

"An Outcast on Mystery's Trail!" GRAND ADVENTURE
STORY WITHIN

The SCHOOLGIRLS' 2^D OWN

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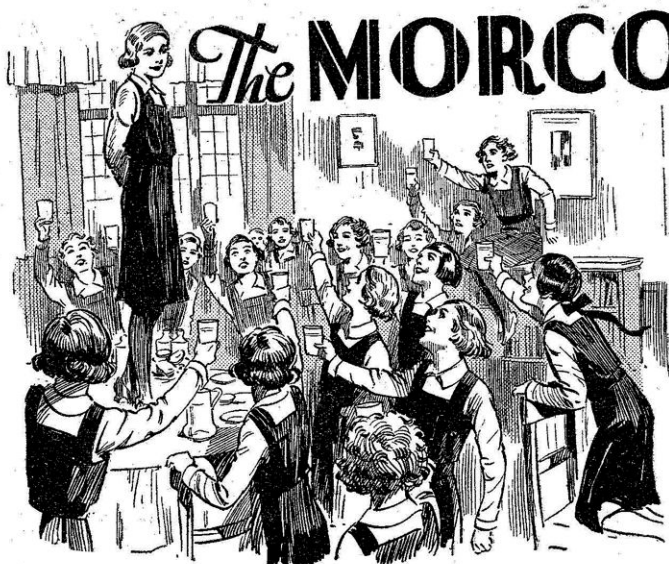


"Look!" Polly gasped.
It was the mystery
man again.

A dramatic incident from
this week's grand long
complete Morcove story.

HER HARUM-SCARUM HIGHNESS Appears in This Issue

Magnificent LONG COMPLETE Story of Morcove School—



The MORCOVE

**STARTLING
SENSATIONS
AT
MORCOVE
SCHOOL!**

**Sensation No. 1.
Biddy Loveland
Worth a
Million Pounds!**

**Sensation No. 2.
The Fourth
Form's
Theatrical
Producer
Has a Secret!**

**Sensation No. 3.
Biddy Loveland
Menaced by
Kidnappers!**

Strangers to Morcove!

"WE have time for a cup of tea, Betty."

"Yes, let's!"

Week-end luggage had, a moment since, been dumped by Betty Barton and Polly Linton in a compartment of the local train that would presently be fussing along the branch line to Morcove Road—station for Morcove School.

The two chums—chief of those who made up the Study 12 chummy—had been away on week-end leave from the school.

It was only last Friday that they set off so gaily for Polly's home, and already, on this, the following Monday afternoon, they were quite as gaily returning. Yet it seemed to both girls that they had been away quite a long time.

"And I wonder, Betty, if anything has been happening?" was madcap Polly's remark as she and Betty made for the tea-room connected with the Barncombe Junction buffet.

"Last weeks of term, Polly! We can do without anything happening, when we know what lively times they mean in any case!"

"Yes! For one thing, I suppose the Form will get up something for the End-of-Term Concert!"

"And that means—"

"Oh, don't remind me any more!" Polly mockingly pleaded. "Why should I be always the one to have to make up a play?"

"You're the only one who—"

"Rabbits! The Form used to say that no one else but you could be captain, Betty. That didn't prevent you from insisting upon Etta Hargrove having an innings. Everybody at times enjoys a change."

"Especially when it's a week-end change," chuckled Betty. "But I don't know that there is much of a thrill in having to change here for Morcove."

"Awful bore," sighed Polly, with all the more emphasis now that they were in the definitely cheerless tea-room, with its odour of gas-rings.

They dropped down into chairs at the first table which came to hand, noticing only one other refreshment seeker—a very attractive, fashionably-dressed woman.

But, although this lady was alone, tea for two had been set down on the table at which she sat. Betty and Polly had, in fact, seen the woman join their main line train at Exeter with a well-dressed man.

"Two cups of tea, please," Betty requested, when the attendant had come round from behind the counter.

"Nothing to do with our school?" Polly presently consulted her chum in a guarded voice, referring to the lady who was still alone at that nearby table.

"I wonder!" Betty whispered back.

They were feeling curious, because it looked as if the lady—and the gentleman, perhaps—would be going on by the "local" to Morcove Road. And, at this time of year, the branch line very seldom knew a passenger who was not going to or from the school itself.

The girls' tea came to hand, and then—just as they were sipping it—a man came in.

He was the same man who had travelled up from Exeter with the lady, and he now rejoined her, bursting into talk as he did so.

Featuring BETTY BARTON & CO., of the Fourth Form, and—

MILLIONAIRESS!

"We could have been met at this junction if we had let them know in time," Betty and Polly heard him exclaim. "The hotel runs a car to pick up arrivals here. So I have asked them, over the 'phone, to send the car to pick us up."

"But Morcove Road station is nearest?"

"They don't use it," the man muttered. "It must be a bigger hotel than we imagined. We knew that the school was—"

He broke off—warned to do so, as Betty and Polly were aware, by a meaning glance from the woman. The two schoolgirls felt sure also that it was their presence which had caused the mute warning to be given.

The man did not look at them, then. But a minute later he was sending glance after glance at Betty and Polly; and there was a furtiveness in this taking stock of them which they did not like.

From those few remarks, which they had been bound to overhear, it was evident that the couple were going to stay at the Headland Hotel—only a mile from the school. To know this would have meant an end to all Betty's and Polly's interest; only—why had the woman warned her companion to be careful what he said, with them on hand to hear?

"Did you notice his eyes?" Polly broke out, as soon as she and Betty were out of the stuffy tea-room. "Did you notice the sort of twist to one eyebrow, as if he had a scar just there?"

"I did," Betty grinned. "And I didn't exactly take to the woman, either."

"Neither did I! They are not Morcove parents, are they, Betty? They've certainly never been down on sports' day."

"Oh, no."

"Then why—"

"Yes, I noticed! That sudden drying-up about the school! At any rate, they are complete strangers to the district, or they would have known all about the hotel they are going to—the size it is."

"And as they didn't know," Polly reasoned on, "it doesn't look as if they are going to stay long. People who are going to put in a week or two usually send for a brochure, if they don't know what the place is like."

"Somehow," said Betty, boarding the train, whilst Polly looked back along the platform as if wishing she could see the pair again—"somehow, I don't fancy they are the usual Headland type."

"No! And, Betty, didn't he stare at us!"

"Oh, well, dear; perhaps we were rather looking at them! Get in, Polly, or the Morcove Limited will leave you behind."

"I could always catch it up, by doing a little sprint," jested the madcap.

The "local's" way of crawling the four miles



By Marjorie Stanton

from Barnecombe was one of Morcove's standing jokes. But Betty and Polly had left their bicycles at the wayside station, last Friday, and in due course they were making up for the time wasted over the last bit of the train journey.

With their luggage on the carriers, at full pelt, the returned week-enders went along the open road to the school. Morcove's chimneys were ding-donging half-past four as they turned in at the main gateway, and so they were not surprised to see an empty games field.

At this dreary season of the year, a little after four, any day, meant a general swarming indoors for tea.

What did surprise Betty and Polly was that none of their friends had hung about, out-of-doors, to welcome them back.

They could see the window of Study 12, one of a whole row of study windows high up in the great schoolhouse, and there was not a face to be seen there.

But if this incident put a slight damper on their spirits, soon enough the two chums were cheered up again. Even whilst they were putting their machines away, in the cycle-shed, sounds reached them which proclaimed great jollity somewhere in the schoolhouse.

Then, on their way to the front porch, carrying their bags, they realised that lots of girls belonging to their Form were gathered in the music-room.

At one and another of the windows of that fine room were many familiar faces—and what

flushed and excited faces they were, too, as if a party were being held to celebrate some great occasion!

"A birthday?" Betty speculated, hurrying along with Polly. "I hadn't heard of one."

"I hope it isn't—when we've no presents!" Polly grimaced. "But here's Pam, anyhow—oh, and Madge as well!"

That Pam Willoughby and Madge Minden had hastily forsaken the music-room gathering, to come tearing down to the front door, Betty and Polly could tell. Their two chums had a "party" look about them!

"Did you wonder?" Madge eagerly inquired, in allusion to the week-enders not having been met sooner.

"We are wondering now," smiled Betty, "what all the excitement is about indoors?"

"Well," Pam responded, with her usual serenity, "we were all asked to be there at four-fifteen, and it would have seemed so rude to stay out to look for you. Et—girls—whilst you have been away—"

"Oh?" jerked Betty and Polly as with one voice. "What, then?"

"Biddy Loveland—in our Form," Pam calmly imparted, "has become a millionairess!"

Enter—Miss Gray!

"**W**HAT A-AT!" yelled Polly, letting her luggage go flop.

"Biddy Loveland's been left something like a million pounds by a relation she had hardly ever heard of!"

"My hat!" gasped Polly. "You're joking!"

"No, it's a fact."
"Then it's jolly nice for Biddy—good luck to her!" Betty cried heartily. "A million, though!" And now Betty felt staggered again. "A million pounds?"

"Yes, well—roughly," Pam qualified once more.

"I don't feel that a few pounds either way makes much difference," sighed Polly. "If any relation I've never heard of cares to leave me a million—more or less—I shan't mind. Whew," Polly breathed, exchanging a round-eyed look with Betty. "Our Biddy—a millionairess!"

"And so—what?" clamoured Betty. "Mean to say, is she leaving Morcove at once, or—"

"Oh, no! She's thrown a party for this afternoon," Pam responded, "but that's only a well—"

"I get you," nodded Polly. "What Naomer would call a 'celebration.' Any chance of two girls who've only had a railway cup of tea getting a look in?"

For answer, Pam and Madge each took up one of the bits of luggage, thereby implying that Betty and Polly must lose not a moment; they were awaited in the music-room!

Although they hurried to get rid of outdoor things and enjoy a tidy-up, there was time for their other special friends of theirs to come seeking them.

There was that elegant member of the chum-mery, Paula Creel, looking very charming in a frock put on for the party. There was dusky Naomer Nakara, all on the caper over the prospect of a "gorjus spread." She gave details of what the specially laid tea-table in the music-room held.

Then there was quiet Judy Cardew, along with jolly Helen Craig and clever-looking Tess Trelawney. Last but not least, Bunny Trevor appeared, her high spirits bubbling over as usual.

Mobbed about by all these good friends, Betty and Polly went up to the thronged music-room, on the first floor, and their entry upon the joyous scene was the signal for clapping and cheering.

In a few moments, however, all the welcoming cries gave place to a babel about Biddy. It was dinned at the returned week-enders over and over again: "Fancy, this about Biddy!"

Girls were asking Betty and Polly if they had had a nice time over the week-end; but there was no waiting for any answer. The same excited tongues switched to: "What do you think of Biddy's luck?"

Then Betty and Polly had Biddy herself in front of them, and they could say to her just what they thought about it all.

"You lucky girl, Biddy!"

"I know I am!" laughed the Morcove millionairess, looking very flushed and radiant. "It's like a dream!"

"When did you first hear about it all, Biddy?"

"Saturday afternoon—just when I was going out to hockey."

Even now, Betty and Polly had only acquired the barest details; but this was not the time for trying to get the full story out of Biddy or anybody else. Tea was ready to be poured out, as the violent tinkling of a bell announced.

Boisterously, the Form rushed to get seated on all the forms placed round the long table. Biddy had exercised her privilege, as hostess, to say where everybody should sit. Betty & Co. found themselves placed all together, at the top end of the table—quite close to their fortunate school-mate. In fact, Betty was right at the top, on one side, as Biddy's left-hand neighbour, Etta Hargrove, as captain, being at the top on the other side. It was an arrangement highly pleasing to the Form in general. Etta, during her short term of office, had proved a good captain; at the same time, Betty was still as popular as ever.

The headmistress, who had readily given permission for the party to be held, had sent in parlourmaids to wait upon the girls.

But authority itself was not represented until healthy appetites had done ample justice to all that had been set out upon cake-platters, some of which were almost embowered amongst flowers.

Then the Form's adored mistress came upon the scene to inquire how her charges were getting on.

There was a great shout for her to find a seat at the table, and Betty & Co. squeezed together so that Miss Merrick might be made room for on Biddy's left hand.

"You're going to make a speech, Miss Merrick!" laughed Betty.

"I am not! I haven't come to stay, for I am expecting an arrival by car at any moment. But I felt I must just look in! How was Linton Hall, you two?"

"Oh, fine!"

There was no time for more. At a moment when the youthful Form-mistress was certainly intending to enjoy a friendly chat with Betty and Polly, a general babel of tongues suddenly resolved itself into one repeated cry for Biddy to stand up and speak!

"Speech, Biddy—speech!" clamoured the Form, with an accompanying tinkling of teaspoons and table-rapping. "Spee-eech, spee-eech!"

"Yes, bekas eet ees not every day you come into a forchune!" Naomer's strident yell rose above the din. "So, queek, Biddy—"

"Spee-eech, come on, Biddy; you must. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh—"
 "Up with you, Biddy!" insisted Betty and others. As for Polly, she herself suddenly jumped up and went round behind Biddy, to haul her on to her feet.

The Form shrieked its laughter and cheered anew.

So, however reluctantly, Biddy was standing up at last, with the whole table hushing down to hear what she would have to say. There was dead silence.

Biddy stammered at last: "Girls of my Form—" "Hurrah-h-h!" The Form always cheered any reference to its noble self.

"I—I— Oh, it's silly, expecting me to make a speech—"

"No, Biddy, go on! Go on-n-n!"

"Bekas—"

"Or—der!"

"What ze diggings!" Naomer protested, at the same time cracking a walnut with her teeth. "Bekas what about all the row you others are—"

"Booh, order! Sit on that kid, somebody! Put her out! Ha, ha, ha!"

Up jumped Polly again, and this time Bunny also rose.

As two who considered themselves best able to keep the dusky one in order, they swooped upon that lively imp and finally stowed her away under the table.

Thereupon a shriek arose from Paula. Naomer, under the table, had grabbed at a certain pair of slender ankles—Paula's. The Form-mistress, realising that there was to be uproar for a few moments, discreetly asked the "hostess" to excuse her, and made off.

At last Biddy was called upon to make a fresh start.

"Er—all I can say is, then, girls, that it's still such a surprise to me, I—I—er— But do, some of you, finish up the last of the cakes, and— and—"

Laughter and encouraging cheers to help Biddy get over her confusion!

"Go on-n-n! Biddy! Order!"

"Well, then, I—er— Of course, girls, it's very wonderful, and—er—awfully nice and all that! I don't deny—"

"You had better not!" Polly put in sternly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tell us what you are going to do with your million pounds, Biddy!"

"Yes, Biddy—yes-s-s!" dinned the Form.

"Oh, as if—as if I can!" blushed Biddy. "One thing I do mean to do, anyhow, and that is—stay on at Morcove!"

Tremendous applause! Biddy sat down to fan her heated face with a handkerchief. All down both sides of the table, her schoolmates launched into delighted talk with one another about Biddy. Suddenly the door opened, and the Form realised that it was a case of "all stand."

Miss Merrick had re-entered, ushering in



The man paused in what he was saying, noticing the meaning glance the woman gave him. Betty and Polly were sure that their presence was the cause of that mute warning being given. Who were these mysterious strangers? they wondered.

another young lady, who was in outdoor things, as if she had just arrived. At any rate, she was a complete stranger to all the scholars.

Instantly, Miss Merrick's pleasant voice broke the respectful silence.

"Girls, I have brought this young lady to meet you all whilst you are together, like this. She is Miss Florence Gray."

A slight stir of excitement went through the hushed scholars. Who, then, was Florence Gray, that she needed to be introduced like this? A new mistress?

"And now," smiled on Miss Merrick, "for a surprise—a pleasant one, I am sure! It is only a few weeks to the end of term, and no doubt you have been thinking about the Breaking-up Concert. You girls of my Form always like to feel, don't you, that you are going one better than any other Form?"

There were murmurs of emphatic assent, and Polly, whilst being nudged by Betty, was aware of being looked at by girls everywhere. It was a silent testimony to Polly's fame as the versatile "playwright" of the Form, which did not take her attention from Miss Florence Gray.

Polly, just then, like her chums and many other girls, was feeling greatly attracted to Miss Gray.

"You will soon be given full details," Miss Merrick spoke on genially. "Then, I am positive, you will feel what a delightful novelty it is going to be! Meantime, I will merely say that Miss Gray is going to put in the next few weeks at Morcove, preparing you all for a little play

that the Form will give at the End-of-Term Concert;"

Very noticeable was the blank sort of pause which came as Miss Merrick finished speaking.

Surprise—and some initial disappointment, perhaps?

But Polly, at any rate, although so vitally affected by the innovation, was far from feeling offended.

Like Betty over the captaincy, Polly wanted no "monopoly" as the Form's amateur "producer." She was the first to come out of a spell-bound state, turning to her chums with a happy smile and a whispered:

"Good job, too!"

That Face Again!

"NOW," cried Polly, slamming down a ruler with which she had just ruled two lines under her finished work that evening, "I am going along to find Biddy, girls!"

"One sec., and I'll come with you," said Betty, making very quick use of that same ruler. "It's all very well to have been told things by other girls—"

"Mine is Biddy's Own Story, world copyright reserved," sparkled Bunny, shaking a blob of ink to the carpet. "The money has come to her from an uncle who made a huge fortune in Australia. He has been dead a year—left no will, and it has taken them all that time to trace Biddy as the next-of-kin."

"That's all right," Polly approved this version; "all the same—"

And she and Betty set off together, going up the long corridor of studies to seek the Morcove millionairess. They had hopes of getting her in a quiet moment. She would not be alone, having to share a small study with one other girl; but there was not likely to be any crowding in upon her.

They tapped at a certain study door.

"Come in!" Biddy responded.

Then came a surprise that stopped Betty and Polly dead at the threshold of the room.

Biddy's only companion was—Miss Florence Gray!

It would have been astonishing enough, if the young lady had appeared to be here merely for a brief chat, due to pardonable interest in Biddy's wonderful windfall. But Betty and Polly instantly noticed that Miss Gray was seated—one might say, settled—at that side of the study table where Biddy's study-mate should have been in evidence.

"Oh—er—we can come back, Biddy," stammered Betty. "Any time will do—"

"But come in, please!" entreated Miss Gray, very cordially. "And don't mind me. I should be so sorry to feel that I am in the way."

"Miss Gray is—is going to be in this study with me," Biddy blurted out; and, for the life of them, Betty and Polly could not help looking blankly again. "As—there is nowhere else for her, I suppose," was added lamely.

"Biddy Loveland has been nice enough to say she doesn't mind—"

"Oh, no, I don't mind!" Biddy caught up the young lady. "If you don't! Only it seems so funny to—put you in a study, as if you were a scholar!"

Miss Gray laughed lightly.

"I couldn't wish for anything better! But I don't like the idea of your losing your study-mate."

"You needn't worry about that, as I said before!" Biddy exclaimed. "We weren't such great friends, Eva Merrick and I. She was mostly in next door with Pat Lawrence, anyhow. Miss Gray, this is Betty Barton, who has been our captain and will be again next term!"

"Who says so?" grinned Betty.

"Etta herself says so," Biddy retorted with a smile full of her own fondness for the ex-captain. "And, Miss Gray—Polly Linton, here, is the girl who has always written our plays!"

"Oh—and I was just coming to Study 12 to find you girls!"

Miss Gray was delighted. She waved to chairs. "Polly Linton, you will be very useful, I'm sure. I have already been thinking; I must have leading spirits like you Study 12 girls to help me over this play of mine—"

"It's a play of your own, then?" Polly jerked. "I wrote it—yes; a little thing, intended for schoolgirls," Miss Gray said flusteredly; "never dreaming that some day I would have the honour of coming to Morcove to handle its production! But although it is my own work, and I am here to see it through, as it were, I shall want to rely upon some of you as a sort of committee. I must have you, Polly, and you, Betty, and then I think Biddy also should—"

"Me!" exclaimed the Morcove millionairess. "Oh, don't get roping me in, please! Not for anything special, I mean."

"But I am sure you are a girl who likes to back up the Form?"

"Yes, that's all right. Miss Gray; only—there may be lots of things now—"

Betty and Polly looked at each other and smiled. After all, it seemed as if their Biddy was expecting to lead a very different life, now that she was one of the richest girls in the country—and only a schoolgirl still!

"There is a part in my little play, Biddy, that is just right for you, I'm certain; a leading part—"

"Oh, but—"

"And to-morrow evening, girls, perhaps we might all—"

"To-morrow evening!" cried Biddy; and now her pretty face was falling. "But I want to go to the Darrells' place to-morrow evening!"

"Who are the Darrells, then?" asked Miss Gray in a humouring tone.

"They live this side of Barncombe. Vera Darrell—I haven't seen her since—since I was told about my being left all that money; but she has heard. I had a letter from her, this morning, asking me to tea to-morrow, and she wants me to stay on. So I am going to get permission from Miss Merrick. I shall have a car," Biddy brightly added, thinking how cars could be afforded now!

It seemed to Betty that Miss Gray looked at her in a questioning way, as if asking: "These Darrells—are they quite all right?" So far as Betty knew, there was nothing against them. Vera Darrell was a day girl at Barncombe House School. Her people would have liked her to enter Morcove; but Morcove could not take day girls.

"Well, we will see, Biddy—"

"Oh, but—I mean to say!" objected Biddy in a nettled tone. "There mustn't be any doubt about it, Miss Gray. If you get asking Miss Merrick not to let me go, because of the play—"

"My dear, you mustn't think me a spoil-sport," came so gently that Biddy at once looked ashamed.

"Sorry, Miss Gray. I—I—"

"That's quite all right, Biddy! And now,"

turning to Betty and Polly, "you must give me some idea as to the way you have usually gone to work, in getting up your plays or concerts. Rehearsals—where do you hold them? I saw what a fine music-room there is—"

"But we can't always have the use of it for rehearsals," Polly broke out, feeling a great enthusiasm for the coming production. "So we fall back on the gym. That's really better in a way. We chalk off a part of the floor as stage—"

"I must see your gym. I haven't been round the school yet, you know," broke in Miss Gray.

"Then come round with us now!" Betty eagerly proposed.

"That's nice of you," said Miss Gray. "I'd like to."

"If you don't mind, I'll stay here."

As Biddy said that, the Study 12 pair saw her reaching for a catalogue which some enterprising firm, hearing of her windfall, had evidently lost no time in posting to her. And Betty and Polly felt like chucking aloud.

Miss Gray, going downstairs with the two chums, spoke about Biddy—rather gravely, they thought.

"It is to be hoped that—that all goes well with her."

"Why ever shouldn't it?" laughed Polly. "I can think of worse harm coming to you than having a million pounds. And that is, to have no money at all!"

"She seems a nice girl."

"She is, Miss Gray. A dear! But here we are in the front hall, and so come and see our class-room. I don't know about showing you the gym," Betty continued, as they all three trended towards the class-room doorway.

"That's a separate building, you see, and it would mean going across to it in the dark."

"Oh, I don't suppose you girls are wanting to do any running out of doors after dark. The morning will do for the gym," Miss Gray contentedly remarked. "But what a fine class-room—the size of it!"

Proud as they were of Morcove School, that remark would certainly have drawn smiles to the faces of Betty and Polly; only—

What a startling moment it was for both scholars—this moment when Betty, feeling for the switch just inside the doorway, had clicked on the lights!

Miss Gray must have failed to notice; but Betty and Polly could see a face at the window, peering in.

It was the face of a man, vaguely familiar.

Withdrawn in the very instant that the lights flashed on, it yet remained to either girl if only as an image, photographed, as it were, upon the brain.

A sharp-featured white face, all the whiter because of the turned-up coat-collar, the eyes fiercely prying—nasty eyes! And where—where, both girls wondered, had they seen that very face before?

Betty turned to Polly, to see her passing a hand over her head in a hard-thinking way. Both girls were almost forgetting the presence of Miss

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Gray, as she interestedly glanced around the fine class-room.

Polly suddenly emitted:
 "I know, Betty! At Barncombe Station—the tea-room!"
 "Why, of course!" Betty excitedly nodded.
 "The man with that twisted eyebrow!"

Biddy Breaks Out!

THE young lady who had come to Morcove to supervise the Form in its production of her play, made a startled turn towards Betty and Polly.

"Pardon?"
 "Oh—nothing, Miss Gray!"
 "You were feeling—scared, I thought?"
 Then both girls laughed.
 "Well, it did give us a turn, Miss Gray!" said Betty. "Just as I switched on the lights, Polly and I saw a man looking in at that window over there."

"You did?"
 "And the funny thing is," Polly exclaimed, "we recognised the face. We're positive it was he—a man who travelled up from Exeter by our train, this afternoon, with a lady. We happen to know they were both going to stay at the Headland Hotel, which is quite close to the school."

"But why should he come prying around the school?" Betty gasped. "It's a lovely night—dry and moonlight. He may have taken a stroll, to start enjoying the change of air at once. Yet—"

"Surely he hadn't mistaken his way back to the hotel?" Polly gurgled. "Mistaken the schoolhouse, with all its lights on, for the Headland!"

Miss Gray laughed.
 "I can tell, Polly Linton, you like to see a joke in everything! Perhaps he is the father of a pupil here, and is taking a look-round the school during a moonlight stroll, before calling in the morning."

"If so," Betty remarked, "he is not a parent we have ever seen at the school."
 "If he has never been down before, girls, that might account for an eagerness to see the school without actually calling at such a time."

Miss Gray followed Betty and Polly as they hurried across the class-room to take a look out of the window. But, as all three had expected, nothing now was to be seen of the man in the moonlit grounds.

Whether Miss Gray had dismissed the strange incident from her mind Betty and Polly could not be sure whilst they showed her more of the great schoolhouse. Mostly she seemed to be intensely interested during the "personally conducted tour." But there were moments when they noticed her looking gravely reflective.

At any rate, they themselves were not going to forget that face at the window. If he and his wife were the parents of a Morcove girl who had never been down before, then he certainly had done a very strange, not to say, ill-bred thing.

But, by midday next morning, Betty and Polly were convinced that the couple at the hotel were not parents of any scholar. They would have been certain to hear if a girl's parents had come to see her. And no girl, as they took the trouble to find out, had anyone connected with her at present on a visit to the district.

Betty came into Study 12, just before school that afternoon, looking a trifle grave.

"Girls, Biddy has just been telling me—and I didn't like to hear her saying it!"

"Saying what, Betty?"

"She is under orders to be back from the Darrells' place by six this evening. And she tells me flatly she is going to stay on."

Bunny and one or two others gave a peal of laughter.

"Bravo, Biddy! Ha, ha, ha! Why shouldn't she?"

"Bekas, eef I had a meellion pounds—"
 "Oh, we know what you would do, kid," Polly mock-scornfully snorted. "Stuff and stuff and stuff!"

"But couldn't Miss Merrick have allowed Biddy to stay later?" Pam submitted.

"It's this play business," Betty pointed out. "The Form is to assemble in the music-room at six, to hear the play read. So there it is, you see—a clash. Miss Merrick feels that Biddy must be present."

"Poor Biddy," smiled Madge. "And it's she who has Miss Gray in her study."

"Yes, bai Jove; wather embawwassing, to say the least!"

"Poor' Biddy!" grimaced Polly. "I like that! And here I'm having to scrape and scrape to save up for Christmas cards! But they should make allowances for Biddy now, and not expect her to do the same as us."

"Thing they wouldn't do—even if they could—you may be quite sure of that," Betty said.

"She's a millionaires!"
 "She's still a schoolgirl."

"Then," said Polly, "if I came into a fortune—I'd just pack up! But what's the good of talking," with a tremendous sigh, "nobody is ever likely to leave me a million!"

"You know," said Bunny, "that's just how I feel, too!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "The worst of it is," Betty resumed, "Miss Gray is all for Biddy being to the fore in the play. She's got a big part for her; wants her on the committee, too."

"Um!" said Bunny. And after a pause: "I hope Miss Gray isn't sort of running after Biddy, just because the girl is suddenly rolling in money. But—"

"Miss Gray, Bunny, is a ripper, I think!"
 "Oh, so do I—at least, I felt she was," Bunny qualified. "But what about her taking over a half-share of Biddy's study? Biddy's mind you!"

"Yes," nodded Pam. "Oh, but she must be all right!"

"Yes, wather!" Paula's beaming cry chimed in with others to similar effect.

And that liking for Miss Gray was even strengthened when, just before six that evening, she turned up at the music-room.

An eager, excitable mustering of the Form had already taken place. Every girl was there—excepting Biddy. All were longing to find out what the play was about, and now Miss Gray was due to read it to them. She herself let it be seen that she appreciated such keenness as was in the air.

Hers was certainly the knack of getting on well with scholars; so much so that Betty & Co. wondered if she had had a good deal to do with schoolgirls before to-day. Like Miss Merrick, she was chummy, and that was what drew the Form to her.

"Biddy not here, then?" she commented, after some first pleasant remarks.

"She'll be here any minute now, Miss Gray. The car went off over half an hour ago to fetch her."

The chums, hearing others say this, held their tongues. They had not spread it round the Form

that Biddy had talked of overstaying her leave. Betty & Co. never were ones for gossiping, and, in any case, they hoped that she would come in on time, after all.

"We must wait for Biddy," Miss Gray said decisively. "It isn't quite six, yet."

That was all very well; but at ten-past, and no Biddy, the Form was feeling disgruntled.

In groups—remote enough from where Miss Gray was watching from one of the music-room windows, as if on the look-out for a car—girls were mumbling.

"Silly of her to be like this!"—for the discontent was with the young lady, not with Biddy. Could you really expect Biddy to be anything else but a bit reckless, at present? "If I were Miss Gray," one girl and another was saying, "I wouldn't expect Biddy to give a thought to the play at a time like this! Her mind is bound to

But there were looks and murmurs of real annoyance next moment when Miss Gray, with an apologetic murmur, hurried away from the music-room!

"Well!" gasped the Form, as soon as she had vanished. "That's pretty cool!"

Miss Gray, coming back a few moments later, found half the Form dancing, and the rest boisterously enjoying themselves. A few girls, over by the piano, were imitating saxophones and helping in other ways to create a jazz-band effect.

Tess was shaking a tambourine, Helen Craig was equipped with comb-and-paper. And Polly, standing on a chair, was vigorously conducting, using a blackboard pointer as baton.

Very professionally, too, did Polly lead the band into some final chords as a grand finish-up, now that the young lady had reappeared.

Miss Gray laughed in spite of her anxiety.



The woman came close to the car window, only to recoil suddenly, a startled expression on her face. Instantly Betty and Polly recognised her. It was the woman they had seen with the man in the station buffet at Barncombe.

be on other things all the while, it's only natural!"

Suddenly:

"Here's the car! cried several girls who, like Miss Gray, had been watching.

"Hooray!" Bunny incited others to cheer.

"Bekas, perhaps she has called at ze Creamery to buy some chocs for passing round! Eef I had all her money—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" the laughter started, changing to cries of amazement when, from the music-room windows, it was seen that the car had come back—without Biddy!

Stopped on the Road!

"MY hat," chuckled Polly. "all this waiting for nothing!"

"Sweeindle!" cried Naomer.

Others, expecting Miss Gray to make an immediate start without Biddy, merely laughed.

"Sorry, girls! You will be wishing me and my play further! But—Betty Barton, and you, Polly Linton; just come, will you?"

"What about us?" cried puzzled voices from the rest of the Form.

"I was going to say; you must simply disperse, I'm afraid."

Betty and Polly, as they followed the young lady out of the music-room, were aware of general indignation over the cancelled arrangement.

"All this fussing about on account of Biddy—and we can guess why!" they heard several schoolmates murmur.

And even the two chums, on being told for what they were wanted, began to feel that Miss Gray really was "running after" the Morocco millionaire.

She was, she said, going to Barncombe to find Biddy, and they must come with her!

The same car took them to the town. It was

Miss Somerfield's own Roysler. The headmistress would sometimes let it be used to enable a scholar to fulfil some engagement—generally, a disagreeable one, such as going to the dentist!

Chauffeur Jennings, when he got back to the school just now, had reported that "Miss Biddy" had told him it wasn't a bit of use his waiting. She had made her own arrangements about getting back, by-and-by, and nobody need bother. If it had been the Form-mistress, setting off so promptly to fetch wayward Biddy back, Betty and Polly would have been little surprised. But why Miss Gray?

The Study 12 pair were still wondering why Miss Gray had chosen them to accompany her, when the car drew up before the Darrells' big house on the outskirts of Barncombe.

If Betty had still been captain, then they could have understood.

"You needn't get out, girls," Miss Gray remarked, whilst alighting in front of the Darrell porch. "Biddy will come as soon as she has got her things on."

But Biddy, it soon transpired, was not at the Darrells' house. Betty and Polly had sat waiting less than a minute, when Miss Gray came to speak into them.

"She is out with that friend of hers, and it means that I must wait for her. I cannot keep Miss Somerfield's car—she may need it. Jennings will drive you two girls back at once. I am 'phoning Miss Merrick, so you won't need to let her know."

Another moment, and the car was bearing the two chums away again—back to the school. It was a dark night, but the car's interior light enabled them to see laughter in each other's eyes.

That merriment was due entirely to the way Biddy was acting, finding her feet so rapidly as a schoolgirl millionairess. Betty and Polly could not see any real need for the fuss Miss Gray was making, for it was obvious that Biddy could have been relied upon to return to school eventually, under proper conditions.

Was Miss Merrick in any real anxiety? It did not appear to be so. Doubtless, Miss Merrick realised that Vera Darrell's mother would see that everything was all right.

The speedy car was doing a comfortable forty miles an hour along the desolate, open road, lying between the town and Morcove, when Polly suddenly summed up explosively:

"But what rot it is, Betty! Just think; the reading of the play cancelled—the Form's time wasted, and you and I fetched out all for nothing! Really, it does look as if Miss Gray is thinking of Biddy all the time, just because of the fortune—Hallo!" the madcap changed to a surprised cry. "Stopping?"

The brakes were applied rather suddenly, and next second the car stopped on the nightbound road—with, as the two girls at once discovered, another car at a standstill close by, as if in trouble.

Two men and a woman were clustered near this other car. Betty and Polly heard Jennings appealed to for help. They could tell that he hesitated, and then only reluctantly got out to do anything he could.

"I'm going to have just a look, as they seem to be in a fix," he announced, opening the car door.

"Quite all right, Jennings! No hurry!" He closed the door upon them, as a hint that he would rather they didn't alight. So, rubbing the misty side-windows, they sat peering out.

A mumble of masculine voices grew fainter as

Jennings went to the front of the other car with the two men. Betty and Polly saw their chauffeur stooping to look in under the raised bonnet.

Then the woman, having nothing to do but wait, sauntered closer to the Morcove car. The two girls expected her to open the door and speak in to them, giving some rueful account of the fix she and her companions were in. But she did not do this.

Instead, she came very close to those windows against which Betty and Polly had their faces set. There was a moment when they saw her smiling to them, and they, of course, felt inclined to smile back.

But then, suddenly, her smile faded, and she took a startled, recoiling step.

As for the Study 12 pair, the heart of each had given a big leap.

As last night, when they had been so amazed to see the man with the twisted eyebrow peering in at the class-room windows, so now they were experiencing a kind of cold thrill at seeing—the woman who had been his fellow-traveller on the train.

She was going towards the grouped men, at the bonnet of the other car, and so her back was turned to the agitated girls.

"You saw?" Polly exclaimed.
"I did," Betty nodded. "And somehow it seems—strange!"

Betty Realises the Truth

BUT now Jennings came away from that other car.

Before returning to his seat at the wheel, he spoke in again to Betty and Polly.

"Fauty wise, that was all. I've shown them; quite easy to get at."

He closed the door, got to his seat, and on they went again. Peering out, the two chums had a last glimpse of the trio belonging to that other car. Both men waved a "Thanks!" to Jennings; but the woman did not look round to pay any attention to Betty and Polly.

"Well, as you say," Polly ended a reflective silence; "it's strange!"

"And yet—I don't know," Betty now smiled. "After all, they are at the hotel, which is close by. And cars do break down sometimes!"

"If I had been that woman, I'd have walked on to the hotel—not hung about in the cold," Polly muttered.

Five minutes later they were being set down at the Morcove porch. Saying a Good-night and Thank you! to Jennings was an opportunity for asking him what he had thought of those people in the other car. And Jennings simply replied that he hadn't thought much of the two men, as motorists, for needing help over such a trifling breakdown.

Then Betty and Polly plunged back into all the life of the Form. Upstairs, they found girls in the mood to shriek with laughter over the amusing report which the madcap, for her part, gave. A final drifting away to the various studies, after Betty and Polly had given audience in the corridor, was the occasion for general cheers about Biddy.

"The young-monkey!" Morcove's millionairess was being called admiringly, whilst Miss Gray came in for a good deal of derisive comment. It served her right for interfering, if she had been led a dance!

Nor did the Form fail to treat its wayward Biddy to an ovation, when she at length returned.

The laughter and cheering were all the greater

because it was as late as bed-time, in the dormitory, when Biddy appeared to all her pyjama'd Form-mates—obviously unrepentant and highly pleased with the fine time she had enjoyed.

"After tea at the Darrells," she blithely explained, "Vera and I thought we would go in the car that was to fetch Mrs. Darrell home from shopping in Exeter. So we went. And I got some choics for you all, whilst I was in—"

"Ooo, gorjus!" shrilled Naomer, as the millionairess suddenly produced a mammoth, ribboned box for passing round. "Don't you ever get eggspelled, Biddy, now you have come into zat forchune!"

"And, Biddy—how about Miss Gray?" clamoured Bunny and others merrily.

"Oh," replied the young millionairess, tossing her head, "there she was, waiting for me, when at last we did get back to the Darrells. I can't help it, if she wasted all her evening. She needn't have! Miss Somerfield had been phoned, and knew all about me! Miss Gray," Biddy added, starting to undress, "is getting on my nerves. She's not a mistress!"

"What did Miss Somerfield have to say?" was the next cry.

"She wasn't like Miss Gray, anyhow."

Betty & Co. were not surprised to see other girls receiving this laconic reply with exclamations of "Of course not!" Biddy's was not the heinous offence of a girl having gone off without permission. She had overstayed her leave, but the telephone had kept Miss Somerfield properly informed.

So, more than ever, it looked as if Miss Gray, in running about after Biddy, was really doing so for a most unworthy reason.

In plain words, she was very despicably attracted by Biddy's great riches.

As for the attraction which Biddy had become to the outside world, that was something very different.

The Form was all laughter again, next morning, at the shoal of letters and circulars which had come for the millionairess by the first post. There were mail-order firms sending her fascinating catalogues, as if she were in a position to write a cheque for anything!

Biddy herself treated this as a great joke, yet it was noticed that she took them all upstairs, to her study, along with a letter which she had been seen to open—containing a sheaf of pound-notes.

Then, after morning school, she called Betty and Polly into her study. They had been going by in the corridor when she glimpsed them through the open door.

"I say, you two, it's like this," Biddy blithely began, dropping a furrier's magnificent catalogue. "I'm not really wanted for that blessed play, am I?"

"The Girl Who Let Down the Form!" Betty jested.

"Not at all," Biddy disclaimed. "I am as keen as ever on the Form—of course I am! Only—well, I can do things in other ways now, I reckon. Don't you?"

"But what," Polly mock-tragically asked, "will Miss Gray say?"

"She can say what she likes! Seriously, though—for I'd like to have it from you, as you are bound to have most to do with the play—can't I be spared? Look, it's close upon Christmas," Biddy rattled on. "And I would like to feel, when Christmas comes, that I've thought of everybody."

"If you are going to do that," Betty smiled, "you certainly can't think about the play! We understand."

"I'm having charity appeals by every post—shoals. I can't bear to stick them in the w.p.b. Yet just going through them and sending them on to my guardian, to ask if something can be done out of my money—it all takes time."

Biddy, since she was orphaned, had known home life only with a lawyer-guardian.

"He does, you know, want me to enjoy myself," Biddy added. "He sent me ten pounds this morning. And the fact is, you two, I want to have more time to myself. I don't want to have to attend rehearsals! Any spare time I have, I want to do other things!"

"As, for instance—" grinned Betty.

"Well, either of you put yourself in my place—"



"Now I know!" Betty told Miss Gray. "You didn't come to Morcove merely to help us with the play. The real reason is that Biddy, now that she has come into all that money, has got to be guarded." Miss Gray put a finger to her lips warningly.

"How I WISH I could!" sighed Polly. "What were the shops like in Exeter, Biddy?"

"Oh!" ecstatically. "Only, you see, we got there too late; most of them were closing. Anyhow, I hadn't money on me, then. But I want to ask Miss Merrick—and I am sure it will be all right, if you two just hint that I'm really not wanted for the play. Better out of it, in fact, for the play's sake! Then, don't you see, I can spend next halfer in Exeter, and—"

Biddy, with the Study 12 pair as amused listeners, broke off abruptly. The door had opened, letting in Miss Gray.

"Spend next halfer doing what, Biddy, did I hear you say?" inquired the young lady ingratiatingly. "Wednesday afternoon—I imagine there's a match, and, after tea, I supposed we would run through the play?"

"Oh, rather!" Betty agreed, finding that Biddy was standing silent, tight-lipped. "But, Miss Gray—about Biddy here—"

"I had better say it myself," Biddy suddenly exclaimed. "I want to shop early for Christmas, and I'm sure Miss Merrick and the headmistress will not refuse me another bit of leave. It's only right I should do all I can for others, when I've come into such heaps of money. Oh, of course," Biddy rushed on with delicious candour, "I'm dying to go to Exeter! I know I'm having a grand time; but I want to do—oh, all sorts of things—for others as well."

"Yes, Biddy," Miss Gray gently assented. "One quite understands. It does you credit—" "Then be a sport and say I needn't be in the play—won't you?" Biddy entreated. "It will mean such a tie—"

"But, my dear girl, perhaps I can arrange matters so that you can go to Exeter and yet be in the play. Yes, I know!" Miss Gray added brightly. "On Wednesday, we won't hold any muster, in connection with the play. Instead, I will go with you to Exeter to get some things we shall want for the performance. They have to be bought sooner or later, and so—"

Betty and Polly were astounded at Biddy's sudden flaring out:

"I don't need to be looked after on Wednesday! I don't know what you mean by being so particular about where I go, and—"

"And what?" asked Miss Gray very gently. "Being in this study with me, so there!" Biddy rushed on, growing angrier. "Look, too, at last evening! I mean, it isn't as if you were a mistress. As a matter of fact, Miss Merrick wasn't a bit fussy, neither was the headmistress. At any rate, they only said I had made them very angry! They didn't come out to Barncombe to wait about for me. I knew what I was about!"

"But, Biddy—"

"So we'd better settle about it now—I mean, about the play. I needn't be in it unless I like, and I don't wish to be. That isn't letting down the Form, either, because I'm no good at amateur theatricals—"

"But, Biddy—"

"Oh, why won't you listen!" she stamped. "I've been telling Betty and Polly, and they understand. There's a lot I can do for the Form that will be much better, considering—"

"I, too, understand, Biddy," struck in Miss Gray appeasingly. "I've said so. And you have also heard me say it can all be arranged quite nicely, I'm sure. Ask for leave for Wednesday afternoon, and I sincerely hope you get it. And then, surely you won't mind if I go down with you to Exeter?"

Betty saw Polly saw Biddy looking furious.

"I shall mind—yes," she said wildly. "For I want to go with Vera—in fact, it's all fixed up; Vera's my friend, and we—we shan't—want—"

Biddy checked herself. For a moment or so it seemed to the Study 12 pair that she was suddenly ashamed of herself, as Miss Gray had now turned very pale. But was it the pallor of a young lady who felt herself to have been insulted? Betty, for one, sensed more sorrow than indignation in the expression of that white face.

"I'm sorry," Biddy suddenly faltered. "I'm being rude, I know. Only you don't seem to understand; you can't take a hint. You seem to want to be with me all the time. You don't seem able to let me out of your sight, except when I'm in class. And I don't like it; I—I can't stand it. I don't see why I should. Oh!"—her voice rose again—"you're a nuisance, that's what you are—a nuisance!"

And, whirling aside to the door, she whipped it open, strode outside, and a loud slam! made Betty and Polly blink. When, next moment, they looked at Miss Gray she remained silent.

Mute and still, her look was one of great perplexity.

Betty nudged Polly to come away with her. And yet it was Betty who, an instant later, paused in the doorway—looking round to note Miss Gray's troubled expression more carefully.

Suddenly, most sensational ideas had rushed into Betty's mind. She halted suddenly and turned back.

Polly, seeing Betty's hesitation, drew away from the door after closing it again. She looked on in puzzled wonder as Betty took her stand directly in front of Miss Gray.

Then, in a deep whisper, Betty spoke. "Now I know," she said to Miss Gray. "It has suddenly flashed upon me. You didn't come to Morcove merely to help us with the play. That's only a blind. The real reason is that Biddy, now she has come into all that money, has got to be—GUARDED!"

Miss Gray made a quick sign that meant "Sh!" whilst Polly breathed a staggered:

"Whew!"

—
Gone, and Yet—!

BETTY BARTON spoke again in a tense, low tone:

"I suppose Biddy herself has not the faintest idea that such a windfall might put her in danger!"

"She hasn't." Miss Gray's subdued voice responded. "And it will be a pity if she ever suspects. Once she has a fright, she may never know a moment's peace of mind. Biddy is a dear girl; we want her to be happy."

"Then," Polly jerked, "really you were engaged by somebody to come here and—"

"I was engaged by her guardian. He has reason to believe that danger may arise. And yet, specially looked after, she is safer than anywhere else at her own school. The headmistress has been consulted. Miss Merrick also is in the secret. That is why, last evening, it was left to me—"

"Oh, and Biddy has so misjudged you! We have all done so!" Betty exclaimed distressfully. "It was thought—"

"What does it matter?" Miss Gray broke in with a weary smile. "I have been misjudged before, so I should know how to be patient."

"Misjudged before?" echoed both scholars.

"That is another story, girls—one I can never tell you," was the quiet answer. "But now that you have discovered the real motive for my being at this school—I feel I must confide in you about Biddy. First, you must not breathe a word—"

"Oh, no—except to our best chums!" Betty quickly added. "I hope you will let us do that? They can be trusted."

"Yes, certainly. But to no one else, please!"

"We promise—"

"And it means that when you see Biddy resenting my seeming to want to be with her always," as she calls it, and when you find her, in her ignorance, losing her temper with me—"

"How painful it is going to be for you, though!" Betty feelingly exclaimed. "She would be so grateful, if she knew—and she mustn't know! Isn't it going to make things very difficult for you?"

Miss Gray nodded.

"That is what I am having to face up to now Biddy has taken a positive dislike to me. I don't think any the less of her for that. Perhaps she has even begun to imagine that I am hanging about her because of her fortune! After all, my being here for such a temporary and trifling job as helping you to produce my little play—it must make me appear to be a young woman at a loose end. So, from now onwards, it really is going to be extremely difficult."

"What you need, Miss Gray, is someone to act along with you—to act for you now and then," Betty astutely suggested, "so that it won't seem as if you are paying her quite so much attention. We Study 12 girls—can't we do that?"

"We must!" Polly put in impulsively. "Oh, and I can see it will be a big help to you, Miss Gray. We're Biddy's own schoolmates—and we've always been on the best of terms with her."

"Yes, I soon discovered that she thinks the world of you."

"Then—we will!" Betty cried, taking assent for granted. "Only tell us what sort of danger it is, and—we'll manage!"

"It must be a danger from outside, of course," Polly inferred. "We all know, for instance, that the children of very rich men are sometimes kidnapped. Biddy has no parents; but I suppose the same trick could be played in her case to get money from her guardian? Betty!"

Now it was Polly who had been struck with a sudden, sensational idea. Her hands made an excitable sweep over her hair.

"Kidnapping!" she breathed. "That man at the classroom window the other evening! And—my goodness!—how about our car being held up on the road last night?"

"Your car, girls—stopped on the road?" Miss Gray said in great agitation. "I hadn't heard about that!"

"No; for it seemed nothing much at the time," Betty said quickly; "only a bit strange that that man's wife was there. On our way in the dark, our chauffeur pulled up because some people with another car had made signs to him to stop, wanting his help. They were two men and a woman. Jennings went to have a look, and afterwards he told us that there was nothing seriously wrong. A faulty wire—"

"That wire," Polly struck in, "might easily have been a dummy! Anyhow, the woman came to our car and took a good look at us through the glass. If—if one of us had been Biddy—my hat, that's it!" the madcap rushed on in rising excitement. "If Biddy had been there—she would have been kidnapped then!"

Miss Gray did not speak; but her look said: "Yes!"

"Can't something be done, then?" Betty clamoured. "I mean—we could pick out that man and woman anywhere. And they are at the Headland Hotel—only a short walk from here—"

"Miss Gray—"

"Now you understand, girls, why I want to get Biddy interested in the play; want to do all I can to check her natural inclination to plunge into outside activities," came the grave murmur.

"Her guardian fully realises what a quandary we are in. He wants her to benefit immediately by her fortune. He knows she won't be happy unless she can do kindness to others. He cannot bear the idea of stinting her. At the same time—"

Pausing, she looked at her wrist-watch.

"You two girls; you might come with me at once, to the Headland Hotel? If only that man and woman are there, we may be able to nip the whole trouble in the bud."

"Ready in a minute!" Betty promised, whipping open the door.

"Meet you downstairs!" Polly added, darting out after her chum.

"Poor Miss Gray," muttered Betty, as she and Polly hurried to rejoin her. "She is being paid for the job, of course; but—she certainly has got to earn the money."

They were soon setting off with her to walk to the Headland. The school chimes, coming after them as they neared the huge hotel, reminded them that it would be lunch-time for the guests—a good time for catching "Twisted Eyebrow" and his wife.

Then Miss Gray went to the inquiry counter, and Betty and Polly followed, standing by whilst she spoke to a lady clerk.

"I am afraid I don't know the gentleman's name, but perhaps you can help me if I describe him," Miss Gray said engagingly. "He and his wife arrived here two evenings ago. He has a peculiar twist to one eyebrow—caused by a scar, no doubt—"

"Oh, you mean Mr. and Mrs. Hawker!" purred the young lady behind the counter. "I am sorry; they've gone."

"Gone!"

"Yes. They left this morning, quite early."

Miss Gray turned away from the inquiry counter and faced them ruefully.

"We've missed them, girls!"

"And if we have," Betty stoically rejoined, "at any rate, they missed—somebody else—last night!"

"Yes, they missed her that time," Polly frowned. "But how are we to know when they are going to try again?"

"We can't expect to know," her chum said promptly, with a meaning glance at Miss Gray which hinted at the resolve to help her. "We can only be prepared."

They passed out into the pale wintry sunshine, and then—on the road back to the school—came an unexpected thrill.

A car flashed by, and at the wheel was the Man with the Twisted Eyebrow, whilst beside him sat his wife.

"No luggage on the grid," Betty was swift to comment. "And we can guess what that means! They have left the hotel; but they have not left Morcove!"

[END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.]

Don't miss "Morcove's Secret Menace" by Marjorie Stanton in next Tuesday's SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN.