," Betty broke out spiritedly, "will you give us ten minutes now, Althea, to go through this dummy?"

"What!"

"If you will look through this—"

"Is that Tess Trelawney's awful sketch on the cover?"

"Yes. We pasted it on, just to get the idea of—"

"Oh, go away and take the thing with you! As if I need a dummy. Besides, it's a bit of cheek on your part to go and—"

"But you don't do anything yourself!" flared out Polly. "And won't let us."

"I'll box your ears, that's what I'll do."

"I'd like to see you! Come on then—come on!"

"Polly," interposed Betty, plucking her by the sleeve. "Come away, dear."

The captain had almost to drag her chum out of the study. As they passed out Lena Grayson and one or two other seniors turned up at that doorway.

"Oh, botheration!" Polly fumed, going along to the stairs with Betty. "Why didn't you let me go for her!"

"That does no good, Polly. It's maddening, I know. But we'll manage."

"We could manage if only it were left to us. Hang it all, weren't we chosen because of what we had proved we could do? Has she ever written a school play and had it acted as I have? Has she ever—"

"I know, Polly. But this can't go on. Only you would hate, just as much as I would, going to Miss Somerfield with a complaint. Let's wait till midday, anyhow, and then keep at Althea about the dummy. I'm going to have that considered by her," was Betty's calm declaration.

Just as it happened they could not get to Althea's study directly after twelve. The Fourth Form was marched out for open-air drill just before noon, and Miss Everard did not think her juniors were suffering any martyrdom by being kept until a quarter-past on the drill ground.

Dismissed at last, Betty and Polly flew indoors. The dummy was recovered from the book ledge under Betty's desk in the class-room, where it had reposed during class-time. Once again the "staff" of "Fifty Years of Morcove" repaired to the editorial sanctum.

### Quite Mistaken

"DASH!" stamped Polly Linton, as they found the senior's study deserted. "Not here!"

"We'll wait," decided Betty Barton. "Even if she has gone into Barncombe, we'll wait."

"And get on with something in the meantime?" Polly urged. "Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know that we're entitled to—" Betty broke off, suddenly aware of a presence in the doorway.

She and Polly both flashed around, expecting to see a senior of whom news as to Althea's whereabouts might be gleaned. But instead they found themselves facing a complete stranger—a middle-aged lady of the timorous spinster type.

"Oh—er—good-morning," stammered Betty. "Were you wanting—"

"Good-morning, my dears," the visitor said, very sweetly and shyly. "My niece, Althea Dillon—from what I was told downstairs, this is her study."

"Oh, yes. Will you come in, please?"

Betty and Polly were done with all nervousness as quickly as this. The lady was a dear.

"I'm Althea's aunt, you see."

"Oh."

"Her Aunt Kathleen, yes, my dears. I happened to be going down to Cornwall, where there is a little boarding-house that is very cheap and good. They always take me in for the winter at very low terms," was confided without the slightest hesitation, "and that suits me so well, you know, as my means are slender."

"And so you broke the journey—"

"I was just going to say; I found I could run up from Exeter on a day ticket and then get a local from Barncombe to Morcove Road station. So that's what I did."

"You walked from Morcove Road station?" Betty exclaimed feelingly. "A goodish step."

"Oh, my dear, I didn't mind that. I like to look after the pence, as indeed I must do."  
 "I'll run and find Althea," Polly offered, "if she is about the place."

"Oh, thank you, my dear; good of you."  
 "And do sit down," Betty pleaded, offering the best chair.

"I haven't seen the head mistress," said Althea's Aunt Kath, sinking into the seat. "I thought I wouldn't bother her. Besides, I have only a little while here if I am to catch the one-twenty back to Barncombe for Exeter."

Betty was receiving the definite impression of a dear soul, given to doing kind actions for others at any cost to herself.

"Althea, as I expect you know, my dear, is under my wing now," the good woman chatted on softly. "I felt I must adopt her when her parents died. She is a dear girl, and, of course, I do feel so proud of her. So high up in her Form."

Betty could have stared. Some misunderstanding here; Althea was not at all high up in the Sixth.

"A rare girl. I may say it, I hope, in pure justice to Althea; so good at games, and yet so talented."

Another misunderstanding. Althea, good at games? To Betty's certain knowledge the girl was a great dodger of games.

"And now from a letter I had only the other morning I understand she has been appointed Editress of some book that is to deal with 'Fifty Years of Morcove.' I am so proud about that. Tell me," purred the gentle lady, "is that a typewriter?"

"Yes. It belongs to the school—a spare one that girls borrow. Er—about your going back presently," Betty was moved to remark. "I'm sure you could be run to the station in a car. I'm only saying that in case Althea doesn't come in to be able to—to see after you."

"Good of you, my dear. But I can walk; I think nothing of walking, although in my time I have had my car and chauffeur." She smiled, not in the least soured by the come-down in life. "If Althea should not come in in time to see me, I suppose I might leave some money quite safely in a note on her desk? She wrote asking me for the money to buy a typewriter for this special work, and of course I want her to—"

"But—but—" Betty was stammering in sheer horror of this good soul being taxed with the cost of a new typewriter; and then Althea came hurrying in.

She was all gushing affection.

"Darling Aunt Kath! Do you know," kissing her, "after I had passed you

on the road, I wondered if it was you, and in the end I turned back. I was on my bike with some chums of mine."

"That was nice of you, Althea dear! As I was just telling this girl"—with a charming smile for Betty—"I have walked over from Morcove Road Station. And now about that typewriter—"

"Oh, auntie darling," gushed Althea. "It's too sweet of you. You see—"

Betty heard no more than this. Naturally, she wanted to efface herself, leaving niece and aunt together. In the passage she found Polly waiting for her.

"It's not fair to grumble now that that aunt of hers has turned up," the madcap at once conceded. "What riles me is that Althea was off out again, it seems, at midday, and only came back on account of her aunt."

"I'm a bit worried about all this, Polly," came the captain's murmur. "By the look of it, Althea's been deceiving that nice aunt of hers most abominably."

"She has?"

"Or how is it that the aunt imagines Althea to be so jolly clever; 'so good at games, and yet so talented'!"

"Good at games—pooh!" snorted Polly. "Why, Althea never plays hockey or anything. I've heard that she swanks it on the links sometimes, but never does the whole course. As for 'talented'—what's her place in the Sixth?"

"A good way down. Yet the aunt imagines



"It's rubbish!" sniffed Althea. "That's the best thing to do with it." And Tess Trelawney's sketch was dropped contemptuously into the waste-paper basket.

Althea to be quite high up. Another thing, Polly. Would you believe it? Althea's been asking for money to buy a typewriter."

"She has?"

"I was just going to tell the aunt that it couldn't be necessary. Not my business perhaps, but; Polly, you could see the aunt would have to pinch and scrape to find the money."

The madcap's mouth set in a firm, hard line. In silence she and Betty made their way downstairs to go out of doors. The weather was dry at last after a very bad spell of wet and there was a general eagerness to take full advantage of the improvement.

"I must get a game or I shall explode," Polly said at last. "Ugh! But if there is anything I do hate it is imposing on others; abusing the good nature of friends or relations. Calling yourself 'literary' when you don't know the first thing about writing—that I can forgive. But—"

"Oh, come," Betty laughed appeasingly. "Althea must be able to write. What about those little stories of hers?"

"I'd like to see one."

Polly was to see one ere long, and there were to be some sensational developments arising out of that. Meantime, instead of being able to get a game on the field she and Betty became mobbed about by fellow juniors who wanted to know if their MSS. were being considered.

"That little article on 'Our Museum,'"

"Oh, don't ask me, Eva!" groaned Polly. "I'm not the editress."

"Well, when shall we know?" clamoured several girls.

"Bekas my articackle on being a queen at Morcovce—eef zey don't want it for ze soup-in-ear, zen I send him to ze Barncombe Herald, queek!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But really," said Etta Hargrove, when the laughter had subsided, "I should have thought, you two, that you'd have been busy now in Althea's study."

"We couldn't," protested Betty a trifle wildly. "She's got an aunt. Oh, girls, do be a bit patient, please."

Then came an insinuation that fairly infuriated both members of "the staff." It was Ada Sharrow who voiced the words, and Ada was not a popular junior. But Betty and Polly could tell that others were thinking what she didn't mind saying.

"It seems to me," sneered Ada, "you want to keep this booklet business a snug thing to yourselves. Althea and you two girls, between you—"

"That's not true!" Polly fired up. "You've no right to say that, Ada."

"Oh, it's only what others are thinking. Look at them!" laughed Ada nastily.

She was drawing attention to the tell-tale colouring up of many another junior.

"Of course we all know," she smirked, turning to walk away, "Study 12 for talent. Still, I wonder what Miss Somerfield would say."

"Miss Somerfield will soon stop their little game, that's one thing," cried Ursula Wade scornfully. Like Ada Sharrow, Ursula Wade was generally disliked, and the two had gravitated to each other just lately. Now they walked off together.

Betty, collecting Polly and others with a kindling eye, strode away with them in the direction of the schoolhouse.

"It's started, you see!" Polly raged. "Never

mind that it only came from Ada and that despicable Ursula. Others really are thinking it."

"Yes, well," murmured Pam. "We know better."

"All the same," Betty exclaimed fiercely, "we're not going on like it. There'll be no time after dinner; but when we come out of afternoon school, either Althea makes it possible for us to go on, or we finish. I mean it."

They could see that she did, and even Polly calmed down again, although it was with a heavy sigh that she resigned herself to another trying wait.

### Found Out

WITH a particularly jaunty step Althea Dillon passed down the Sixth Form corridor at half-past three that afternoon, making for her own pocket.

Eight pounds in her pocket, and no need to buy herself a typewriter after all. Pretty good going, she was thinking.

Of course it would have been better if Aunt Kath had sent the money through the post instead of turning up like that at middle-day. Something about Aunt Kath that made one feel ashamed of her. Shabby. Really, she might have the decency to take more trouble over her appearance, instead of going about looking so faded.

Good job, thought Althea, that her most intimate schoolmates had been away in town when Aunt Kath was on hand at the school. She had managed to hurry off to the railway-station just in time to avoid a bad clash. Lena Grayson, for instance, she would have been aghast at Althea's having an aunt like that.

Althea entered her study, humming to herself, and closed the door. Then she frowned. There was that spare typewriter belonging to the school, and Aunt Kath had noticed it whilst here; had seemed to wonder whether, after all, a new machine must be bought. A little finesse—Althea's word for humbug—had saved the situation.

"But it's my belief," she frowned to herself, "if I had not come in when I did that Barton girl would have just spoiled my chance of getting the money. She—"

Tap, tap, tap, at the door.

"What do you want? Oh, you two girls again!" sighed Althea as Betty and Polly entered. "But I can't go into things now."

"Then when can you? After tea, Althea?"

She drew herself up, eyeing Betty resentfully.

"Don't you try that tone on me, kid."

"Polly and I are sick and tired of being played about with. What's more," said the Fourth Form captain, "this is not doing the school any good, Althea. You've been entrusted with the job of getting out that souvenir, and we're under orders to help you, and obviously there's no time to waste. So what about it, please?"

"If you think I'm going to do anything before I've had my tea—"

"Then how soon after tea?" Betty demanded, just as imperatively as before.

"I don't know; perhaps not at all. I want to go into Barncombe."

Betty looked at Polly who nodded:

"Go ahead; I would."

"Well, Althea, without wishing to seem uppish, Polly and I mean to insist upon something being done at once. Here's this dummy—"

"Take that stupid thing away, I tell you."  
 "Sorry," Betty said, "but a lot of trouble has been taken over it. Tess especially has worked awfully hard. In fairness to her—"

"I'm not looking at it," Althea stated, shaking her head as Betty set down the dummy for inspection. "Take it away with you."

"Some of Tess' headings—"  
 "Talking to me about headings when you don't know in the least what the features are to be."

"And whose fault is that?" cried Polly. "By now if any other senior but you had been in charge the whole lay-out would have been decided. Girls would have known what to give their minds to."

"Please, Althea," Betty entreated, "the dummy is only intended to show you—"

"It is intended to teach me what I know. Like your conceit, the pair of you."

"Conceit!" Polly echoed. "Anyhow, we don't take in other people, as you do, Althea Dillon!"  
 Then Betty again:

"Are you going to make use of us or not?"  
 "I've told you—not now. And as for your rotten dummy, there's the best place for that!"

And Althea shied it into the waste-paper basket. "It shan't stay there!" panted Betty, starting to cross the room to retrieve it. "Now Polly and I resign. We refuse to go on. And in fairness we shall let it be known why."

"Clear out!" commanded Althea fiercely.  
 "When I've got back that dummy—"  
 "I'm editress!" stormed the senior. "And this

is my study. You leave the thing where it is, or—"

"We shan't do that," Betty declared, and advanced another step or two.

Instantly Althea flew at her. Another moment and the senior would have had both juniors to scuffle with; but she and they heard a voice in the corridor, just outside the study door.

Miss Somerfield!  
 There was a dramatic standstill in the study, a tense silence except for some hard breathing.

Then the door opened and Miss Somerfield made her genial entry upon the scene.

"**B**usy, Althea?" the headmistress smilingly inferred. "The editress—and her staff. Very creditable to all three of you, so soon after school."

She closed the door behind her and came forward.

"I thought I would give you a look in, Althea, just to see how you are getting on. By now I suppose you have some sort of a dummy booklet to show me, giving your ideas about size and contents, and so on?"

"Er— Why—er—as a matter of fact," floundered Althea, "I was going to make up a dummy—er—this evening."

"You've not got as far as that yet?" was Miss Somerfield's astonished cry. "I should have thought, with such girls as Betty and Polly to assist you— But what," she broke off to inquire amazedly, "is that?"

She was pointing to something lying in the waste-paper basket.

"Oh, that!" jerked out Althea uncomfortably. "Er—that's nothing, Miss Somerfield."

"Nothing? It looks to me extraordinarily like a dummy booklet—just the sort of thing I am meaning," cried the headmistress.

She picked up the dummy from the waste-paper basket.

"Charming cover," she said. "As a rough sketch, and, of course, that is all it claims to be—most attractive. We wouldn't wish for anything better. Whose work, Althea?"

"Er—a girl in the Fourth, I fancy—er—Tess Trelawney."

"You fancy? But don't you know for certain?"  
 A touch of acerbity was creeping into Miss Somerfield's tone.

Betty and Polly offered to go, but were gestured to stand by, the headmistress meanwhile turning the pages of the dummy.

"Excellent, so far," she exclaimed, half-way through the sample souvenir. "I like the half-page left for a poem at the end of 'The Year Round at Morcove.' And what's this suggested feature—'Girls We Are Proud Of'? We must retain that. Just the thing; a present-day article, following a survey of the fifty years. Something nice and human intended, of course!"

A few moments later she burst out laughing.  
 "At Morcove As a Queen"! To be written by Naomer herself, of course! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't suggest that article!" burst out Althea. "I'm not so silly! I had nothing to do with—that dummy, as you call it!"

Miss Somerfield looked hard at the senior over the lowered booklet.

"You didn't, Althea? Then what—who— And is that why it was in the paper basket? Not by accident, but because you had thrown it there!"

"No—at least—"

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"Althea, what does this mean?" came with increased sternness. "Yes or no, please. Did you throw this wonderful specimen make-up into the paper basket as being no good, or didn't you?"

No answer from Althea!

"You two girls"—Miss Somerfield turned to Betty and Polly—"I must ask you to explain. How is it that I found this rough guide to what the souvenir is going to be lying in the paper basket? Did Althea throw it there?"

"I'm afraid she did," Betty was bound to answer.

Again the headmistress stared at the senior.

"And you said, Althea, that you did not suggest the article to be written by Naomer? You're not so silly?"

"No, I should hope I'm not!"

"Very well. Then it is perfectly obvious to me that you are not the right girl for the job. It demands someone, Althea, who will recognise that the human note is not silliness. What else had you to find fault with in this dummy—which I now assume Betty and Polly to have got together out of their own heads? Or hadn't you looked through the thing properly?"

Again Althea Dillon stood reduced to silence.

"This won't do," the headmistress said with quiet authority. "I realise it has been a great mistake to appoint you to the editorial position. You put yourself forward for the post, so naturally I took it that you were tremendously keen. I made inquiries and was given to understand that you were THE literary one in the Sixth. But I am sorry, Althea, I shall have to find someone else."

"I don't care! If it's to be a stupid production, like the Fourth Form mag—"

"Althea, once and for all, for anything in print to be free from affectation and highbrow nonsense, shall I say—is not stupidity. There is a human note, a naturalness about the 'Morcove Magazine,' which I greatly admire. You evidently do not. Very well!"

The two juniors were turned to once more.

"Betty, find Ethel Courtway, will you, and ask her to come. Return with her. Polly, you might be collecting any 'Fifty Years' stuff for removal. I am sorry, as I said before, Althea, but—"

But Miss Somerfield found it useless to complete the regretful utterance.

Althea, most rudely, was walking out!

### Full Speed Ahead

THREE minutes later:

"You want me, Miss Somerfield?"

"Oh, yes, Ethel! Stay around, Betty; you, too, Polly!"

Very gently Betty Barton closed the door, and then became a bystander with Polly Linton, who had finished putting all the unread MSS. together, also with the dummy make-up and the type-writer.

"A rather painful discovery, Ethel," the headmistress addressed Morcove's head girl. "Althea Dillon will be no use as editress of the 'Fifty Years.' She may be 'literary'; as an editress she seems to have a genius for not getting anything done, and not letting others do anything if she can help it. I am not often sarcastic; but really! Will you look at that, Ethel?" handing her the specimen souvenir. "Just a glance through, please!"

Watching Ethel, as she ran through the strange-looking pages, with their pencilled headings and

rough sketches, Betty and Polly saw how delighted she looked.

"Awfully good, Miss Somerfield, surely?"

"I think so! Althea, it appears, consigned that dummy to the waste-paper basket. Can you wonder, then, that I insist upon an immediate change in the editorial chair?"

"But no sacking of the staff, I hope?" smiled Ethel.

"Dear me, no! That would be adding insult to injury!" laughed Miss Somerfield. "Now, listen, Ethel. I can, in a moment, turn over the superintendence of the booklet to a Form-mistress. In that case I rob myself of the greatest possible pleasure by and by; the joy of being able to say, in my brief preface, that it is entirely scholars' work."

The head girl nodded.

"Do you want me to suggest some other senior in place of Althea, Miss Somerfield? If so, it's going to be a bit difficult. The Sixth is not strong in that direction, sorry to say. Literary accomp—"

"Literary"! Ethel, we will have less of that word and get on much better and faster," smiled the headmistress. "Somebody who will infuse human nature into the 'Fifty Years' is demanded; somebody who will understand that if Naomer Nakara, in the Fourth Form, is to be given a page, it must be Naomer, unedited!"

"Spelling and all, you mean? I understand!"

"I am sure you do, and I really can't see why, Ethel, you should not be the senior to—"

"I!"

"Yes, Miss Somerfield—oh, please!" burst out Polly, with her usual impetuosity, whilst Betty became all persuading smiles and nods. "Do—do!"

"But couldn't it be left to these two girls?" cried Ethel Courtway lightly. "This is their dummy. Well, then, what's wrong with it?"

"Nothing," said the headmistress emphatically. "And for two pins, after seeing such good work— Well, Betty?"

"I am sure Polly feels as I do; we'd rather have a senior over us."

"Provided she is the right one," chimed in Polly. "Ethel here!"

Morcove's sportive head girl looked as if she would like to say: "Quiet, you two, letting me in for this!"

"Then there it is," exclaimed Miss Somerfield, with a gratified expression. "As these juniors realise, it is the fitting thing for a senior to supervise the production. 'Fifty Years of Morcove' will be edited by Morcove's Head Girl!"

"Cheers!" Polly said softly, and met Betty's sparkling eyes.

"Full credit will be given, of course, to all who assist—"

"Oh, I'll see after that, Miss Somerfield!" came Ethel's nodded assurance. "Only, I don't claim in the least to be able to—"

"Althea Dillon did claim to be able to, and nicely she has let us down," Miss Somerfield laughed ruefully. "We will regard it as settled, Ethel. One thing more and then I can leave things in your hands: I think it will be better if a room is set apart for the editorial work. There is going to be a great accumulation of material. Isn't there a spare study on this Sixth Form floor?"

"Yes," Ethel responded. "Just round the corner, at the end of this corridor."

"I remember the room. Make that the editorial office, Ethel."



Whipping open the door, Polly beheld Althea in a shrinking attitude. And in answer to Ethel's cool "Want me, Althea?" the senior could only stammer "No—oh, no!"

Polly wanted to caper. Oh, to be able to rush away presently to Study 12 and shout the news!

"And, please, Miss Somerfield—"

"Yes, Betty?"

"Tess Trolawney is so awfully good at drawing. You saw her rough sketches in the dummy. I wonder if she, too, could be lent to Ethel Courtway?"

"Staff artist!" smiled Ethel. "Splendid!"

"By all means." The headmistress gave her all-powerful sanction. "Anything else?"

"No, thanks, Miss Somerfield," said the head girl cheerfully. "We must just be left now to fight it out amongst ourselves. Although I don't suppose there will be much fighting really."

"Not with you, Ethel!" said Polly, almost before Miss Somerfield was out of the room. "Oh, Ethel, how jolly!"

"Is it?" smiled the sportive senior. "A nice thing you've done for me. What do I know about editing! But there, I can always go off to golf and leave you kids to do the donkey work! What about this room?"

They went, the three of them, to look at it at once.

It was one of those unfortunate rooms that are bound to be found somewhere in a huge building. It had missed getting any view from its one window, and being at the back of the schoolhouse it came in for a clatter from the kitchen regions at times, and even the smell of cooking.

"But it's a good size, no mistake," Betty commented blithely. "If you'll say where you'd like your table to be placed, Ethel, and the editorial chair, we'll manage."

"You kids must have the best light, so you

must be over by the window," Ethel decreed. "An easy chair, near the fireplace, will make a good enough editorial chair for me, with that corner by the mantelpiece for my golf clubs. It's all I ask!"

"She talks like that," Polly exclaimed to Betty, for Ethel had suddenly wandered away. "We know very well she'll be a crasher for the work, really. Betty darling, what about it now?"

"Fine!"

Finally captain and madcap romped away to Study 12, to find their best chums on hand and the tea waiting.

"At last—pipooray!" Naomer cheered. "Bekas what about zat artickle of mine, you two? Is he eggscpected yet for ze soup-in-ear?"

"He is," said Betty. "We haven't read it, but you're to have a page, anyhow, Naomer."

"Bai Jove! Owpl!"

"Zen why do you say bai Jove, as eef you were surprised!" yelled Naomer, lamming into Paula. "Stahp it! I was—owch!—meroly expressing surprisw—ooch!—at Althea Dillon's having—"

"Althea, girls," Betty proclaimed joyfully, "is out of it now."

"What ze diggings, got ze sack? Ooo, gorjus!"

"Ethel Courtway is editress."

"Ethel is?" the "chummery" yelled amazedly.

"Never!"

"But she is," beamed Betty. "Oh, and by the way, Tess, you're appointed staff artist."

"Oh, don't rot!"

"But it is so!" dinned Polly. "And we're going



to have a special editorial den, with a Turkey carpet and the typewriter."

"Sweeendle!" shrilled Naomer. "Bekas where do I come in?"

"You don't. If you do come into the editor's den, you go out again, sharp," Polly playfully threatened. "Oh, I'm so thirsty; can't we have tea?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And they all sat down to table to enjoy a thorough chatter-chatter, whilst the cups went round.

### Her Secret Dread

"WHAT we must do this evening," said Ethel Courtway, alone in her study with Betty, Polly and Tess, "is to get out a list of suggested features for Miss Somerfield's approval."

So, after all, the sportive head girl had not been long in settling down to her job in real earnest. A prediction of Polly's fulfilled.

"Let's have a look at this again," continued Ethel, thumping the dummy booklet upon her writing pad. "A lot here that we can retain— heaps."

She began to turn the pages. "Girls We Are Proud Of"; we're going to retain that. We heard Miss Somerfield say— Half a second, though."

In a rather puzzled way Ethel was suddenly looking across to the door which was closed.

"Somebody out there?" she wondered. "Wanting to come in?"

"I'll see," Polly offered, and jumped up from her chair to flash across to the door.

Whipping it open she beheld Althea Dillon in a shrinking attitude, as if there had been a bending to listen at the door only a few moments previously.

"Oh, that you, Althea!" called out the head girl, remaining seated. "Want me?"

"Er—no. Oh, no."

And the ex-editress passed on flusteredly to her own study.

She shut herself in there and then paced about the room, looking keyed-up—worried.

Bad enough that the job had been taken away from her; but there was worse to come. "Girls We Are Proud Of" to be retained for the printed souvenir. And would that article mention her name? Was it likely!

Strange, but through such a simple medium as this intended souvenir an hour of reckoning for her was threatening.

Prevent Aunt Kath from ever receiving a copy of the souvenir—how could one hope to do such a thing. Aunt Kath, more than any other parent or guardian, would be on the look out for it.

"She believes that I am the editress, and I can't bring myself to tell her that they've got somebody else now. Besides, it would mean sending back that eight pounds."

Althea Dillon drifted about the room, feeling herself going hot and cold by turns.

As certain as she had ever been of anything she was miserably certain that the ultimate distribution of the "Fifty Years" was going to be her utter undoing.

All the fond illusions cherished by her aunt, all the pride in her, Althea, that shameless deception had managed to create—shattered in a moment.

As in a vision Althea could see to-night her adoring aunt turning the pages of the published Souvenir, hunting eagerly for items paying tribute to all the boasted achievements. "So good at games, and yet so talented."

"And what I am to do about it all, I don't know!" the wretched senior sighed to herself. "She'll finish with me. If only—oh, if only I could manage to smash up the whole thing somehow. Or, at any rate, prevent that article from going to press. I wonder—could I?"

And then she sat down to rack her brains, wearing such a look of desperate anxiety as she would have been afraid for others to see.

"ENOUGH for to-night, girls," declared Ethel Courtway an hour later. "Now you can get back to your chums, whilst I take this list along to show it to Miss Somerfield."

"Which seems to me," said Polly, "business." "At last," rejoined Betty blithely. "Good-night, then, Ethel, if we don't see you again."

"Night, kids. And don't lie awake until three in the morning thinking out fresh ideas."

"Not if we can help it," grinned Polly. "Oh, and another thing," came with Ethel's engaging carelessness. "If any of the others want to know about their MSS., I'm reading them before I go to bed. I'll try to let them know in the morning."

"Good enough."

With Tess on one side of her and Polly on the other away went Form-captain Betty, all smiles.

"I say, girls," Polly exploded, "when the real thing does come out—when!"

She said it in a voice charged with joyful anticipation.

Only to Althea Dillon at this very moment was that same thought meaning mental torment. The self-same words, repeating themselves again and again like a mocking whisper from Nemesis itself:

"When that book *does* come out—when!"

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

The title of next Tuesday's superb long complete Morcove School story is,



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