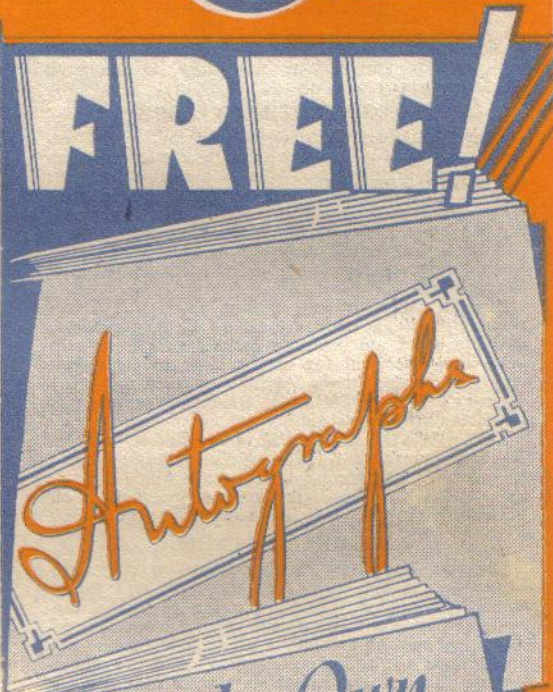
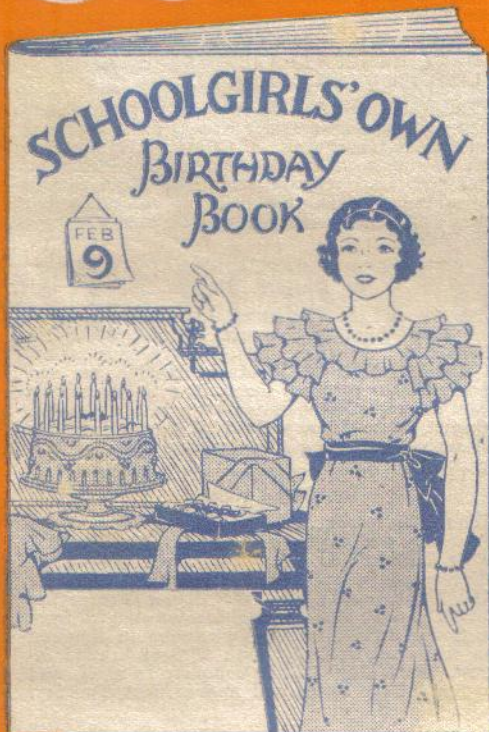


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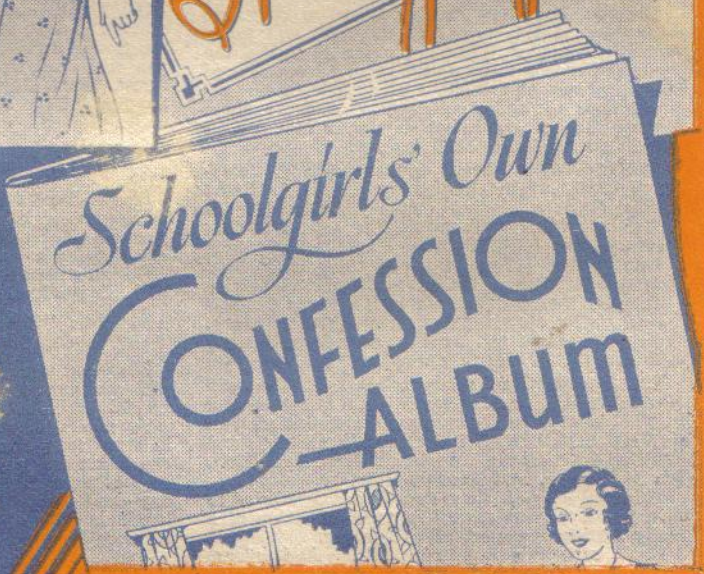
# The SCHOOLGIRLS' 2<sup>D</sup> OWN

No. 730. Vol. 59  
Week ending  
February 2nd, 1935  
EVERY TUESDAY



THESE  
WONDERFUL  
GIFTS  
**FREE**

Full Details  
INSIDE





## Exciting Complete Morcove School Story



# WHEN PAM DARED DISCOVERY

## CHAPTER 1. Betty Can Tell

"**A**NYTHING the matter, Fay?"

"Why, what do you mean, Betty?"

"You look—worried."

"I'm sure I'm not! Why should I be?"

"Oh, all right, then—"

"Any rate, would it be your concern?"

"It might be, you know!" And Form-captain Betty Barton smiled. She could not help doing so. After all, she WAS the captain—much as this other girl, Fay Denver, disliked the idea of the Form having any captain at all!

"You can mind your own business, Betty!"

"But this happens to be rather my business, Fay, because—"

"Oh, shut up!"

Fay Denver needed to take only a step to be across the threshold of that study which she shared with her sister, Edna, at Morcove School. She took that step with passionate quickness, and next moment the door went SLAM!

Betty laughed then, going on down the corridor to Study 12. But it was laughter that ended in a regretful sigh.

"A kind word wasted," she remarked to those good chums of hers who were, as usual at this hour of the evening, crowding out the famous study. "But really Fay Denver was looking so hot and bothered just now, I felt bound to stop."

"Whereupon," said madcap Polly Linton, sitting legs a-dangle upon the edge of the study table, "Fay jumped down your throat!"

"Something like that," Betty agreed. "I don't mind, so long as there really is nothing for her—or anyone else—to worry about. But—I can generally tell!"

"Was Edna with her?"

## BY MARJORIE STANTON

**E**DNA DENVER has been kidnapped—in mistake for "Monica Gray"! Somewhere she is being held captive—a helpless prisoner in the hands of a band of unscrupulous plotters. And although Edna scarcely deserves it, "Monica Gray" comes to her rescue in a way that calls for the admiration of the whole of Morcove School.

"No," the captain answered Judy Cardew.

"Was Edna in their study?" questioned Helen Craig, with a significant look.

"No, girls, I don't think Edna was!"

"Ah!" smiled Polly Linton grimly. "So there, perhaps, you have it!"

Betty nodded gravely.

"Shouldn't wonder," she said. "And yet Fay had the cheek to say that it was no business of mine. Well! If that has been the game, this evening, and Edna Denver is nowhere in the school at this present moment—it will be very much my business when she does come in."

"So I should hope!" grimaced Polly, whilst languid Paula Creel, from the depths of an easy chair, voiced an endorsing:

"Yes, wather, bai Jove!"

"Those Denver sisters," murmured staid Madge Minden sadly. "Spoiling it for others—as usual!"

Then Tess Trelawney, after peering round the edge of the window's lowered blind, offered her comment.



"Why any girl should want to break bounds—sneak out of the schoolhouse—"

"Oh, but we don't know for certain that Edna has gone out," Betty fair-mindedly struck in. "No! Certainly, one can't help—wondering! But we'll wait, that's all; just wait!"

"Wheech will give us time for our usual hand-round instead of at nine o'clock," piped in that dusky imp, Naomer Nakara, sidling towards the corner cupboard.

"Didn't I see you," the madcap witheringly rounded upon the chummy's imp, "having a lemonade only half an hour ago?"

"What ze diggings if I did! Can't I have another, if I like?"

"You can," said the madcap, relenting sweetly, "if there is enough for you after I have had mine. Let's look!"

As prompt investigation resulted in the discovery of a clove-cordial bottle in which the merest dregs remained, there immediately developed one of those wordy combats which so often raged between madcap and imp in Study 12.

What, Polly wished to know, had become of all the clove cordial? Naomer, alone called upon for an answer, could only advance theories most unsatisfactory to Polly.

Inevitably, from words the two got to a "dust-up," other girls keeping out of the ring, so to speak, with a dexterity born of long experience.

As for Betty, she took a stroll up the corridor and, after a minute of standing about at the stairs end, turned back.

Whilst returning, she saw a study door open to let out a girl—Fay Denver again. But as soon as Fay saw Betty, that door went SLAM—again!

Another sign of Fay's being in suspense—unable to settle down! And the captain, with another sigh, realised she had waited long enough.

"DASH that Betty!"

Alone in the study, Fay Denver was muttering through clenched teeth.

"And dash Edna, too!" she raged on to herself. "For going out after hours when I warned her not to! Now she is going to be caught getting back, and I'll be for it as well—oh, hang! Why couldn't Edna have done as I said, and put off everything until the morning!"

With a creeping step—for Fay felt sure that Betty was now posted in the corridor, eyes and ears on the alert—she crossed to the study window and peered out.

But it was a futile thing to do, as she miserably realised. The wintry night was moonless and dark, and nothing was to be seen.

For the second time in the last ten minutes, Fay Denver looked at her wrist-watch.

Getting on for nine o'clock! As late as that it was, and yet her sister was still absent. What, then—what on earth was the reason? Why had she been out all this while, when she had only been going to nip across to the wayside railway-station and back again?

"More than two hours she has been away—and she reckoned it would take her fifty minutes at the most!"

Suddenly the study door opened, and Betty came in. Closing the door behind her, she stood and looked at Fay—steadily.

"Now, Fay, what is all this?"

"What's what? I don't know why you—"

"It is no use, Fay," the captain said flatly.

"Your sister should have been back by now, and she isn't? That is what is worrying you?"

"Nothing of the sort!"

"Fay, if you've any sense you'll drop that tone. This is not a time for you to be petty and insolent, when perhaps I can help you. You know me—"

"Oh, don't I know you!" the worried girl seethed. "Here, get out!" she suddenly blazed. "I don't want your interference, your nosing into—"

"No; but as captain it's my duty," Betty struck in, standing immovable. "I was going to say, you must know that if I can save the pair of you from a rowing—in fact, worse than a rowing—I will. But you must tell me—"

"I jolly well shan't, so there! Why do you stand there when I tell you to go?" Fay stamped. "Dash you, I say! You are making a fuss about nothing—wanting to work up a case against me and Edna!"

"How long has she been away, Fay? How long overdue?"

"That is, if she isn't about the place all the while? And how do you know she isn't?" Fay demanded, with a wild little laugh.

"I have said—"

"Oh, right-o, stick around and be laughed at by both of us when she shows up. But don't expect me to talk to you, because I'm just not going to!"

With anger in her movements, Fay snatched up a book to read, and sat down.

Ding-dong, the school's own chimes came into the silent room. Ding-dong, and a third time—ding-dong! A quarter to nine.

"You're her sister, Fay, and you're not doing your best to save her. Very well," Betty remarked sadly—and went out.

Even as she was drawing the door shut behind her, she heard Fay rise excitedly from the chair, casting aside the book. She heard the worried girl's to-and-fro movements in the study; to-and-fro, to-and-fro—like one distraught!

But Betty had done with appeals that only fell upon deaf ears. Not a moment was to be lost. If only Fay had made a clean breast of the whole wretched business, whatever it might be, then perhaps it would have been less difficult to devise a means. As it was—

"Here, Polly—and you others," Betty briskly whispered to her chums, when back in Study 12.

"We've got to do something to prevent a first-class row and the sending down of Fay and Edna. Assembly is at nine—and Edna isn't in yet. It's a waste of time to ask Fay where her sister is likely to be. We can only suppose Edna is prevented, somehow, from getting indoors by the means they were relying upon. Everything's gone wrong by the look of it."

"The whole place locked up long ago," Polly nodded. "Gosh, I'm sorry for her, then—yes, I am, even though it's Edna!"

"Yes, wather, bai Jove! Tewwible wow there will be, geals!"

"Not if we can help it," Betty insisted softly. "Quick, now, some of you brainy ones. A girl's locked out and can't get in, who should have been in all the evening. We can take it for granted that's the position. Edna is hanging about, outside, half out of her mind most likely—"

"Bekas her sister hasn't been able to stick to ze arrangement—yes, I get you, Betty," jabbered Naomer.

"Then—I have it!" came from Polly, with an inspired look. "Some of us go out, pronto—to get her in!"

"Go out—some of us?" stared several of the listeners to this audacious ruse. "Polly!"



"Bekas, what ze diggings, Polly——"

"But Polly's right! I see what she means." Betty voiced eagerly. "We'll manufacture an excuse—any old excuse——"

"Such as this, for instance!"

Polly, as she said it, was letting the window-blind fly up, so as to be free to raise the lower sash.

Then, with the window open, she darted to the study table and picked up the first thing that came to hand.

It was the study's much-worn dictionary. Often had Polly hurled it, in fun, at Naomer, and now Polly hurled the weighty tome—straight out of the window.

An astonished silence lasted just long enough in the study for all the girls to hear the ill-served book fall plop to the ground far below.

Then came a mock-dismayed outcry from Polly, than whom there was no girl in the school better qualified for acting in fun.

"There, now, that's done it! But it can't lie out there all night! Supposing there's rain!"

"Come on!" cried Betty, "and we'll get it back!"

So away they rushed, with only ten minutes to go before assembly. Plenty of joking and laughter went on during the descent to the ground floor, for the last thing Betty and Co. wanted was to make a secret of the fact that Polly had hurled a dictionary out of the window.

"This way, girls!" panted the captain, heading the dash round into a ground-floor passage which had a door at the end opening on to the grounds. "Hope Miss Merrick won't mind; but if she does turn up, I'll do my best to explain anyhow!"

For that purpose Betty, as captain, remained at the door after it had been unlocked and opened to let her chums dart into the open. In a moment their voices were dying away, and she caught herself chuckling a bit too loudly in the subsequent silence. Nor, as she soon reflected, was there anything to chuckle about really.

Behind this ruse, amusing enough though it was, there remained the fact of Edna Denver's absence at an hour as late as this. And supposing after all they did not succeed in smuggling her in? Supposing she was not to be found out there, and so there could be no getting her to come in with them all as if she were simply one of those who had skittishly run out just now? Supposing

"What does that door mean, standing open?" demanded the unmistakable voice of Miss Merrick, half a minute later. "Who is that, hanging about just there? You, Betty!"

The recognising cry came after the Form-mistress had taken a few steps along the dim-lit passage.

"Yes, Miss Merrick; but it's quite all right——"

"Indeed! I am inclined to think that it is quite all wrong! What's the joke?"

"Oh, I can't help laughing!" Betty cried. "The study window upstairs had just been opened—before our coming downstairs to assembly, you know—and Polly somehow flung the dictionary so that it went—ha, ha, ha!"

"Out of the window?"

"Yes! But they won't be a minute now, Miss Merrick, getting it back. I waited, to explain if you should turn up, whilst they——"

"And, pray, who are they?"

"Oh—some of the girls, Miss Merrick."

"How many, Betty?"

"Oh, quite a few. I can't say, exactly."

"This is most reprehensible!" said Miss Mer-

rick, trying not to laugh. "They must come in, at once, all of them. All of you out there," the Form-mistress called loudly into the darkness, "come in, come in! This instant!"

"All right, we're coming!"

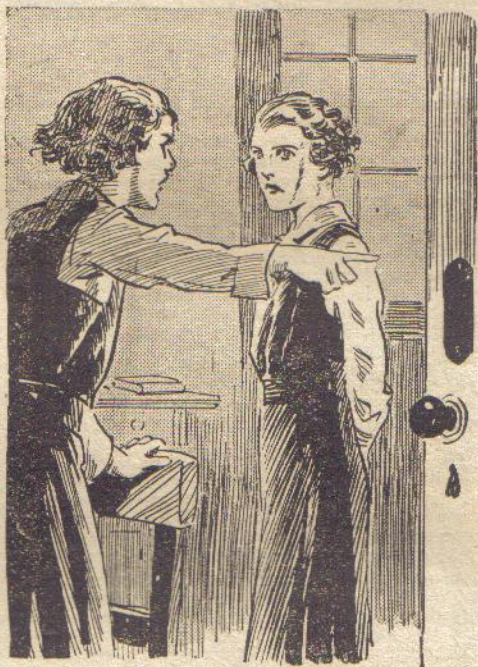
But Betty had still to wonder anxiously: Would Edna Denver come in with them?

## CHAPTER 2.

### Not Back Yet

AT the other end of the passage Betty suddenly beheld a solitary figure—that of a girl—peering towards her in the dim light.

At first Betty imagined that the girl was Fay, in an excitable, hesitant state on account of her



"Get out!" Fay blazed at Betty. "I don't want your interference!" But the Captain stood her ground, unmoved. Somehow, she had to find out if Fay knew what had become of Edna.

absent sister. But instantly there was a questioning cry which established the girl's identity.

"What's up, Betty?"

"Oh, is that you, Monica? I can't explain for the moment."

Miss Merrick had now darted out to shepherd Polly and the rest back into the schoolhouse, as they had not come in at once, after all. So Betty would have been quite alone at the outer doorway, only Monica Gray—the "new girl," as the Form called her—hastened along the passage, her wonderment increasing.

"Anything happened, Betty?"

"No, Monica," the captain responded, cordially—for Monica Gray had become very popular with the "chummery." "The fact is,—in a deep whisper—we are trying to do something to save



Edna Denver from an awful rowing. She's out, and we are hoping to be able to smuggle her in, unnoticed, amongst so many others."

There was no time for more. Suddenly Polly and the rest came flocking in, with Miss Merrick at their heels. Polly flourished the retrieved dictionary, and there was some laughter and facetious cheering. But—the ruse had failed.

Edna Denver was not amongst them!

"Never," said Miss Merrick, "do such a thing again, girls! Go on upstairs now—if there's time before assembly."

She remained, to do the locking up, and so the girls could only troop away, taking Monica with them.

"Rotten!" was Polly's grimaced comment on the failure. "Where is the girl, that she didn't seize the chance when we were out there!"

"No sign of her?" Betty inferred dismayedly.

"None!"

"And, woe!ly, geals, it begins to look sevious"

"Gosh, that it does!" fumed Polly. "In a few minutes, assembly will tell Miss Merrick that Edna is not in the school."

"What's this you are saying?" jerked Monica.

"Edna—absent without permission?"

"Out of bounds, yes," Betty gravely whispered. "Should have sneaked back a good while ago—and she didn't. I tumbled to it all by noticing that Fay was upset—worried. Then we girls did our best to enable Edna to slip indoors unnoticed, if she was hanging about outside, not knowing how to get in. But it didn't come off."

"She was nowhere outside in the grounds," Judy Cardew declared. "Or the plan would have worked."

"Then—where is she?" Betty asked, looking aghast. "Oh, it's no use; I'll have to report it now. I've done my best—we all have. But—yes, I will run up and see Fay first, for just a moment."

The entire batch of girls moved on to the stairs, and it would not have been Betty to ask them to let her go up alone. They had co-operated with her over the attempt to save Edna, and so they were entitled to keep with her—Betty—and hear anything that Fay might have to say now.

As it chanced, they encountered Fay on a half-landing. She appeared to have paused on the way downstairs to peer out of the landing window into the darkness.

Facing round to find Betty and Co. coming up in a significantly quiet way, the harassed girl would have flaunted past them all, but Betty spoke arrestingly.

"Wait, Fay. If Edna had been outside a couple of minutes ago, she would have had the chance to slip in and escape disgrace. But she was not there—we know that now."

They saw Fay's excessively pretty face turn paler than ever.

"So—I'm sorry," Betty said, her voice ringing with sincerity, "but I'll have to report it. You can't suggest what's prevented Edna from getting back?"

"I—I—oh, she is all right, must be!" Fay quavered miserably. "If only you'd all mind your own business!"

"Fay, what is the use of talking like that?" the captain protested warmly. "It's assembly in a minute or two from now, and your sister isn't going to be present. You'll have to go to the Head at once—"

"I shan't—"

"Then I must, that's all. Don't you realise, anything may have happened to Edna! She went

out, alone, and has been absent several hours?"

"Yes; but—"

"Why did she go out, Fay?" clamoured several of Betty's chums.

"I'm not going to say!"—sullenly.

"Oh, then, do the other thing!" Polly exploded.

"Come away, girls—leave her!"

Most of them, sharing Polly's disgust, went on with her up to the Form quarters, but Judy and Madge remained, and so did Monica Gray.

It was Monica who ended the silence which the deadlock had brought about.

"You and Edna were over at Swanlake this afternoon, I fancy?" she said to Fay, regarding that girl steadily with bespectacled eyes.

"What's that got to do with it!" snapped Fay.

"But hasn't it anything to do with it?" Monica pressed. "I would like to know."

"You'd all like to know—too much!" Fay raged out, wildly. "And you'll not be told, so there! I said before, Betty, and I say it again: If there is to be a row, then let there be a row! I'll face Miss Somerfield—and I don't want any trumpery captain to show herself off by 'helping' me!"

"Shame, Fay!" murmured Madge. "That's an unkind thing to say, when Betty has been—"

"Wanting to get hold of something that she can hold over Edna's head and mine! That's what Betty has been trying to do. As if I don't know—your precious captain, bah! Get away!"

And she pushed past the four of them, to go upstairs.

Next moment she turned round to speak again, wildly attempting to make light of her sister's absence.

"She went to the railway station—that's all!"

"You mean," Betty gasped, "to go in by train to Barncombe?"

"No! That's where you are wrong again—jumping to the worst conclusions. Edna simply slipped across there, to telephone."

But this only surprised Betty and her chums all the more.

"Telephone—from the railway-station? But why on earth couldn't she get permission to use the school 'phone?"

"That's Edna's business, not yours, Betty!"

Fay hurried upstairs after that, and they could imagine that she must be wishing she had never paused to say what she had. It had not left her in a position to laugh at them as having made a mountain out of a molehill.

"There's something pretty serious in all this," Betty promptly muttered. "That sounds worse than ever—her having to sneak out to beg the use of the telephone at the railway station. Permission is always granted for the use of the school 'phone, if— Oh, look here, I'm going to use the school 'phone now, anyhow, and without permission. There's no time to ask—and none to waste!"

With the words she went careering downstairs again.

Monica Gray followed along with Judy and Madge. As they reached the ground-floor, the clock in the Front Hall told them that any minute now the bell for assembly would ring.

Betty ran to the telephone-box at the back of the hall and the others remained close at hand.

For a minute, but only a minute, they watched her in talk. Then, ringing off, she came out of the telephone-box, looking utterly amazed.

"It's extraordinary!" she panted. "I can't make it out at all! I got them to put me on to the railway-station—the booking-clerk. I asked him if a girl from the school had called there



this evening to beg the use of the 'phone—" "You wanted to know if Edna got to the station, anyhow?" Judy inferred.

"Yes. And the booking-clerk said that there was a girl from the school there, several hours ago, using the 'phone. But—what DO you think, girls? He says she gave her name, over the 'phone, as MONICA GRAY!"

Judy and Madge turned to Monica, in as great amazement as Betty was experiencing.

"Monica Gray?" echoed Judy blankly. "But—that's you, Monica! You didn't go to the railway sta—"

"Oh, no! No!"

"Then—goodness!" Betty gasped. "Edna, when she was there, spoke in your name to someone over the 'phone! And the booking-clerk told me it was Grangemoor School she rang up. She spoke to someone named Jimmy—Jimmy Cherrol, I can only suppose."

"Then I know what it means," said Monica tensely. "I know why Edna has not come back."

"You do?"

At that moment, the bell for assembly began to ring.

"Yes," Monica nodded. "What's more I know why she is—missing."

"Missing!"

The word had an appalling meaning to those who heard it.

"Monica—oh—"

"Sh! I must go to Miss Somerfield this instant. I wish I could ask you to come with me, Betty, but I—I can't. You must just leave it to me."

Ding, ling! Ding, ling! the bell clanged on its summons, whilst Monica flashed away, to find the headmistress.

Betty found herself exchanging blank looks with Judy and Madge. All three girls were transfixed—spellbound.

Ding, ling, ding, ling!

"And now," Betty gasped at last, "what in the name of mystery has Monica to do with it all?"

### CHAPTER 3.

#### The Hut in the Quarry

AT that moment when the bell was ringing all the scholars into Big Hall, for assembly and prayers, a dark-clad figure crossed the night-bound road at a point about a mile from Morcove School.

It was off the moorland wastes this figure had come, in great haste. On the opposite side of the lonely, unlighted road were the grassy clifftops, where Cliff Edge bungalow was the only dwelling-place.

A woman it was who, nervously glancing this

way and that, flitted across the road to go in at the bungalow's gateway.

Panting hard as if from much running, she sped up the weedy path to the porch, where she most excitedly rapped upon the front door.

There was no light in the hall, nor did the person who at once came forward, in response to the urgent yet subdued knocking, switch on a bulb.

The door came open in front of a man, to whom the woman breathlessly spoke in a foreign tongue. As the man wore a turban, and as he and she had much in their looks to suggest an Eastern origin, the language was probably Hindustani.

"Quick—Hazarin—quick!" was the English equivalent of the woman's urgent whisper. "Leave this place—leave all, at once! I have caught the girl—I have her in a safe place, not far from here. Come, and I will take you to where she is!"

"And not return here?"

The woman nodded, still panting for breath.

"Put on your things, that is all. Hazarin. What does it matter how we leave this place? No one is to see us here again. We shall vanish—"

"And with us vanishes—the Sahib Willoughby's daughter! Very good, Azara. A moment, and I am ready."

Leaving the door ajar, he turned back to equip himself for out of doors, whilst the woman moved clear of the porch, so as to be able to peer about as anxiously as ever in the darkness.



Polly flung wide the windows and hurled the book into the darkness. "Now we must go out—to fetch it!" she explained. It was a daring ruse to get out of doors to search for Edna—but would it succeed?



The lights went out in the bungalow. Then the man came forth. He drew the door shut—softly—turned a key in the lock, then chuckled as he pocketed the key.

"So! They must force the door to get in, Azara, and when they do get in—they can wait and wait—we do not mind!"

"Ah, but hasten!" she again urged, setting the pace for him down the path. "It has cost me much time to conceal her. Even now, there may be an alarm at the school."

He and she both glanced, then, in the direction of Morcove's vast schoolhouse—a mile off in the moonless night—showing many a lighted window.

"How I have run, to get to you and let you know," she quavered. "Every step of the way it was my fear that I would be too late; I would come close to the bungalow, only to find the police there—a car from the school, with the head-mistress and others. The girl was taken by me so many hours since!"

"Yet might she not be missed at the school, Azara, until the time for all the scholars to go to their beds. You are taking me—"

"That way, yea," she whispered, pointing directly ahead across the dark moor. "Ah, and it is a rough way, Hazarin. Have a care! We must not come by an accident in the dark, thou and I. There is so much to be done—now."

"Yet it can be said, Azara, that already the greatest part of all has been accomplished. She is in our hands—at last!"

"And so the ameer's promised reward will soon be in our hands!" the woman rejoined exultantly. "Have I not done well, then, Hazarin? Am I, thy wife, such a bungler, after all?"

"How did you contrive it?" he asked eagerly.

"I was on watch near the school, as we arranged that I should be. Lo, a girl came out in the darkness, and I followed her. Full well I knew that she was on some secret errand, and so I wondered if she were the one who has called herself *Mon-ic-a Gray*."

The whispered narration was interrupted for a few moments, owing to their difficulty in finding their way across the pitch-dark wastes of gorse and bramble. Then the woman resumed:

"She went to the railway station whose lights we can see even yonder. She spoke on the telephone, and I—I crept close to the little building, unseen, to listen. She spoke with one whom she called *Jim-mee*. She gave him her name, and it was—*Mon-ic-a Gray*!"

"Good!"

"So, when that girl comes away from the railway station—on her way back to the school in the darkness—I fall upon her. In a moment she is my prisoner and cannot cry out. An hour it took me, after that, to get her to where she is now."

"There is no escape for her, Azara?"

"None! We could keep her there—but we shall do better than that, thou knowest. Hazarin, when you have had word with her, you must away at once, to make it known to the Ameer."

The man nodded.

"And then," he muttered, "this girl who calls herself *Monica Gray*—this daughter of the *Sahib Willoughby*, as we know her to be in truth—she will be smuggled to a safer place. Ye know the one I mean, Azara?"

"The prepared place—yea!"

Once again the difficulty of hastening on in the darkness put a check upon their talk. Nor was conversation possible during the next half-hour. The most that passed between man and wife was an occasional uneasy murmur. He would ask,

in the purring tongue of their native country, was she sure that this was the way? And the best she could ever answer was to the effect that she hoped so.

At last she discerned some landmark, looming darkly in the dark night, which set her mind at rest. After that, there was only ten minutes more of their floundering progress across the silent wastes, and then she went before him down a descending stony track.

Upon their right hand, as they went down, a wall of rock became ever higher above their heads. It was the curving face of a great stone quarry, the floor of which was all loose boulders and unshaped blocks of that stone which the place yielded.

The man stumbled along badly now, whilst she, with previous experience of the going, picked her way across with undiminished speed.

In the end they came to a large wooden hut that sheltered close in against the quarry wall. The low building seemed to have been very stoutly built, for the plank door which the woman unfastened and opened was itself most massive. Almost, this might have been a backwoodsman's hut in the wilds of Canada. It was, of course, a workman's shelter, used when the quarry was in operation.

Hazarin hurried in after his wife had dragged the door shut behind him. Just as he did this Azara switched on a pocket torch.

The battery's current was no longer strong, and possibly that was why she had not used the torch during the hurried trudge from the bungalow on the cliffs to this hut in the quarry.

But the ray was bright enough to pick out very vividly the figure upon which it was turned. A schoolgirl, and that girl—*Edna Denver*!

#### CHAPTER 4.

##### She Is Sorry Now

HERE she stood, the girl who was missing from Morcove School to-night—*Edna Denver*, white-faced, her eyes dilating with fear.

Tears had been trickling down her blanched cheeks, and it could be seen that she had never once wiped those tears away. That was because her hands were tied behind her back.

No other bonds had been applied, yet she was abjectly helpless, drooping a little in the light from the torch.

Azara, keeping the light upon her capture, moved aside to let Hazarin take a good look at her.

"*Mo-nic-a Gray*, eh?" he jeered in English.

"No!" *Edna* panted, and instantly he nodded and chuckled.

"No! You are, of course, the girl *Pam-e-la*, daughter of the *Sahib Willoughby*. We know that. It is why my wife here has caught you."

"But you're wrong, you're wrong!" *Edna* said frantically. "I am not *Pam Willoughby*, either! Oh, why won't you believe me!" she wailed. "I was only pretending to be *Monica Gray* when I did the telephoning! I made myself out to be *Monica Gray*—"

"So," Hazarin nodded again. "That is what proves—you must be *Pam-la Willby*! We find out to-day, my wife and I, *Pam-la* is *Mo-nic-a*, and *Mo-nic-a* is *Pam-la*!"

"I have told her that," Azara interposed in English. "She still will not admit it, as you see; but there is no mistake—"

"Oh, no," Hazarin agreed, shrugging. "She lie to us, hoping we shall set her free. But—"



"Listen—oh, please, please, do listen! I tell you," Edna rushed on again in a moaning voice, "you have made an awful mistake. I am not the girl you think I am. I'm Edna Denver—"

"Oh, you have yet another name now?" he jeered. "Bah, it is too much trouble to remember all these names of yours! We are going to call you by your real name—Pam'la."

The light from the torch was gradually dimming.

"Be quick, Hazarin, if you have anything more to say to her," Azara urged. "But what is there to say? She is the girl!"

"There is this to say to her," he responded, looking hard at the captured schoolgirl. "As Pam'la Will'by, daughter of the Sahib Will'by, you are to be kept away from your school and your friends for the present. You will come to no harm—that is, if you give no trouble."

"But—"

"This that has been done was necessary," he cut her short. "Your father, the sahib, is now on his way to India. When he has turned back to this country, having learned—as he will learn—that you have vanished, our purpose with you will have been fulfilled. So, you see, all you have to do is to submit patiently—not give trouble—"

"And as for trying to escape," Azara put in sternly, "she had better not!"

"She will have more sense," Hazarin remarked, treating the captive to a beguiling smile. "As the daughter of the Sahib Will'by she must have some idea of the might of those whom we serve. Very well, then—good! Now, Azara, I go. You will stay to guard her for the little while that she must remain here."

Azara nodded in agreement. Switching off the torch, she fell into subdued, rapid talk with her husband in the groping darkness. Now the man and woman had reverted to their native language, not having to include Edna in the conversation, and so that unhappy girl could not understand a word of what passed.

But enough had been explained to her to keep her mind busy. With undiminished dismay she realised that she must resign herself to a fate that should have been—Pam Willoughby's! Impossible to get these people to believe that they had caught the wrong girl—utterly impossible!

And for that mistake which they had made she had only herself to blame. Maddening thing, that! If only she had never crept out of the schoolhouse to-night, to use the telephone at the wayside railway station she would never have been in this terrible plight.

It was all due to that and that alone! Due to her having given her name over the 'phone as Monica Gray, so that she might get things said to her over the 'phone that would never have been said to anybody but Monica Gray.

In other words, she had over-reached herself. The desire to nose into certain affairs concerning Monica Gray had resulted in her meeting with the very disaster that had been threatening Monica Gray!

Suddenly the whispered talk ended. Hazarin went out of the shed, and the moment he was gone his wife, remaining inside with Edna, fastened the door.

A little after this, Azara came to the girl in the darkness and untied the thongs that had held wrists together. But this was done without anything being said.

Nor did any word come from the Hindoo woman during the succeeding spell of waiting.

Time dragged on. To Edna, it seemed as if hour after hour of the winter's night was dragging by, whilst she remained—almost afraid to make a movement, for fear of some ruthless action by the woman who stood on guard!

## CHAPTER 5.

## Such a Surprise

"ANY news, Betty?"

"None!"

"You mean to say, Betty—nothing turned up in the night? No trace found—"

"We are just, girls, where we were when we went to bed last night, and so is Miss Somerfield, it seems!"

"Gosh, what a mystery it is then!"

"Yes, wather, bai Jove! Extwaordinawy!"

Another day had come for Morcove School Betty Barton, who had run downstairs whilst other girls were still rushing through morning toilettings, had come back to find many of her chums descending from the dormitory floor, anxious for the latest news.

But, as she had just informed them, there was no news!

"What do we do, then?" Polly fretted. "No use going down! May as well go along to Study 12."

"But," Judy Cardew exclaimed as they started to drift into the study corridor, "we are bound to know something at any moment now, surely! The police were called in last night. They will have been busy—inquiring, searching—"

"Pwecisely!"

Two or three of the chums, glancing round to see if Monica Gray was keeping with them, found that she had gone on downstairs. There was no comment on this until Study 12 had been reached. Then Madge Minden remarked, gently:

"I suppose Monica has gone down to try and get word with the headmistress. That may produce some news."

"Quite," Betty nodded. "Monica, of course, has more right than any of us to go to the headmistress about it all; in a way, Monica is mixed up in the affair."

"Which is the thing that so puzzles me!" was Polly's fuming rejoinder. "Why—why did Edna Denver use Monica's name, last evening, when telephoning to Jimmy Cherrol at Grangemoor School. I wonder how much Fay knows?"

"Not so much as Monica, I fancy," answered Betty shrewdly. "Fay was not kept long by Miss Somerfield, last night. But Monica—"

"Yes, what a time Monica was with the Head!" cried Helen Craig. "We didn't see Monica again, in fact, until she came up to the dormitory."

"And that was after we were all in bed," added Tess.

"Besides, Monica has already gone down to find the Head—obviously," Judy carried on the talk. "As for Fay Denver, she is simply moping about."

"I feel awful sorry for Fay now," murmured Madge. "However detestably she and Edna behave, as a rule, now that this has occurred—"

"Hark!" And Judy, who had heard a footstep in the corridor, looked out to see who was there. "Yes, I thought so," she added, turning away from the door, "it's Monica Gray, and she may be coming in here."

The door was wide open. In the belief that Monica had been absent during the last few minutes, for the purpose of a talk with Miss Somerfield, there was an eager waiting for her.



And then, when every eye was watching the doorway, there came such a bewildering surprise for Betty and Co. as they were never likely to forget.

There had been Judy's word for it, a moment ago, that Monica was coming this way; but the girl who had now appeared at the study's threshold was NOT Monica Gray.

Instead, they all beheld a certain chum whom they had supposed to be hundreds of miles away from Morcove School at this time. And that chum was—

"Pam!" they all named her, in a general shout of amazement. "Pam!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Bekas, what ze diggings, Pam!"

"You, Pam, you?" gasped Betty incredulously. "When—when did you get here, then? Where have you come from?"

"And what—what's become of Monica Gray, then, who was out there a moment or two ago?" cried Judy. "I saw her—horn-rimmed glasses, flat-footed step—"

"Yes, well," smiled Pam Willoughby, "I am Monica Gray!"

Her listeners stared in greater amazement than ever.

"You're WHAT?" jerked Polly.

"I am Monica Gray, girls!"

"Never!"

"Bekas—"

But now Pam Willoughby, advancing into the room with that graceful step of hers—a step so different from Monica's awkward one—threw a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles upon the table.

"Gosh!" Polly gasped.

"Bekas—"

"Bai Jove! Extwaordinawy!"

Pam turned round to close the door. She looked fully two inches taller than Monica had ever been. Erect and willowy, and delicately graceful; their Pam, right enough—"the little lady of Swanlake," as they had often called her.

"Miss Somerfield has given me permission to drop the Monica Gray pose," she announced calmly. "I went to her, just now, to ask her if I might—because I could see a reason for being done with the pose. As it happened, the same idea had just occurred to her. By my being my proper self again in the school, we might save—Edna Denver."

"I don't understand!" cried Polly, sweeping a hand across her forehead. "No, I don't!"

"None of us do!"

"I don't suppose you do," Pam answered. "But a few words will now make everything clear. Last night, Edna Denver was kidnapped in mistake for me."

"Kidnapped!"

"Yes. We knew at once—Miss Somerfield and I—that that was what had happened. We have been outwitting the gang by my changing myself into Monica Gray, a new girl at Morcove; but somehow they have found out, and that was why they kidnapped Edna last night. It is perfectly obvious. One of the gang, spying around the school, heard her give her name as Monica Gray, so she was pounced upon—"

"But surely!" burst in Polly. "They have found out the mistake by now! Edna has explained—convincing them—"

"How could she convince them?" Pam submitted. "No, we can't expect to find her turning up, after being set free. They are keeping her convinced that she is the very girl they were out to get. And the only way to save Edna, now—as Miss Somerfield and I have both realised

—is for me to go about again in the school in my rightful name."

"Ah!" Betty cried. "Now I get you! Yes!"

"Meaning," Polly chimed in eagerly, "the sooner the gang know that Pam Willoughby is here in the school, the sooner they'll release Edna? Until they do find out that you, Pam, are amongst us all, Edna will be kept prisoner?"

"That's it. And so I'm to be Pam again for all I'm worth! It ought to do the trick—"

"But look here," Madge interposed uneasily. "If you were the girl they were after, then doesn't it put you in great danger, for you to disclose yourself? You were safe as Monica Gray, but—"

"Oh, there may be a bit of risk to me—I don't mind," Pam stated, serenely. "The point is—as Miss Somerfield sees—that Edna can't be allowed to remain in their hands to keep me out of danger. Dad himself would never have agreed to that—and he was anxious enough to make things safe for me."

"Why, Pam—why did they want to kidnap you?" Helen suddenly clamoured.

"There again, I can soon explain. By going out to India—as he has gone, now—dad knew that he could do a great service to a native prince who had asked his aid. That prince is all for working with the British out there. Enemies of the prince wanted to prevent dad from going out. They couldn't harm him, or they themselves would have been suspected. So they planned to kidnap me, hoping to cause him such worry on my account he would be bound to stay in this country. But we made our plans, so that he could go to India after all. I became Monica Gray."

"You were Monica Gray in London, at that hotel, and yet you were Pam all the while, really?"

"Of course I was!"

"Gee!" gasped Polly. "And you were really Pam when you came to Morcove this term as Monica Gray, the new girl!"

"Of course I was!"

"Just fancy!"

"Yes; I can't get over it!"

"Bekas, talk about anybody having us on!"

"You made yourself so completely different, Pam, as Monica Gray!"

These and like remarks were still going up when a number of girls turned up at Study 12's doorway. The sensational presence of Pam Willoughby served these newcomers just as it had served Betty and Co. Then the hubbub drew more girls to the scene.

A few moments more, and the news was spreading like wildfire through Morcove School.

Monica Gray and Pam Willoughby were one and the same girl! And this astounding circumstance had, the school learned, a vital bearing upon the disappearance of Edna Denver!

Girls could talk of nothing else during breakfast and in the odd half-hour between "brekker" and school.

A fresh sensation was caused by the news that Cliff Edge bungalow, visited by the police overnight, had been found to be deserted. Fires in the grates had gone out, and the dwelling had grown cold when the police forced an entry, so the inference was that the tenants of the place had fled.

Nor was there any doubt that they had made off in secret, taking Edna with them.

All trace of her and the Hindoes was lost. Plenty of girls were longing to be allowed to make up search-parties; far from this wish being conceded, however, a notice appeared on the



green-baize board, putting the whole school in bounds until further notice.

The school knew that Edna had been kidnapped in mistake for Pam, and that the next step was to make their mistake known to the kidnapers.

There was the possibility that the Hindoos would become aware that Pam herself was actually at the school.

She, indeed, was in danger now. Her abandonment of the rôle of Monica Gray was as good as a "Here I am!" to the kidnapers. "Pam Willoughby is the girl you were after; yes, well—I'm that girl, and here I am, at Morcove School!"

But that danger she was quite prepared to run for the sake of Edna Denver. From a few remarks which Pam made to her chums, the latter were aware that she would have abandoned the Monica Gray rôle, even against Miss Somerfield's wishes.

As it was, the headmistress, faced with a choice of evils, had decided that it was right for Pam to submit herself to the risk. She must be Pam again, and Morcove must rely upon its being able to protect her as Pam.

"Don't let her out of your sight for a moment, any of you," was the entreaty Betty received from Miss Somerfield at midday. "It is a terrible position now, Betty, and remember, it may remain so—"

"Even if Edna is set free and turns up again, unharmed—yes, I quite see that," nodded the Form's shrewd captain. "The Hindoos may be as determined as ever to try again."

"And next time they can hardly fail to kidnap the right girl. If they get any girl at all it will be Pam." And then—

Breaking off, she walked to the window, giving a glance to the front drive as if expecting an arrival. Betty was alone with Miss Somerfield in the sanctum, having been sent for.

"I suppose," Betty said, "your brother, who is staying at Swanlake, has been interesting himself in this disappearance of Edna Denver?"

"It is odd, your mentioning Mr. Somerfield," the headmistress exclaimed, still watching from the window. "I am expecting him at any moment, by car. And I may tell you, Betty, he is wanting me to approve a daring plan. If I do agree to it then you and one or two of your chums may be needed."

"Oh, how jolly!" And it made the headmistress smile to see the Form captain looking so overjoyed. "There is nothing, Miss Somerfield, we want more than to do something—anything!"

"Yes, I know what you are, you girls! But you must go away now, Betty, and not lead Polly and the rest to think that something very different from lessons is in store for them this afternoon.



"You, Pam!" the cry went up from the chums. "But what's become of Monica Gray?" Pam smiled. "I am Monica Gray," she said.

I hear a car coming now, and—yes, that is my brother, right enough," Miss Somerfield added, peering out of the window again. "But you need not wait, Betty."

So Betty, giving a scholar's bow, withdrew. In spite of a hint about not getting too keyed-up, she pranced away from the headmistress' private room. Pam and others were waiting about in the Front Hall, and Betty's jaunty air might have led to her being immediately bombarded with questions, but now the car was pulling up opposite the porch, and its arrival caused a diversion.

Excitement would have been great enough even if the chums had seen only Mr. Jack Somerfield alighting from the car; but with him were four schoolboys—THE FOUR!

Polly's brother, Jack; Judy's brother, Dave; Jimmy Cherrol and "Tubby" Bloot—in they came at the heels of Mr. Somerfield who, calmly and gladly turned them over, as it were, to the girls.

## CHAPTER 6.

### A Job For the Juniors

MR. SOMERFIELD'S own greeting to Betty and Co. was a mere "Hallo, all—hallo, Pam!" whilst he directed their attention to the Grangemoor lads. Then he went striding on, to seek his sister, the headmistress, in her private room.

"Morning!" greeted Jack Linton, bowing to the girls with his chums on either side of him. "Re the affair of Edna Denver, reported miss-



ing, believed kidnapped. We are the Flying Squad. My card—"

"Now, don't be a goop!" snorted Polly, playing up to his attempt at a bit of nonsense. "Who wants you boys over here—thinking you are going to do what we girls can't do!"

"Mr. Somerfield rang up the Head and asked if our services could be called in," Jack blandly explained. "We stated our fee: To cancellation of work in class, one hundred guineas. Travelling expenses, and food allowance for Tubby, extra."

"I should have thought," said Polly, "you would have brought your own supply of food."

"So we did," sparkled Jack. "But Tubby ate it all, coming along in the car. He won't want lunch; we others will."

"I jolly well see zat Tubby sits down with ze rest of us—and sits next to me," Naomer piped in. "Bekas, cef we are going to investergate, cet is no use starting out hungry!"

"What are we going to do—do you know?" Betty eagerly inquired of the boys. "Miss Somerfield has just been making some mysterious allusion; but—"

"Bothered if we know," Jack answered for self and chums. "It's a fact, though; we have been borrowed for the rest of the day. Mr. Somerfield has some plan of action, but we don't know what it is. He just picked us up at Grangemoor School, and brought us over in his car. Any rate, it's nice to see you, Pam, once again! Changed since we saw you last!"

There was laughter then. The boys knew by now, of course, that Pam had been Monica Gray, and subsequent talk revealed that they knew the reason why. Mr. Somerfield had confided the whole story to them when he picked up the redoubtable four at Grangemoor.

"But I shall always suspect," Jack jested, "that Jimmy knew, from the very first! He knew all right, that evening at the hotel in town, when he 'took pity' on Monica Gray; he knew he was really dancing with Pam, even though she was such a poor dancer—bit flat-footed if I remember aright?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Did you know, Jimmy?" asked Betty teasingly.

"I only wish I had known," grinned he.

"And I," smiled Pam, "wish I could have confided in all of you, but that was strictly forbidden. In fact, I was under solemn promise to dad not to let any of you know. Poor Jimmy, was I very flat-footed?" she asked him.

"Gosh!" Jack interposed. "You should have heard the names he called you! So don't have anything to do with him any more, Pam, just to pay him out."

But Pam, with that inborn delicacy of hers, had a good deal to do with Jimmy during the next hour or so. When the Form went to its table in the school dining-room, with the four boys as guests, it was observed that Pam welcomed shy Jimmy as a right-hand neighbour. He was so very shy, as usual; only a girl of Pam's understanding could have set him at his ease.

And afterwards, when she and three other members of the chummery had been warned to stand by, as it were, with the boys, because they were likely to be wanted, Pam drew Jimmy into talk of a more personal nature.

"Strange, Jimmy, how this Edna Denver business has brought us together like this."

"Not surprising," was his opinion. "It's pretty certain, now, that Edna and her sister gleaned something through our meeting at Swanlake yes-

terday afternoon—when I first found out that Monica Gray was—you!"

"Oh, yes, that's about it," Pam nodded. "They were over that way, as we know. What I meant was—things do seem to happen, to bring us together."

His great shyness made it impossible for him to see anything good in this for Pam.

"Seems to me," he mumbled, in his modesty, "I cause all the trouble! If I hadn't recognised you yesterday afternoon, then most likely Fay and Edna would never have had the chance of finding out that you were Monica Gray! They overheard—"

The rest went unsaid, for at this instant Mr. Somerfield briskly appeared upon the scene, ready for out-of-doors—as were the boys and girls.

It was all they had been told—to get their hats and coats on, and then wait for him in the Front Hall. Even so, it had been enough to put the selected juniors in a state of great delight. At the very least, they looked like having an afternoon out of bounds, when the rest of Morcove would not only be in bounds, but—in school!

"Now," Jack Somerfield said, with looks that promised no exciting time, "we'll get away. I just want you to—well, come with me!"

But they refused to believe that the jaunt with him was to mean an uneventful time after all. Nor could girls who were hanging about, knowing that Betty, Pam, Polly and Judy had been selected like this, refrain from giving loud cheers as the party set off for the school gateway.

It was quite a joyous mob that followed Mr. Somerfield and his youthful companions down to that gateway, where final cheers and jocular cries were raised, with Naomer's voice rising shrilly in a final:

"Sweendle! Bekas, why couldn't I go as well—booh!"

Polly turned round to answer the Imp.

"You sat next to Tubby at dinner, kid; what more do you want!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

After that, the chosen juniors had to step out smartly to keep pace with Mr. Somerfield on the public highway.

Only then did they learn from him that the first objective was the bungalow, a mile distant from the school, at the edge of the cliffs.

"We shan't be staying. I just want a word with the policeman who has been put in charge there. You boys and girls can wait at the gate whilst I go up to the front door."

Nothing very exciting in that, they felt. When the time came for them to be left waiting at the bungalow gateway whilst he went up the private drive to the porch door, Polly, for one, was all yearning looks in the direction of the vast moor which spread for miles inland from the road running between Morcove and the town.

"Shouldn't wonder if Edna is being kept prisoner somewhere not far from the school," impatient Polly fumed. "There is an old empty house on the moor—"

"The 'police have searched there, I fancy," Dave Cardew quietly interposed. "They went there in the night."

From Mr. Somerfield, at the bungalow porch, came a sudden bawled cry for:

"Pam! Pam Willoughby!"

There had been just time for her to get half-way up the path, at a run, when Jack came out with an inspired:

"Gosh, I know why he shouted for her like that at the top of his voice. Anything, on the chance of its helping to make it known to the gang that



Pam's out and about—Pam is! Get the idea?" "Oh!" Polly cried. "And so, for as long as we stay out with her, it must be 'Pam, Pam, Pam!'"

"Not very nice for Pam," was Betty's serious comment. "Increases the risk to her—drawing attention to her, for that's what it amounts to. But she won't mind, we can be sure."

"We've got Mr. Somerfield with us, at any rate," Judy murmured. "And I dare say he is armed. I mean, if from here we are to go on to the moor."

Jack Somerfield came back down the path to them, with Pam. She was her serene self, and her smile evidenced that there had been nothing more than a ruse in his calling her to the porch just now.

"And now for a bit of scouting on the moor," said Jack Somerfield, lighting a cigarette. "The police, I am told, have been all over it, and have drawn blank. It's for us to see if we can do any better than that."

He spoke on as they all crossed the road to fare away over the wintry wastes.

"Those Hindoos had a car at the bungalow—BAJ 010. It may have been used to take Edna Denver right out of this district, and the police are all in favour of that theory now. I reckon, myself, the gang would think twice before using that car. Easy to alter the number-plates, but the make of the car and so on was made known to the police last night. The gang would expect that to happen."

"Then is it your theory, Mr. Somerfield," Betty asked, "that the missing girl is still in the neighbourhood?"

"Ah," he said, shrugging, "there could have been another car, ready to turn up as soon as word came. But what I do feel pretty sure about is that somebody belonging to the gang has remained in the district to pick up news of what the police may be doing, or what's being done at the school. Just look at the moor, out there," nodding before him over the miles of gorse and dead bracken. "How easy to lie up, coming out only by night."

"Even quite close to the school!" Betty rejoined, gazing around. "But can't we scatter a bit then, Mr. Somerfield? Otherwise—"

"It's what we are going to do, right now," he responded calmly. "That doesn't mean you are to be out of sight to me; just a sort of advance in open order, if you get me? Oh, and by the way, shout to one another as much as you like!"

"And if any of us call out for Pam—no harm done?" Polly blandly inferred.

"That's it! If anybody has been left around here it will only be because Edna will have been protesting, over and over again, that in kidnapping her they made a mistake. Her assertions may have created an uneasy doubt—they MAY have done that, I say. In which case," Jack Somerfield reasoned, "the gang might hope to clear up the doubt by leaving a spy."

"Come on, then, boys!" Polly's brother cried, meaning the girls as well, as usual. "And just see if we can't bolt a hare!"

Another minute and they were in slightly scattered formation. Betty and Polly and Jack were a trio scouting in one direction; Judy and Dave roamed together over their chosen area;

(Continued on the next page)

No. 472

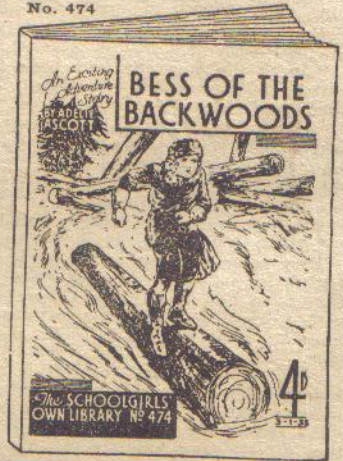


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Pam was with Mr. Somerfield, Jimmy and Tubby.

Jack had talked of "bolting a hare," but that was only his bit of levity. The last thing they expected to do was to stumble upon someone skulking amongst the gorse, so that he or she would have to dash away before their eyes.

The methods, indeed, would have been far different had conditions been favourable to taking somebody by surprise. As it was, the facilities for lying low and remaining safely concealed were so favourable, a wary and silent prowling about would have been so much time and trouble thrown away.

As Polly remarked, it was almost as bad as "looking for a needle in a bundle of hay."

But the very fact that somebody might be lying low within earshot made this bit of so-called scouting really worth while. Very soon, in pursuance of the policy agreed upon, Pam was being hailed first by one Morcove chum and then by another.

Time after time, either Betty, Polly or Judy wanted to make some inquiry of Pam, the preliminary to which was a shouted "Pam!" loud enough to be heard half a mile away.

And then, suddenly, the unexpected happened. At a moment when Polly could not have claimed to be seriously searching for clues that might lead to anything in connection with missing Edna—she gave a thrilled cry.

"Betty, Jack! Oh, look—look there!"

And those two companions of hers saw her pointing, excitedly, to something lying amongst the dead and flattened bracken.

Jack, after bounding to get a nearer look at the object, shouted:

"Gosh, a girl's handkerchief!"

And Betty said:

"Yes—Edna's!"

## CHAPTER 7.

### A Clue is a Clue

POLLY was already pouncing to pick up the sensational find.

"Edna's—yes!" she confirmed Betty's assertion. "Here are her initials—E. D.!"

"Gee! Whew, we never expected this!" Jack gasped, breaking into a joyful smile. "Now, boys—now we are on to something, if you like!"

"She dropped it—perhaps on purpose," Betty voiced the rapid workings of her mind. "Hoped, perhaps, that it would be found, and would be a clue—"

"As to the way she had been taken," Polly caught up her chum excitedly. "Which way, then, was Edna taken from here?"

"Steady, boys," Jack counselled breathlessly.

"Mind out that we don't spoil the trail. They brought her this way, and so—but let's call up the others! Mr. Somerfield—hi!" he shouted, framing his mouth with his hands. "This way, all!"

"Yes, Pam! Judy!" Betty and Polly halloed.

"All of you—quick, quick!"

They came running to the spot, and there the entire batch stood grouped together, realising that from now onwards a different motive altogether must inspire their actions. Now they must try their hardest to follow up this valuable clue.

"It is known almost for certain that Edna was kidnapped somewhere between the school and the railway station," Mr. Somerfield reflected aloud. "It's reasonable to suppose that they came from that direction on a fairly straight course to this point—"

"And still went on—"

"And still went on, as you say, Dave, keeping to the same course—"

"Which would take them—that way, more inland," Polly burst in, gesturing expressively.

Then her brother Jack moved a step or two as if to obtain a closer view of something fresh.

"Here, boys!" This time he meant Mr. Somerfield as well as his fellow juniors. "I know the bracken is everywhere lying flat, after the winter rains, but it seems to me there's a sort of trail—"

"There is!" cried Polly and others, looking the way he was pointing. More beaten down—the bracken—"

"As if two or three people had passed that way," was Betty's eager chiming in. "Which is just the way they might have been expected to go, on a straight course towards the heart of the moor!"

Jack Linton's "Come on, boys!" was emphatically approved by Mr. Somerfield, who cast away his cigarette in a way that meant "Now, to work!"

And, like hounds working over ground where the scent was hot, they went on again.

This time, they kept together, and soon they were drawn out in single file. Mr. Somerfield was leading, but this did not mean that he was being left to follow the trail alone.

Every step of the way the juniors were looking past him to what lay in front. It certainly did appear to be a faint trail, left by some person or persons who had floundered this way recently. At this wintry season of the year there was no recovery in any of the vegetation—most of it quite dead even—from the pressure of a foot.

So they snaked along between the clumps of gorse and the stunted trees growing here and there, always making out the tell-tale signs of someone having passed that way.

It could have been one of the policemen, of course; it could have been anyone in the last few days, come to that! But—there was that found handkerchief which had at least given them a starting point; a proof that Edna, as a captive, had passed where they had started from, just now!

No moorland road had to be crossed during this eager prowling along. No building came in sight. They were working more and more towards the very wildest, loneliest part of the whole wild and lonely moor.

At last they encountered a disused cart-track. It had been stone, at one time, but the grass had grown over the stones.

Mr. Somerfield called a halt, for the track ran to right and left of the course they had been following.

"Now, which way?" he questioned. "Is this where they put her in a car, perhaps? I take it that the track comes out, upon one of the by-roads not far off? But—"

"No car has come this way lately," Dave asserted, with quiet conviction. "If they went along the track on foot, then we are going to be up against a difficulty."

Mr. Somerfield must have known what the astute lad meant, for he nodded. The grassy track, being very firm on account of the layer of stones, was not likely to show the imprints of feet.

"And they did go one way or the other along the track, if you ask me," Betty grimaced. "For there's no sign of a trail on the other side, like the one we have followed so far."

"Then which is the way to the nearest road?" Mr. Somerfield wanted to know. "For it looks



as if they turned aside to go along to where a car was waiting."

The girls were ready to answer him, for the course of every road and bridle-path on this part of the moor was known to them. But, before they could voice a word, another clue was being literally picked up.

This time, it was a bone button—a large coat-button, first seen by Polly, who with an excitable pounce snatched it up from the grassy track.

"That's Morcove, that is!" Polly said, flashing about to show the button on an upturned palm. "Off a Morcove girl's winter coat. Edna's again!"

"By heck!" cried Jack. "For, don't you see, boys, Edna was doing her best, whilst being taken along, to leave clues? First the hanky, then a button

"Clever of her!" Mr. Somerfield exclaimed. "She had the wit to do a thing like that! Chose just the right place, too, so far as the button is concerned."

"Oh, Edna Denver is no fool!" Betty remarked. "So now—we may hope to find other things she dropped without letting her captors know what she was doing?"

"Anyhow, this is the way," exulted Jack Linton, for the found button had decided them as to which direction Edna had been taken along the track. "Come on, boys!"

For a short distance the old cart-track ran over level ground. Then it went gently downhill before them, although more high ground was directly ahead. It might have seemed a mere descent into one of the many hollows of the moor, with a rise as gradual to be encountered, but suddenly Betty voiced the recollection:

"Why, I know where this is taking us—to the old quarry! Oh, and don't you remember, girls? There's a hut in the quarry!"

"Yes, of course."

Even as Betty's three school-chums answered in chorus like that, they all brisked up the pace. A

few moments more, and they were running—fast.

The hut! Mr. Somerfield and the boys were ready to believe that any bit of shelter out here on the moor might have served the kidnapers a very useful purpose. As for the girls, now that they had been put in mind of the hut in the quarry, they were feeling that of all places, it was the one most likely to offer clues bearing upon the fate of Edna Denver.

The track took a bend in its gentle descent, and round that bend they had the quarry right before their eyes, a place of rugged grandeur, grimly forbidding because of the high walls of rock forming a horseshoe round the boulder-bstrewn floor.

"My word, what a hole!" Jack Linton panted. "I wonder if the police have been here?"

"There's the hut!" several of the others said breathlessly. "Right in over there, under the highest part of the cliffs."

"But the door's wide open!" jerked Polly. "No one there!"

Next moment, whilst still running, the juniors were aware of Mr. Somerfield taking something from a right-hand pocket; it was a revolver.

He held it at the ready as he led the advance into the quarry. With a creepy sense of becoming more and more shut in by the almost encircling stone terraces, they zig-zagged between the giant blocks of rock that lay about in the sedgy grass. A few jackdaws flapped away, giving their sharp little cries.



"Betty—Jack! Look!" Polly yelled to the other searchers. "I've found a clue—a girl's handkerchief! And it's Edna's!" But would it lead them to the missing girl's hiding place?

"So there's no one about," Mr. Somerfield promptly deduced, "or those birds would have been gone before this. We frightened them away."

"No one," Betty echoed, and there was a note of disappointment in her voice. "Too late, then—is that it?"

Keeping close together, they came to the ramshackle wooden building, the door of which stood wide open as if to offer them a mocking sight of the lifeless interior. They went inside, and the first eager searchings produced nothing in the nature of a clue.

Then suddenly Judy Cardew made a find. She announced it by an excited:

"Just look at this, all!"

They flocked around her, and it was an appalled



silence which ensued as they saw what was lying upon her upturned hand. Another button, matching the one found on the track leading to the quarry.

"Yes, well," Pam whispered, ending the great pause. "Then they brought her here; they had her here for a time, at least."

"But she's gone—she's been taken away," Betty sighed heavily. "And so we are—too late!"

## CHAPTER 8.

### Morcove Waits—and Wonders

MISS MERRICK, the Form-mistress, looking up from some correction work as she sat at her desk in front of the class, saw a good many of her girls casting wistful eyes at the clock.

No word of reproof did Miss Merrick voice. She considered that the Form had been splendid in class this afternoon, considering the abundant cause there was for letting the mind stray.

"I think, girls, we will stop now. It is only twenty-past, but most of you have finished, I can see. Books away, then!"

"Hooray! Bekas—"

"Naomer, if you would please defer any jubilation until you are dismissed with the rest—"

"But you are such a sport, Mees Merrick! Bekas—"

"That will DO, I tell you!"

And Miss Merrick, blandly ignoring an outburst of tittering, gave the command which resulted in a more or less orderly exit from the class-room.

No sooner were girls clear of the class-room than they formed into gossiping batches. Fay Denver, sister of the girl who was still missing, and of whom not a word had been heard, was alone in a drifting towards the stairs.

Out of sympathy—although they disliked Fay—two or three girls approached her, ready to keep with her; but she moodily snapped that she didn't want their company, and so they left her to go up to her study, to be alone with her thoughts.

"Wonder when we shall see Betty and the others back?" Madge murmured to some of her best chums. "I'll never forget trying to work in class, this afternoon, and having to think about them—and Edna Denver—all the time!"

"Same here—"

"Yes, wather, bai Jove!" sighed Paula. "Twying beyond words! Howevah, Miss Mewwick was, I must say, most considewate."

"Miss Merrick is a ripper!" declared Helen Craig. "But shall we go out and down to the gates? We don't want to think about tea yet."

"Unless we all get tea," Naomer counter-proposed, "so as to be quite ready to make a start when Betty and ze rest do come in? Bekas, you never know! Zey will come in hungry any old how," was the reinforcing argument.

But the inclination of the rest was to seek the open air, and they did so, Naomer going with them.

The wintry afternoon had become gloomy with heavy clouds drifting in from the sea. Normally, the girls would have felt content that there was no rain to put a check upon before-tea games, but the gloomy light oppressed them now.

It seemed to threaten an early onset of dark night. And, when darkness had come again—with still no news of Edna Denver, perhaps—what would their thoughts be then!

Another night, and the kidnapped girl still untraced! Darkness again—all the long hours when nothing could be done.

"Somehow," Tess remarked, on the way down to the gates. "I feel certain that the girls, at any rate, will be back any minute now. Pam is one of them, and Mr. Somerfield would never allow Pam to be out as late as the twilight, even."

"Why he took them out for the afternoon, I can't imagine!" Helen was exclaiming, when Madge voiced an interrupting:

"Hark! I can hear—"

"Oh, so can I—and I!"

"Yes, wather!"

Faint and breathless shoutings from some girls on the road just outside the school's main gateway! Voices rendered all the fainter by reason of the intervening boundary wall, and yet they were recognisable—Betty's voice, Polly's!

It was a thing to send Madge and others galloping the rest of the way down to the gateway. Before they reached it they saw Betty and Polly coming in, with Pam and Judy.

These were the chosen four who had been out with Mr. Somerfield and the boys on the mysterious mission; but there was a fifth girl amongst them now. She was one whom Pam and Judy were helping along because of her weak and tottering state.

"Why, it's Edna Denver!" yelled some of those who were just out of class. "It's Edna—it's Edna!"

"Bai Jove, so it is! Geals, geals—"

"Hooray!" Naomer capered. "Bekas, zey have found her! Zey have got her—hip, pip! Gorjus!"

These four or five girls were only a tittle of those who were now dashing to put themselves with those who had come in at the gateway.

Scores of scholars were careering down the drive from the schoolhouse. But the chums were the first to be in breathless talk with Betty and her companions of the afternoon.

"You've got her!"

"We've got her—yep!" Polly nodded, triumphantly.

"Edna!" cried one and another, in mingled delight and pity. "Edna! Oh, what—how—where—"

"Better not question her now; she's very upset," Betty interposed. "I think Pam and I should go on with her to the schoolhouse, to turn her over to Miss Somerfield. Polly and Judy will explain to you—"

"Very well, Betty! Do that!"

It was a chorus of eager approval, followed by a brief hush as Betty and Pam went on with Edna, who was in a pale, drooping state.

Then the crowd re-formed around Polly and Judy.

"Bekas, what ze diggings, Polly? You say, queek!"

"Yes, Polly—Judy—"

"I must tell you later, girls, what led us to a hut in the quarry on the moor," Polly began to relate, breathlessly. "We had definite proof that Edna had been kept there for a time; but we felt we were whacked as to tracing her any farther. Mr. Somerfield shared our belief that from there she'd been taken right away in a car."

"And she hadn't been, after all!" the crowd excitedly inferred.

"She was going to be," Judy took up the narrative. "At any moment the car might have turned up. It looks as if there had been a hitch, and so the car was overdue—"

"Any rate," Polly burst in, "when we were coming away from the quarry—suddenly we formed a suspicion that something was close at hand. We scouted round, and then a woman—"



a Hindoo woman, although she wore some European clothes—got up to run. Some of us had nearly stumbled right upon her."

"She had Edna with her?"

"She had been keeping Edna beside her, amongst the gorse, making threatening signs to prevent her from calling out. But," Polly rattled on, "the woman left Edna, to start running away. Mr. Somerfield and the boys gave chase. We girls, finding Edna in such a terrified state, stayed with her. They caught the woman, and they are now sure of catching the man. He is somewhere on the moor—at his wits' end to know what to do. Must be!"

"Splendid! Oh, fine!" Morcove rejoiced. "Hooray!"

"Bekas, what ze diggings, now we can celebrate! We can have a gorjus spread at tea-time, and ze boys—"

"Are they coming back to Morcove?" clamoured the crowd.

"Rather!" Polly sparkled. "Mr. Somerfield, too, will be along by-and-by. He is first handing over the woman to the police. But the great thing is, we've got Edna back."

"Yes, wather!"

"She is saved—"

"And you girls did it!"

"But did we?" grimaced Polly. "I suppose," she jested, "we must share the glory with the boys!"

"But, look here," Tess exclaimed anxiously. "Does this mean that the danger to Pam is over for good and all? I mean, just the one woman being captured, when it's known there was a gang—"

"That's the snag," Polly grimaced again. "Even Mr. Somerfield, who knows as much about the whole business as anybody, is not certain about that. Oh, but, anyway, Pam's safe at present, and—and now," the madcap sighed amusingly, "here come the boys!"

Morcove treated Messrs. Jack Linton and Co. to one of its ringing cheers, whereupon Jack took off his school cap and bowed, hand to heart.

"My young friends, I thank you," he said, putting on a grown-up air. "On behalf of my colleagues, without whose assistance I could not have achieved the personal triumph which—wow!" He doubled down, for Polly was "going" for him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that," Jack scowled, returning his cap to a tousled head, "is your gratitude! It's all we get, you chaps—"

"No!" yelled Naomer. "Bekas—tea! Hi, queek, everybody! Come and see if we can have ze music-room for tea, and a grand celebration! You're hungry, aren't you, Tubby?"

"Look at Tubby," Jack said sadly. "Pounds, he's lost, in a single afternoon! Run himself to a skeleton, Tubby has. All very well to laugh, boys"—meaning girls—"but he was the Pride of Grangemoor, Tubby was; the Champion Heavy-weight of Challenger's—and now look at him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

#### CHAPTER 9.

#### Bravo! the Juniors

**H**ALF an hour later, Morcove's fine music-room was serving as the setting for a very festive gathering.

That Form which had the honour of numbering Betty and Co. amongst its members—THE Form, as it always claimed to be—was enjoying a special tea, provided at the school's expense.

The boys were there, as old favourites who must be accorded a share in the triumph.

Miss Merrick was supposed to be presiding, but it was like Miss Merrick to know that, after seeing a good start made, she would be better out of the way!

"I'll be back presently," she gaily announced, intending to come in again only at the finish.

But the girls and boys were still going strong upon sandwiches and cake and jam-sandwich when the Form-mistress came rushing in with such looks as could only mean—a fresh sensation!

Instantly the chatter and laughter died down. On a sudden silence came Miss Merrick's voice:

(Continued on the next page)

## 2 FINE NEW STORIES NEXT TUESDAY

Number one of a brilliant new series of long complete Morcove School tales, featuring Betty Barton and Co., entitled:



And the first of a new series of complete stories entitled:





"The latest news—received a minute since by the headmistress over the phone: It is now known that Edna Denver would have been taken away before dawn this morning, only the kidnappers down here at Morcove could not get into touch with their chief, in London. They had counted on getting a car sent down, in secret, but the man for whom they were working—"

"The Ameer of Abdur-Khan," Pam put in knowingly.

"Yes! He was the instigator of the whole thing, girls and boys—his motive being known to you all by now, I fancy. Well, at eleven o'clock last night the Ameer of Abdur-Khan was run over in the East End of London."

"What!" gasped some of the girls, whilst Polly and Jack favoured an explosive "Gosh!"

"He must have gone into the East End to confer with some of his hirelings at a lair they had, near the docks. And that means—"

"Gee, boys!" Jack could not help vociferating, "we know what it means! An end to Pam's danger; an end to the whole business!"

"Yes, Pam!" came from all sides of the table. "You're safe now, Pam!"

"It means more than that," said she, with all her usual serenity. "Much more. It means that dad can come back from India by the next air liner. It means an enemy to peace out there in India can never cause anyone another moment's trouble. That being so—"

She let it go at that; but, later on, she was to have more to say about the dead Ameer. That was when she and certain of her chums, along with the boys, were having to make their way to the headmistress' sanctum.

As there had been a hint that this parade was being required so that they might all be personally thanked by Miss Somerfield, and also receive a few congratulatory remarks from her brother, the juniors were rather inclined to dawdle.

"The Ameer was a cruel monster in his own country," Pam felt bound to tell her chums as they made their way downstairs. "And the worst of it was, he not only set his face against reforms where he was the ruler; he was always plotting against the rulers of neighbouring parts."

"We remember him in London—he was staying at our hotel," Betty murmured. "That was when you were there as Monica Gray—and he no more suspected that Monica Gray was really Pam Willoughby than we did!"

"Gosh, if he had!" Polly said grimly. "There would have been no Pam Willoughby with us now, that's pretty certain!"

"But you're with us, Pam!" Madge exclaimed,

(Concluded on the opposite page.)

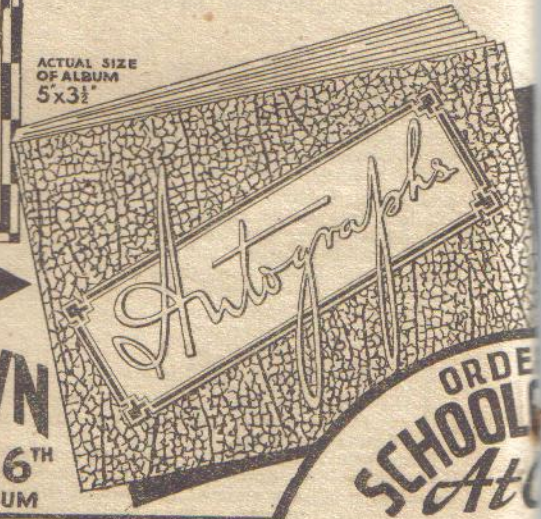
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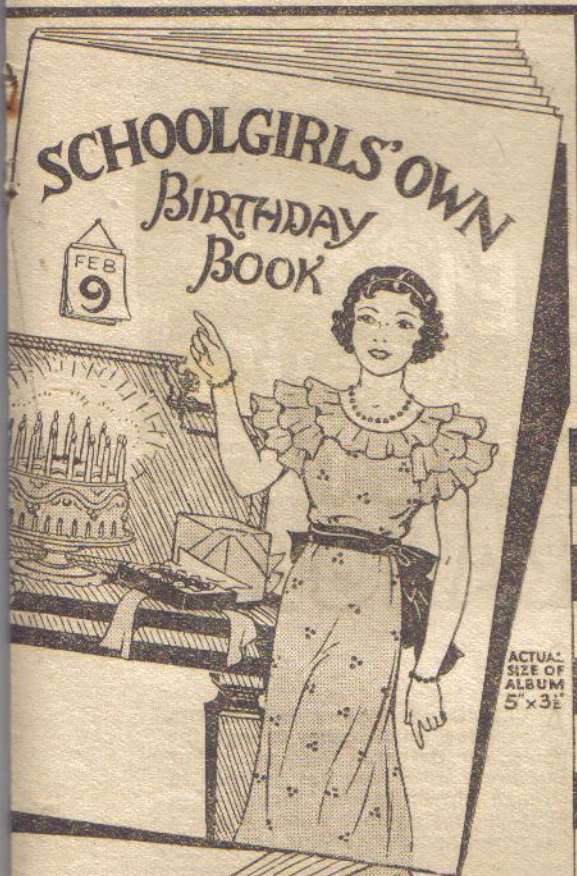
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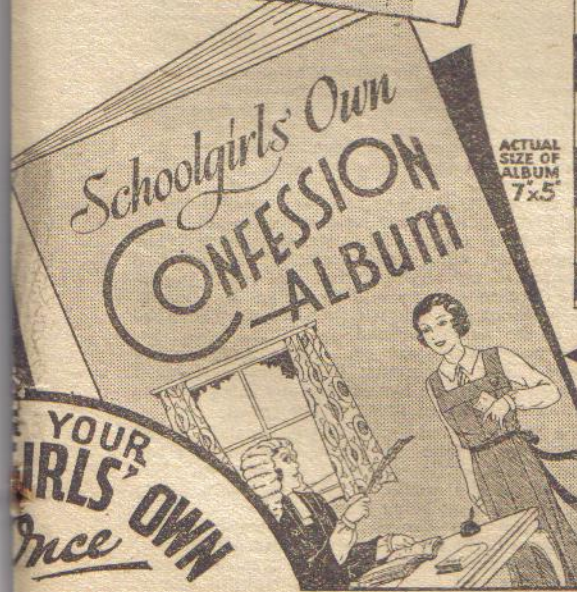
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Once

rejoicing. "And Edna Denver—she will soon be all right again, they say."

Edna had been put to bed in the "san" within a few minutes of her being brought back to Morcove. She was expected to be much better after a good night's rest. Meanwhile, of course, any scolding which she and Fay alike might deserve was deferred.

"Fay wasn't at tea with us," Dave said to Judy. "Has she thanked you girls?"

"I fancy she had been allowed to go over to see her sister in the san," Judy answered. "In any case, we wouldn't expect any thanks from Fay."

And now the chums and the Grangemoor four were turning into the ground-floor passage which led to the headmistress' private room.

"Shun!" breathed Jack, and he fingered his tie. "You wish me to reply to the speech of thanks, do you?"

"We do—not!" said his sister sweetly. "If you would kindly request Tubby not to breathe so loudly? Betty, get in front! And if you do see a chance to put in for a whole day off for the Form, to-morrow—you know what to do!"

"Right-ho!" chuckled the captain. "Where's Pam? Oh, there she is!"

Pam was coming on behind, with Jimmy. "He's been talking to her about Monica Gray," chuckled Jack. "Saying what a nice girl she was, up there in London. Poor dancer—bit flat-footed, in fact—still, nice!"

"But not so nice as Pam—eh, Jimmy?" Polly teased him, merrily.

"Shame!" laughed Betty. "You make Jimmy shyer than ever."

"There's one thing," said Polly, "Jack makes up for him there. But are we ready?"

They were at the door marked "PRIVATE."

"Tubby—waistcoat—cake-crumbs!" was Jack's final whisper to the portly one. "I say, boys," meaning the girls as well, "supposing it isn't to be a speech of thanks? Supposing there's a row on? Supposing—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Polly, roguishly pulling her brother's school tie all awry. "Give a tap, Betty!"

So Betty tapped.

"Come in!"

Jack whispered a mock-anxious: "Is it all right?" as the captain opened the door.

It was all right—of course it was!

They had only to see the admiring smile with which Miss Somerfield was receiving them all to know that she had many pleasant things to say!

THE END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

(Full details of next Tuesday's long complete Morcove School story will be found on page 53.)

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