

GIRLS' CRYSTAL ^{3¢}

AND "THE SCHOOLGIRL"

Week
Ending
Jan. 5th,
1946.



JEAN and HER WONDER DOG

Kim, The Alsatian, Was More Than A Match For Any Human—As The Schemer Who Was Out To Secure Possession Of Rainbow Ranch, Quickly Discovered—By ENID BOYTEN

DANGER AT THE INDIAN BRIDGE

"MAYBE there will be good news by this afternoon's mail," Jean Wayland said to herself. "I guess my special postman won't be long now."

There was an anxious look on Jean's pretty face as she gazed through the living-room window of Rainbow Ranch. She loved her Canadian home so much, but she knew, with a pang, that she and her father might have to leave it very soon.

Some weeks ago a wealthy neighbouring rancher, Roger Corrigan, had started a lawsuit in which he laid claim to Mr. Wayland's little ranch. About that time some vital documents—the title deeds of the ranch—mysteriously vanished.

Without those papers Jean's father was unable to prove that the ranch was his own property, and at this moment he was away in town, fighting the law case as best he could against the crooked lawyers Roger Corrigan had hired.

That was the reason Jean was so anxiously awaiting the postman who might bring news of the fight to save their home.

"Here he comes!" she exclaimed suddenly, her brown eyes lighting up.

No human being had come into view on the winding trail that led around the tall cottonwoods. It was a four-footed postman that Jean was expecting!

A magnificent Alsatian dog had appeared round a bend in the trail, with some white objects firmly gripped between his teeth.

"Dear old Kim!" Jean's anxious look vanished in a smile. "But—why is he racing like that? Something must be wrong!"

It was the daily task of Jean's clever pet to

save the regular postman a journey by meeting him where the trails crossed, two miles away, and bringing the mail back to Rainbow Ranch. Kim loved that job! As a rule he trotted back proudly, his head held high, the precious letters held firmly between his teeth. But now he was racing madly, and Jean knew there must be some reason for it.

She flew to the door, throwing it wide open as Kim sprang on to the veranda. His sleek coat was covered with dust, and a growl rumbled in his throat. But at sight of Jean he sat up on his hind legs, offering her the letters, his faithful brown eyes fixed on hers—though he was still panting and trembling excitedly.

"What is it, old boy?" she asked. "Did someone try to rob you, back there on the trail? It looks like it!"

Eagerly she took the letters. One was from her father, and she opened it at once. It was just a brief note: poor daddy tried to write cheerfully, but it was plain he could hold out little hope that the ranch might be saved.

The other letter was addressed to Jean in a smudgy scrawl she did not recognise. Curiously she opened it, and a gasp of wonderment left her lips as she read the message it contained:

"Miss Jean,—I'm mighty sick, and I want to make a confession. Corrigan bribed me to steal the title deeds of Rainbow Ranch. But I never gave them to him; I hid them in the Lucky Horseshoe Hotel at Prairie Corner, before I was taken 'n'. They're still there, I guess. But I believe Corrigan is on the track of them, so you'd best hurry if you want them back. I've made a plan, showing just where they're hidden."

The message was unsigned. Beneath it was

a rough kind of map—a plan of the hotel named in the letter, one spot marked with a cross.

It was a letter from the thief who had stolen the precious title deeds!

"And it gives me a chance to get them back!" Jean thought, her pulses racing.

She turned to the dog, but he had gone. She saw him racing away towards the cotton-woods, vanishing amongst the tall trunks. She waited, puzzled. A few minutes later he was back again, something gripped between his teeth.

He jumped on to the veranda, and held it out to Jean, with an eager whimper. It was a battered Stetson hat.

"I can't talk human language," Kim seemed to be saying. "But that hat will tell you something, I'm sure!"

Jean gave a whisper of dismay as she saw the name-tab inside the hat.

"Slim Barker!" she breathed. "He's one of Corrigan's men. Was it he who tried to rob you of the letters, Kim? Maybe his hat fell off in the struggle and he lost it—and you've brought it to me, to show me who he was!"

Again Kim gave a little whimper, his ears pricked up, his eyes fixed on Jean.

Together, girl and dog went into the ranch living-room, where Jean's first idea was to find a hiding-place for the precious map.

After a few moments' thought her eyes lit up. She unbuckled the strong collar that Kim wore, and while the big Alsatian watched her, his head on one side, she made a slit in the leather and inserted the folded paper, then carefully glued it up again, so that no one would guess the collar held a secret pocket.

"You'll guard it, boy," she smiled. "It may be the one hope of saving Rainbow Ranch, and giving daddy the loveliest surprise of his life."

For Jean had made a decision. She felt that everything depended on her—and Kim, so at sunrise to-morrow she and Kim would take the lonely thirty-mile trail to Prairie Corner and find the missing deeds, despite Roger Corrigan and all his hirelings!

The next day, in the half-light of a cold, frosty dawn, Jean saddled Bess, her bay mare, and took the lonely western trail, with Kim loping steadily beside her, the vital clue hidden in his collar.

"We'll cross by the old Indian Bridge," Jean decided. "There's a newer bridge downstream, but this will save time."

She turned the mare's head towards a narrow bridge of ancient timber that spanned the stream just there.

"Hi, Kim!" she cried.

For the Alsatian had bounded eagerly ahead, but, as his forepaws rested on the first planks of the bridge, a change came over him. He whined uneasily. The thick fur at his neck bristled, and he gave two or three short, sharp barks.

Then he whirled round, and, with a swift jump, grabbed Bess' bridle, frantically pulling the mare to one side, away from the bridge.

"Say! What's wrong?" gasped Jean. "You'd better show us. We'll stay here."

Kim was already returning to the bridge. Lightly he raced across it, pausing in the centre to sniff and search. Jean watched him gain the farther bank and plunge in amongst some bushes.

He came back carrying a large object between his teeth, trotting slowly with it across the bridge again.

"Gosh! It's a saw!" exclaimed Jean in wonderment.

She sprang from the saddle, examining her pet's find. There was fresh sawdust clinging to the teeth of the implement, and from it her eyes turned to the woodwork of the bridge.

"Someone's been tampering with those timbers, I guess," she told herself. "And he hid this saw, meaning to come back for it later—or maybe he's still watching from some hide-out. And Kim—dear old Kim—sensed the danger!"

Was this a trap Corrigan had laid for her, guessing she might be riding this way in her search for the missing documents? A fall from the bridge at this point might not have led to serious danger, but it would certainly have given her a nasty shock. Corrigan might have argued that it would have been enough to scare her back to Rainbow Ranch, leaving him free to continue his search!

"But the trap failed," Jean thought. "And now—"

Suddenly she caught her breath in dismay, for at that moment a jack-rabbit bobbed out of a hole, and Bess, who was a nervous animal, squealed in fright. Next moment, before Jean could grab the reins, she had taken to her heels and was careering madly across the bridge.

Already Kim had darted in pursuit, but, quick as he was, he could not stop the mare in time.

There came a crash of splintering timbers as the centre of the narrow bridge gave way, and Bess plunged into the stream below. In an instant Kim had dived after her.

"Oh, good boy! Good boy!" Jean panted.

She saw that he had caught the bridle. In doggie language he seemed to be encouraging Bess, urging her to follow him towards the bank. Amidst foam-splashed boulders he led the struggling mare back towards Jean, who stood on the bank, waiting to lend a hand.

And then suddenly—disaster!

For Bess could not be blamed for feeling panicky now, after that unexpected plunge. She had almost reached the bank when in fresh fear she lashed out wildly with flying hoofs.

And, as misfortune would have it, one of those hoofs struck Kim a stunning blow on the head.

Jean's heart felt a pang of despair as she saw her dog flung sideways into a welter of racing foam: carried swiftly away, his dark head just showing, towards the rapids.

"Kim—Kim!"

No familiar bark came in answer to Jean's cry. By now Bess had scrambled ashore and stood with hanging head, as if sorry for all the trouble she had caused.

"We've got to find Kim!" Jean cried. "He'll battle his way through, I know he will. We'll find him, Bess!"

She climbed into the saddle, urging the mare along the riverside trail, scanning the tumbling waters. But there was no sign of the Alsatian, as desperately Jean searched.

Soon it became impossible to ride along the boulder-strewn trail, where it dipped beside the rapids. Jean dismounted, leading Bess as quickly as possible, searching everywhere as she went.

"Kim—Kim!" she called.

Unspoken fears in her heart, she reached the new iron bridge that crossed the stream below the rapids. Mounting Bess again, she rode across, hoping against hope that the swirl of the current might have carried Kim to the farther bank, where she would find him lying exhausted, but safe.

But again there came no answer to her repeated calls.

And then, as she halted Bess amidst a clump of pines, a little gasp broke from her.

From this rising ground she could plainly view the township of Prairie Corner, with its two or three streets of frame houses and plank sidewalks. In the midst was a large, rambling wooden building, and in the clear frosty air Jean could plainly read the signboard along its front:

"LUCKY HORSESHOE HOTEL."

As she looked her eyes opened wide in dismay.

On to the hotel veranda had swaggered a figure wearing a white Stetson, and light check riding-coat. She recognised him at once for Roger Corrigan; the rancher always dressed

like a dandy, loving to display his wealth and power. He was followed on to the veranda by several of his men.

It meant that they had got here first, that they knew the missing documents were hidden in the hotel, even though they might not know precisely where.

Jean's heart sank as she realised how hard her task had become.

Her enemies were installed in the very place where she must search for the hidden documents that would save her home.

And she had lost Kim; and with Kim had gone also that vital map hidden in his collar! Jean's brain reeled as she wondered what her next move should be.

KIM IS TOO CLEVER!



"DO we need help in the hotel, my dear? Land sakes! I should say we do!"

Mrs. Clark, manageress of the Lucky Horseshoe, smiled at the girl who had just called at the back entrance. The girl wore dark glasses, and her brown hair was dragged back in rather an unbecoming way; she seemed to walk, too, with a slight limp. But she was evidently keen to get a job at the hotel, and Mrs. Clark was at her wits' end for some extra help.

"You can start right in," the manageress told her. "Just slip on that overall, and fetch some of the dirty crocks from the dining-room."

Mrs. Clark did not see the gleam of excitement under those dark glasses, as her new girl helper made her way to the hotel dining-room, where Roger Corrigan and a party of his men were just finishing their lunch.

The big dining-room had been newly decorated, and the tables were covered with snow-white cloths. Most of the lunchers had departed by now, but the wealthy rancher and his men still lingered at the big table, talking in low tones.

They took little notice of the girl in the blue overall, with her dark glasses and limping walk.

A scowl had settled on Roger Corrigan's handsome face.

"Well, we've drawn blank," he muttered. "We know that Jake hid the papers here, instead of handing them over to me, as he should have done. We've searched the room he stayed in, and everywhere else we can think of, but there's no sign of them."

"Reckon that girl at Rainbow Ranch knows where they are, boss," put in another man.

"If I'd been a mite smarter yesterday I could have grabbed that letter away from her dog," said Slim Barker. "I'm pretty sure it had Jake's handwriting on it."

"Maybe we oughtn't to have tampered with the old Indian Bridge," a third man said softly. "We've probably scared her back to the ranch. It would have been better to let her come on here and find the papers—and then grab them off her."

Roger Corrigan fiddled with the expensive diamond tie-pin he always wore.

"You boys are a big help, I must say," he said with a sneer. "Letting yourselves be outsmarted by a girl and a dog! If I don't get those missing documents soon there'll be big trouble all round, I'm warning you."

His sneering voice held a note of grim threat, and the girl with the dark glasses trembled a little as she passed behind his chair with a tray of crockery.

That girl was none other than Jean! Jean had felt that the boldest plan was the best. She had ventured into the township in disguise, even though it was swarming with Corrigan's men.

Jean was a clever actress. Though born and

bred on a western ranch, she always took part in any amateur theatricals that took place in the district. With the help of a pair of sun-glasses, and a different hair style, she had disguised herself very effectively. She had even adopted a limping, shuffling walk that made her look very different from the trim girl at Rainbow Ranch.

It was a piece of luck, getting a temporary job at the hotel. Already she had learnt that Roger Corrigan had not been able to discover the missing papers.

If only she could find Kim!

She had hoped to hear news of her dog in Prairie Corner. The river flowed close to the town; if the current had swept Kim so far, he might have been seen by some of the townsfolk—might have been rescued.

Jean's lips trembled whenever she thought of her missing dog. She felt lonely, helpless, without Kim. And without the map hidden in the Alsatian's collar she could not hope to trace the hiding-place of the papers in this rambling old house with its many staircases and odd rooms.

"There's only one thing for it," she heard Corrigan mutter. "We've got to get that girl. She'll know where the title deeds are."

Jean trembled with indignation as—still keeping to her shuffling, limping walk—she passed between the dining-room and kitchen with her tray of crocks.

And then suddenly came startling news.

A man ran in from the street, hurrying up to Roger Corrigan.

"Say, boss! I've got news!" he panted.

"News? You mean to say you've found that girl?" the rancher demanded, an eager look in his hard blue eyes.

"Not the girl, boss," the man replied. "But I've found her dog."

As she folded a tablecloth near by Jean could hardly keep back a little cry. Kim had been found! But if he was safe and at liberty, why hadn't he rejoined her? Where was he? What had happened to him?

Her heart thudding, she limped closer, under the pretence of emptying some ash-trays.

"I'd know that dog anywhere," went on the man. Jean recognised him as Eddie Gibson, one of Corrigan's cowboys. "He's fallen into a kind of pit not far from the river, south of Pine Bluff. He's not hurt, I guess—but it's just too steep for him to jump out."

Jean's heart knew a sudden relief. At least Kim was safe!

Afraid they might suspect her if she hovered near them too long, she limped behind a screen near the fireplace, but still within earshot.

"If the dog's there, it means the girl can't be far away," she heard Corrigan say thoughtfully.

"It sure does, boss! And this proves it!" exclaimed Eddie, holding up a scrap of white material. "I found it near the river, some way from the pit. It's a girl's handkerchief, with the initials 'J. W.' on it. Reckon she dropped it while she was searching for the dog."

"We still haven't found the girl, though," Slim Barker objected.

Jean heard the rancher's chair scrape back. His voice, tense and low, just reached her ears.

"We'll get that girl Wayland mighty soon now," he exclaimed. "Don't you see? We can pull the dog out of the pit and give him the scent of this handkerchief. As soon as he gets the scent, he'll lead us to the girl!"

Jean's heart seemed to miss a beat. So they were planning to use her own dog as a weapon against her! Unable to find her themselves, they meant to employ Kim to track her down.

Jean's thoughts raced. A light of determination flashed in her eyes, behind those disguising glasses.

"I've got to reach Kim first," she told herself. "Once I've found him, and the clue in his collar, we can trick these scoundrels between us!"

"She hurried to the kitchen quarters, almost forgetting her assumed limp. Luckily there was no one about just now, and Jean threw off her overall and darted into the street, knowing she had not a moment to waste.

Taking a side turning, she plunged into the cedar thickets and scrub pine that bordered the southern limits of the township. Pine Bluff, she knew, was a great jagged cliff rising up on the farther side of the river. There was a chain of rocks like stepping-stones that she could cross; Corrigan and his riders would probably go round a longer way.

The thought of Kim spurred her on, and she reached the line of foam-splashed rocks in record time. Recklessly she crossed them, scrambling, slipping, drenched by whirling spray.

Was that a drumming of hoofs she could hear, beyond the undergrowth on the farther side? She even fancied she heard Kim's deep bark, but the splash and hiss of the racing water made it difficult to distinguish other sounds.

Breathlessly she reached the farther bank and turned towards the Bluff, pushing her way through the thickly clustered bushes.

And then she stopped short, still under the screen of bushes, staring in wide-eyed dismay.

A clearing confronted her. In it was the pit that had trapped Kim, and bending over the brink were Roger Corrigan, with Eddie Gibson and another man, their horses tethered behind them.

They had lowered a length of rawhide rope into the pit, from which came those glad yelpings. They were hauling on it.

"They've got him!" Jean panted, her heart sinking. "They've got here first!"

There was a noose at the rope's end, and it had dropped over Kim's head and shoulders. Jean caught her breath as her dog chum came into view, his sleek coat covered with muddy streaks, his forepaws clinging desperately to the brink as they pulled him over.

Of course, he would feel grateful to these men. Eager to find Jean, he would be only too glad to lead them on her trail. Already she could see Corrigan fingering the handkerchief, ready to give Kim the scent.

"I shall be spotted if I stay," she told herself. "I've got to get back!"

It was difficult to leave without even speaking to Kim or letting him know she was there. If only she had arrived a few minutes earlier! She tightened her lips, turned round and sped silently back.

"Maybe the stepping-stones will throw him off the scent," she said to herself.

For the first time in her life she was hoping that Kim's tracking skill would fail him! She recrossed the river, afraid every moment that she would hear Kim's eager bark as he sighted her.

Reaching a clump of pines on the other side, she paused for breath and looked back.

She had only a few seconds to wait before she saw Kim, held by the rope, break out from the bushes on the opposite bank, with the three men behind him. Skilful tracker as he was, he had not been long in finding her trail.

"But perhaps the stepping-stones will baffle him," she thought. "Perhaps he'll start searching up and down the bank."

Kim was not so easily fooled, however. He was straining at the rope, plainly trying to reach the first stepping-stone, and making it quite clear to the men which way she had crossed.

Corrigan turned to the third man, ordering him to take the horses back by the other route, while he and Eddie followed Kim across the river.

It was useless to stay, and, with something like despair in her heart, Jean turned away.

Kim's cleverness was proving too much for her. Her pet was leading her enemies closer.

She was startled by a drumming of hoofs and rumble of wheels. On the rough trail, not

far ahead, a homesteader was driving his wagon towards Prairie Corner, the clumsy vehicle swaying and lurching over the rough ground as he urged the horses on.

Recklessly Jean sprang forward. An idea had come to her which might still delay Kim and perhaps put him off the scent altogether.

She reached the trail just as the wagon was passing. With a daring leap she grasped the tailboard, swinging herself off the ground, clinging on for dear life as the wagon rumbled swiftly on.

At least she was leaving no scent on the ground now, and possibly the wagon and horses would obscure the trail she must have left when travelling towards the river.

The wagon lurched to a standstill on the outskirts of Prairie Corner, and with aching muscles Jean dropped to the ground.

"Better get back to the hotel," she thought. "It's the best place for keeping an eye on Corrigan. And maybe Kim will be baffled, and give me time to think out a plan for rescuing him."

She slipped unseen through the back entrance of the Lucky Horseshoe. Hastily she adjusted her disguise, dragging her wavy brown hair straight back, donning the sun-glasses again, adopting that shuffling limp.

Then she prepared to tackle the enormous pile of washing-up that was waiting.

Minutes passed. One of the other hotel maids came into the kitchen and lent her a hand. They had nearly finished when a shadow darkened the doorway. Jean's heart missed a beat as she looked up and saw Eddie Gibson standing there.

"Sorry to interrupt, girls," he said abruptly. "But everyone has got to line up in the dining-room. Roger Corrigan's orders, and it's important. Get moving, both of you!"

What did it mean? Jean could not tell, though her heart sank. There was no chance of escape, with Eddie's burly figure blocking the way, and she and the other girl had no choice but to walk into the dining-room.

They found every woman and girl in the hotel and surrounding houses lined up there, with the rancher's men guarding all exits. Roger Corrigan faced them, immaculate in his flashy riding-kit, with that polite manner that always seemed to veil a sneer.

"I'm real sorry to inconvenience you folks," he said. "But I've been robbed, and I've reason to believe the thief is hiding right here—maybe in disguise. I've a means of identifying her, and that's why I've asked you all to line up. One moment, please."

He disappeared on to the veranda. Jean caught her breath as he came back leading Kim on the raw-hide rope.

His purpose was clear. He meant to lead the Alsatian along the line of people, certain that he would identify the disguised Jean when he came to her.

"And, of course, he will!" Jean groaned to herself. "He'll see through my disguise in a jiffy. Oh, Kim, if only I could warn you!"

Already Corrigan was leading the dog forward, Kim eagerly straining at the leash.

And suddenly a memory flashed into Jean's mind. It was a faint chance, the only hope of saving her secret mission from failure!

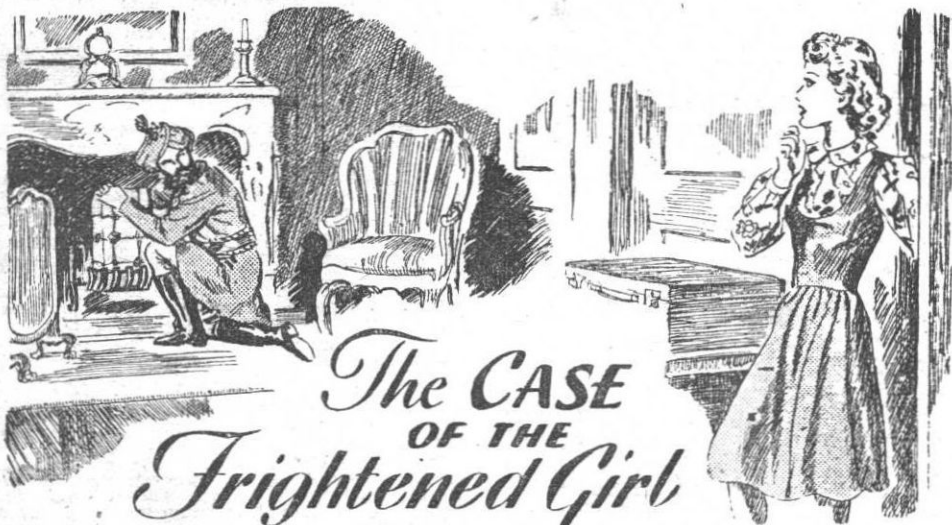
A BITTER CHOICE



JEAN'S memory had flown to a Christmas party last year, when they had played hide-and-seek in a big ranch-house. Kim had rather spoilt it, because he always flew to where she was hiding, and gave the game away.

So she had taught him a trick. When she gave three sharp little coughs, in a peculiar high-pitched tone, Kim was not

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FACE TO FACE WITH THE GREEN RAJAH!

By PETER LANGLEY

JUNE GAYNOR, niece and partner of Noel Raymond, the famous detective, went to the Lake District to investigate the mystery of a spectral Green Rajah, who was supposed to haunt Temple Isle. She was specially intrigued because a person calling himself the Green Rajah had made a vain attempt to steal a large package which had been entrusted to her by a mystery girl.

Also staying at Glen Hall was Jack Linton, a boy who seemed anxious that she should not carry on her investigations. Yet, after dinner, he suggested the party should try to track down the Green Rajah.

On Temple Isle the party separated, June hiding behind a boulder with plump Billie Murdoch.

Nine o'clock struck. Billie leapt to his feet, pointing a quivering hand towards the lake.

JUNE gave a wondering gasp as she stared over the top of the jagged boulder behind which she and Billie Murdoch were crouching.

Silently, as if pulled back by an invisible hand, the brass-studded door of the temple had opened, and in the archway now appeared an eerie green light.

Flickering and whirling, it expanded until it filled the whole doorway with a misty, cloudy glow. Then gradually it seemed to take shape, and from the watchers came startled shouts. "The—the ghost!"

"It's the Green Rajah himself!"

For a moment the boys and girls forgot their plan to capture the practical joker whom they had felt certain was responsible for the ghostly scares. Awe-stricken, spellbound, they were all too startled to move.

The figure seemed to become more solid; steadily its outlines grew clearer, and suddenly it turned, turbaned head thrust forward, as though to glare suspiciously around.

June's heart gave a wild leap. "It is he—the Green Rajah," she whispered, for there could be no mistaking that statue-like figure. It was the bearded Indian who, a couple of days earlier, had broken into Noel Raymond's London flat. Then her suspicions had been right! The mystery ghost of Glen

Hall and the amazing puzzle of the package which the frightened girl had entrusted to June were connected!

Suddenly the eerily glowing figure in green seemed to sense the presence of the hidden boys and girls. He took a silent step forward and dramatically thrust out a brown hand.

"It is useless to conceal yourselves!" he cried. "The Green Rajah sees all—knows all. Begone ere his vengeance descends upon you."

Indescribably eerie was the hollow, unearthly voice which seemed to go echoing around and around.

"Begone!" Again the Green Rajah's voice echoed over the island. "It is forbidden for anyone to enter the temple!"

And silently, as if floating over the rocky ground, the turbaned spectre began to glide forward.

Involuntarily many of the hidden boys and girls began to recoil, and Billie Murdoch grimaced uneasily at June.

"I don't like this," he muttered. "I vote we clear out."

But June's face was grim.

"No, we don't! Let's catch him!" She gave a shout. "Come on!"

"Rather!" There came a rallying cry from behind the tree where Ted Brandish crouched. "We'll teach him to try to scare us away!" he declared.

With June at his side, he went plunging up the path. From all around the temple came other shouts, and the rest of the boys came running forward. For a moment the girls hesitated, then, as they saw the Green Rajah turn and go gliding back towards the open door, they also joined in the chase.

"Come on, he can't escape!" called Ted Brandish. "The temple's surrounded, and he—"

He broke off, and involuntarily they all pulled up, for an amazing thing had happened. From the temple doorway had come a sudden puff of smoke. For a moment it engulfed the Green Rajah, and when it had cleared away there was no sign of that eerily glowing figure.

It had vanished as amazingly as it had first appeared.

June, however, was not impressed. "It's only a conjuring trick," she declared. "He must still be in the temple."

Again they all went racing on, and, as June gained the doorway, she pulled from her pocket a powerful electric torch and clicked it on. The dazzling light revealed a long, stone-flagged room, its wooden walls decorated by an astonishing array of great carved wooden statues. The temple was a veritable museum. Strangely shaped bowls and ewers stood on shelves. In one corner was hung an elephant's howdah; in another hung a huge, queerly engraved brass bell.

From curio to curio June's torch beam wandered, while the boys and girls behind her blinked a little uneasily.

But the light failed to reveal the Green Rajah.

One of the girls plucked nervously at June's sleeve.

"Perhaps it was a real g-ghost," she whispered.

June shook her head.

"Not likely. The Green Rajah was very human indeed," she declared. She darted forward, turning the light of her torch down on the dusty flagstones. "Look—that proves it!" she exclaimed.

Dropping to one knee, she picked up something that lay on the floor and held it out. Wonderingly the ghost-hunters regarded it.

"Why, it looks like candle grease!" ejaculated Billie Murdoch in surprise.

June nodded.

"Yes—and it's still warm. That shows that it was only dropped a minute or two ago. And that's not all— Breaking off, she turned her torch downwards again. "See those footprints?" she asked. "They weren't made by ordinary shoes, but by sandals—Indian sandals."

In admiration the boys and girls regarded her. The quick way she had discovered these two significant clues impressed them, and Ted Brandish gave a grim nod.

"I knew all along it was only some silly practical joker," he asserted. "Well, he's not going to get away. He must be hiding here somewhere, so come on, everyone—scatter around and search."

"Yes,—that's the idea," urged Billie Murdoch.

Eagerly the search was begun. June tried to follow up the footprints, but inexplicably they came to an end beside one of the huge wooden images. For a moment she stood regarding the statue frowningly, then, as she looked around again, her frown deepened, for suddenly she had become aware of a curious fact.

Jack Linton was not in the temple. Indeed, now that she thought about it, he had not joined in the rush for the doorway. In fact, she had not set eyes on him since they had first taken up their hiding-places on the island.

What had become of him?

"It's queer," June murmured. "It was his idea that we should come here. How is it, then, that he's not here searching with the others?"

She suddenly recalled the sound of oars she had heard just before the ghost scare had started.

Could it have been Jack Linton who had been rowing? After seeing everyone safely concealed, had he left the island?

Puzzled and uneasy, June left the temple, and, making her way down to the rocky beach, she looked across the moonlit water of the lake. She was just in time to see an indistinct, shadowy figure race along the landing-stage and disappear amongst the trees in the grounds of Glen Hall.

Could it have been the missing boy?

Resolutely June stepped across to the nearest boat.

"I'll soon see," she told herself, and, dragging the boat down to the water's edge, she launched it and scrambled aboard. Another moment and she was pulling strongly away from the haunted island. She had gained the mainland and was just making fast the boat when something made her look across at the hall.

The ground floor windows were ablaze with light, but the upper stories were in darkness—except for one window in front.

"Why, that's my window!" she exclaimed in surprise, and immediately she thought of the mystery package with which she had been entrusted.

Running forward, she gained the side of the house and went racing up the fire-escape which she saw. That would be the quickest way to her room. At the top of the iron steps was an open window. June clambered through, and went hurrying along the corridor.

Gaining the door of her bed-room, which stood ajar, she stepped boldly in. Instantly she pulled up, a horrified cry escaping her lips.

For there, in front of the fireplace, knelt a green-clad, turbaned figure—a figure in the very act of lifting out of the grate the mystery package she had hidden there!

"The—the Green Rajah!" she gasped, and incredulously she gaped, relieved that the intruder was not, after all, Jack Linton, but baffled as to how the pseudo ghost had been able to leave Temple Isle without being seen.

THE SECRET HIDING-PLACE



FOR a moment neither June nor the Green Rajah moved. It was as if both had become petrified by surprise.

The man in the eerily glowing green robes still clutched the package, and his dark eyes gleamed in alarm as they stared incredibly at the girl

standing in the doorway.

"How—how did English girl get here?" he muttered at last.

June gave a grim laugh. His agitation gave her fresh confidence.

"That's the question I was going to ask you," she retorted. "And who are you? Are you Roger Standish?"

There could be no mistaking the man's agitation now. Dropping the heavy package, he jumped to his feet. June felt her heart thudding. Could the frightened girl's uncle and this strangely garbed thief be one and the same person? Was the amazing suspicion which had occurred to her yesterday in Hyde Park correct? But why should Roger Standish wish to rob his own niece? And how had he managed to transport himself so swiftly and mysteriously from Temple Isle?

June took a resolute step forward, one hand outstretched.

"I'll soon see whether you're wearing a wig or not," she declared.

In alarm the Green Rajah backed towards the open window.

"English girl had better be careful," he said huskily. "The Green Rajah warns her for her own good."

As he spoke, he made a leap for the sill. With astonishing agility he sprang through the open window, and before June could get over the first shock he had gone, clambering down one of the stone pillars supporting the long balcony which ran across the front of the house.

June, running out on to the balcony, was just in time to see him racing for the shelter of the trees, and at that moment she heard voices from the nearby landing-stage. The

rest of the youthful ghost-hunters, having left Temple Isle, were on the point of landing. It would be hopeless to try to explain from this distance and get them to take up the pursuit, June realized.

Recklessly she followed the Green Rajah's example and went clambering down the stone pillar, to find herself instantly surrounded by a bewildered, inquiring crowd of boys and girls.

Swiftly June explained, though she did not tell them the reason for the Green Rajah's visit to her room.

Ted Brandish scowled. "I'd like to know how he got away from the island," he said. "But it's no use hunting him now. Say, where's Jack Linton?" June compressed her lips.

"That's just what I was wondering," she declared. "I haven't seen him since—"

She broke off, for from behind them had come an amused, drawing voice:

"Hallo; did I hear my name mentioned? And, I say, why did everyone buzz off like that?"

And there, sauntering from the nearby trees, his hands thrust into his trouser pockets, was the missing boy.

A little indignantly everyone whirled on him.

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Billie. "The question is—where have you been?" Jack waved a nonchalant hand.

"Oh, round and about," he drawled. "I got the idea the Green Rajah might have slipped across to the other side of the island, so I went exploring, but not a trace of him did I see. So I returned to the temple, only to find you had all skeddaddled. Thank goodness you left me a boat, otherwise I'd be stranded there now. But, I say, what are you looking so excited about?"

Quickly they told him, while June regarded him covertly. Had his nonchalant explanation been genuine? Or had he actually left the island before the ghost scare had started? But what reason could he have had for slipping away?

June gave a sudden start as a startling suspicion occurred to her. Had Jack Linton been that disguised figure she had surprised in her bed-room?

"But that's impossible," she told herself. "I'm practically certain Roger Standish is the Green Rajah. Besides, Jack is not the kind of boy to be mixed up with crookery. Despite everything, I like him."

It was getting cold outside, so, one by one, the ghost-hunters went indoors, but as Mildred Henley made to follow, June caught her by the arm. It had suddenly occurred to her that it would not be safe now to leave the mystery package in her bed-room. Until she decided what to do with it, a safer hiding-place must be found for it.

"Mildred," she said to the daughter of the house, "I'd like you to help me. I've got rather a valuable parcel which I'd like to lock up. Has your father got a safe?"

Mildred shook her head.

"I'm afraid not, but there's a burglar-proof cupboard in the library. It's where Colonel Raikes used to keep some of his curios. Would that do?"

June hesitated, then nodded.

"Yes—I think so," she said.

"Right—then I'll get the key right away. We won't bother dad, if you don't mind. He's expecting another guest—an old friend of his. You pop up and get your parcel and I'll meet you in the library in five minutes' time."

The two girls separated, and when June, carrying the heavy mystery parcel, entered the library a few minutes later, she found Mildred already there, standing beside one of the book-cases which lined the walls.

Wonderingly June looked around, but she

could see no sign of any cupboard. At her puzzled expression, Mildred laughed.

"The cupboard's well hidden. Colonel Raikes was an eccentric old chap, by all accounts," she said. "He certainly didn't take any chances when it came to guarding his precious curios. Look!"

She pressed against the beading of the book-case and it swung away from the wall, revealing a small door inset in the brickwork beyond. Taking a key from her pocket, Mildred inserted it in the lock, turned it, and pulled open the door.

"Your parcel ought to be safe enough there," she said with a smile.

"Rather!" Mildred's expression of interest deepened when June, after stowing away the package and locking the door, produced a reel of thin black thread from her pocket and proceeded to arrange an almost invisible web across the front of the cupboard.

"What's that for?" she asked, unable to restrain her curiosity.

"Just to make certain that no one tampers with the door," explained June. "If anyone does try to open the cupboard, they're bound to break these threads and give themselves away."

Mildred's eyes opened wide.

"What a bright idea!" she exclaimed. "You're a real detective. But that parcel must be valuable for you to take all these precautions." She paused expectantly, but June made no comment, so Mildred swung the book-case back into place then handed over the key. "You'd better take charge of that," she said. "But for goodness' sake don't lose it. It's the only one there is. Now let's see what everyone else is doing," she added, as June pocketed the key.

Leaving the library, they made their way up the corridor towards the big front drawing-room. From there there came the sound of a gramophone and the sound of merry laughter. Evidently the rest of the guests were thoroughly enjoying themselves.

To reach the drawing-room they had to cross the hall, but as they entered it they paused involuntarily, for by the front door stood two men. One was Mildred's father, and the other was evidently the guest she had said he was expecting.

Seeing the two girls, Mr. Henley beckoned joyfully.

"Come and be introduced," he invited.

Smilingly Mildred stepped forward, but June did not move. In startled amazement she was staring at the black-moustached, bespectacled figure at Mr. Henley's side.

It was Roger Standish—the uncle of the frightened girl—and the man June believed to be the Green Rajah!

THE SECOND ROGER STANDISH



FOR a moment the schoolgirl detective could not believe her own eyes. Surely there must be some mistake. The man who had deceived her so brazenly would never dare show himself here as a guest. And it was incredible that an old friend of Mr. Henley's could be a thief!

As June stood there, her head in a whirl, Mildred called to her.

"Come and meet Mr. Standish," she said.

So, then, it was true! The newly arrived guest really was Roger Standish!

Dazedly June joined the trio. To her surprise, the man showed no sign of being startled when he saw her. Indeed, when Mr. Henley had introduced her, he beamed.

"So you are Noel Raymond's young partner?" he cried. "I have heard about you,

young lady, and it gives me much pleasure to make your acquaintance."

He held out his hand, and as June took it she gave him a sharp, almost accusing look.

"But we have met before," she reminded him.

"Met before?" Behind his tinted spectacles his eyes looked surprised. "I don't think so," he said.

"Not in Hyde Park two days ago?" persisted June, determined to break down this hypocritical pose.

He seemed more surprised than ever.

"In Hyde Park? But that's impossible, young lady. You are mixing me up with someone else. I have only just returned from a trip to France."

Despite herself June's suspicions were shaken. He seemed so genuinely puzzled. Yet surely there could not be two Roger Standishes—both exactly alike! It was absurd, she told herself, and her lips compressed angrily.

"Do you mean to tell me that it wasn't you who came with your niece to Noel Raymond's flat last Thursday?" she demanded.

There could be no mistaking the accusing note in her voice now, and Mr. Henley flushed a little angrily. Plainly he resented this cross-examination of his friend, and before Mr. Standish could reply to June's question, he intervened.

"Really, I must protest at your persistence," he declared. "I do not understand the reason for it, but I must ask you to desist. It is obvious that you are making a mistake. I can vouch fully for Roger Standish. Besides, he hasn't got a niece."

"Wh-aaaa-t!"

June gave an amazed gasp, and for a moment she was too taken aback to make any further comment. Then she became aware that Roger Standish was surveying her queerly.

"You say that someone calling himself Roger Standish called at Mr. Raymond's flat on Thursday—with a girl?" he asked.

June nodded.

"Yes—and he was the living image of you," she declared.

"And were either of them carrying anything?"

For a fraction of a second June hesitated, then she nodded again.

"Yes—a package."

"One sealed with green sealing wax?"

"Yes."

"Great Scott, then that explains the mystery!" Excitedly Mr. Standish whirled on his host. "Henley, don't you see that this clears up the burglary at your flat?" he cried.

Feeling more and more bewildered, June stared at them both.

"B-burglary?" she stammered.

Mr. Standish gave an angry snort.

"Yes—burglary. A valuable package was stolen from Mr. Henley's office on Thursday morning by a rascal impersonating myself. Suspecting nothing amiss, Henley's clerk actually handed it to the impostor—just a minute before I arrived at the office myself. I was baffled as to how it was that the scoundrel managed to escape without my seeing him, but now it's clear. He and that girl he called his niece must have slipped in Mr. Raymond's flat on some trumped-up excuse."

June gave a horrified gasp, for, like a lightning flash, she realised how she had been tricked.

Having obtained the mystery package, the impostor and his confederate must have caught sight of the real Mr. Standish ascending the stairs, and in desperation they had entered Noel Raymond's flat, making the excuse that they wished to consult him.

No wonder the impostor had been relieved to learn that the famous detective was out of town! Then, when June had turned up on the scene, he had decided to carry out an audacious trick. Knowing that his imposture

by now must have been discovered, the trickster had been scared to venture out with the stolen package, and so he had had the effrontery to ask the young girl detective to take charge of it for him. No doubt he had thought that a young, inexperienced girl like her would be easily taken in.

June's cheeks burned.

Never had she felt so humiliated. What a fine beginning to her career as Uncle Noel's partner!

And then her brows met in a puzzled frown. But where did the Green Rajah fit into this startling theory?

It did not take her sharp wits long to guess the answer. Naturally the impostor had not wanted to visit the scene of his crime again, so, having craftily got June to tell him where she intended to store away the package, he had disguised himself as the Green Rajah and calmly set out to steal it back! When that had failed, he had got his so-called niece to ring up and ask June to bring the package along to Hyde Park. For some reason the girl had been unable to keep the appointment, so her confederate, again disguised as Mr. Standish, had met June, only again to find himself balked.

June's eyes gleamed with a grim satisfaction. Tricked though she had been, she had at least succeeded in preventing the impostor from gaining possession of the package. Even tonight she had frustrated his third attempt to get hold of it.

But who could the Green Rajah be?

Involuntarily her thoughts went to the likeable, yet tantalising boy whose behaviour had puzzled her ever since she had come to Glen Hall.

"Jack Linton," she murmured. "Perhaps he's the trickster. If he were, then all his queer actions would be explained."

Yet, though all the evidence pointed to Jack, June was very reluctant to accept it. She liked Jack, and the idea that he might be a crook dismayed her.

And what about the frightened girl—the fake Roger Standish's supposed niece? Obvious now why she had given a false name. She seemed to be every bit as bad as her older confederate, and yet, illogical though it was, June found it impossible to feel the same burning indignation against her as she did against the impostor. Somehow she could not forget that haunting look of fear in the unknown girl's dark eyes.

With an effort June broke off her thoughts. She became conscious that Roger Standish and Mr. Henley and his daughter were surveying her impatiently. They were expecting her to tell them more about her encounter with the impostor. Meeting their gaze, she coloured again, still acutely aware of how completely she had allowed herself to be tricked.

She regarded them frankly.

"It is evident I've been the victim of a trick," she said, "but before I tell my side of the story I'd like to ask one or two questions, if I may. About this parcel—what did it contain?"

To her surprise Mr. Henley shook his head.

"I'm afraid I don't know," he replied.

"Don't know?" Blankly June eyed him. Was there to be no end to the shock she was to receive in this surprising case? But if the package belonged to either Mr. Standish or yourself, surely you must know what it contained?" she gasped.

Mr. Henley smiled.

"I'm afraid we don't. You see, the package doesn't actually belong to either of us. It forms part of Colonel Raikes' estate."

"You mean the man who used to live here?"

The solicitor nodded.

"Yes—and, as you know, he was a very keen collector of Indian curios. I didn't know him very well personally. He was just a client of

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The Skating Girls Mystery Mascot

By MARIE MATHESON

CORINNE'S DEMAND

SHEILA MAYNE lived with her family at the little Canadian town of Juniper Bend.

The "Bluebirds," the skating club to which Sheila belonged, were anxious to do well in the forthcoming ice carnival and impress Lee Farrell, a film producer, who would be present.

Sheila's rival, Corinne Lefevre, was being tutored by Karl Olsen, who boarded with the Maynes. He and Corinne seemed curiously interested in an owl totem necklet which Sheila had found, and which Red Eagle, a young Redskin, told her to guard closely. He also offered to help her improve her skating.

During the Bluebirds' Christmas celebration Sheila found a ring in her Christmas pudding. But when she displayed it, Corinne declared it had been stolen from her by Red Eagle, and demanded that Sheila be expelled from the club!

INSTANTLY the happy atmosphere of the Christmas party disappeared. Every eye at the table centred on Sheila, holding the ring which Corinne had declared had been stolen from her house by Red Eagle.

Angrily Corinne looked around at the Bluebirds.

"I tell you, Sheila and this rascal Red Eagle have been in league from the start," she declared. "I knew all along she wasn't to be trusted, and this latest incident proves it. Red Eagle must have given her that stolen ring. She only pretended to find it in the Christmas pudding."

For a moment no one spoke. Corinne's sensational accusation had stunned them all. Sheila, regarding the horrified, silent faces opposite her, felt her cheeks go white, for it looked as if Corinne, at long last, had triumphed. For how could Sheila possibly prove her innocence? Suddenly Larry Green, the President of the Bluebirds, leaned forward, his eyes anxious and worried, as they turned to where Sheila sat.

"Sheila, is it true what Corinne says?" he asked quietly. "Did you get that ring from Red Eagle?"

Sheila shook her head vigorously. "No, I didn't. I—I found it among my pudding here on this plate. Oh, you must believe me! Until a moment ago I'd never set eyes on the ring."

Corinne gave a swift, sneering laugh. "She's lying!" she snapped. "Haven't we caught her at it before—like that day she refused to join us in a ski run, because she said she was tired, and then we caught her red-handed with Red Eagle? I want my ring, or I'll go straight to the police."

Karl Olsen, who had sat through the scene in silence, rose up, waved a hand.

"No, Corinne, not that. Think of the scandal. It would ruin the chances of the club in the ice carnival." He turned to Larry. "You will excuse me, Mr. President, if I intervene. You are all so young, so impetuous. If Miss Mayne were to return the ring—"

He hesitated, looking at Larry. "Sit down, Mr. Olsen," said Larry somewhat crisply. "This is a matter for us, as a club. Sheila, please give the ring to me."

Sheila rose, came round the table, and laid it in his palm, then returned to her place.

Larry looked the ring over, and nodded. He had seen the eighteen carat mark inside, the platinum setting, the genuineness of the stones.

"It's the real thing as far as I can see," he stated abruptly. "If it was among the articles stolen from your house, Corinne, the police will have it on their list. Isn't that so?"

"Of course," retorted Corinne.

"Well, I can soon get that corroborated," Larry said, keeping very calm. "I'm not at all satisfied with things as they stand, and in the circumstances we dare not jump to any conclusions, however silly and unfortunate Sheila's association with Red Eagle may have been."

He rose to his feet. "I'm going to question the cook who made the pudding, and the waiters who served it," he continued. "They may be able to help us get to the bottom of the mystery. I also mean to ring up the power station. We mustn't forget that the lights went out just before Sheila produced the ring. In fact, the whole business looks fishy to me."

"Of course it does," put in Mavis Poynter, and she gave Sheila's hand a reassuring squeeze. "It's absurd to think that Sheila is a thief. It's all a horrid mistake."

"Hear, hear!" came in a chorus from several of the others.

Sheila eyed them gratefully. It was fine to

know that, despite the evidence, she still had loyal friends here. Corinne gave a sneering laugh, but made no further comment, and Larry left the room. A worried, embarrassed silence fell over the room when he had gone. Sheila, looking at Corinne, frowned as she saw a malicious glint of satisfaction in that girl's eyes.

"This is another trick of Corinne's," she told herself. "A trick to get me in disgrace. She's determined to get me turned out of the club."

A few minutes later Larry, looking more worried than ever, returned to the dining-room. He looked across at Corinne's skating coach.

"Mr. Olsen, I must ask you to leave the room," he said. "Only Bluebirds can be present to hear what I have to say."

"Certainly, Mr. President. I will wait outside till I am recalled."

"Thank you," said Larry.

Olsen rose, bowed all round, and left the room.

"I've come to a decision," said Larry gravely. "This matter must be settled by the Bluebirds themselves. The police have corroborated the fact that a ring answering to the description of the one Sheila avers she found in the pudding was among the articles stolen from Corinne's home. I can't get any satisfactory explanation of how the lights went off. The power station say there was no break. It could only have been done by the switch in the basement."

The Bluebirds all leaned forward, while Sheila trembled with anxiety.

"I am convinced," went on Larry, "that that is how it occurred. In fact, I have evidence. The cook personally placed all the lucky gifts in the plum pudding. The ring was not among them. But on the floor beneath the light switch in the basement I found this caught on a nail."

He held up a piece of embroidered buckskin. "The man held in prison on suspicion of the theft is definitely not Red Eagle," continued Larry. "But this is like a part of the clothes he wears. He may have been here, seeking refuge from the police. He may have sneaked into this room when the lights were out, and may have planted the ring he had in his possession on Sheila."

Sheila jumped up, her face flushed. The glow of happiness that had filled her at the knowledge that Red Eagle had not been the arrested Redskin was replaced by a feeling of indignation.

"I don't believe it!" she cried. "Red Eagle would never do a thing like that." "Then you still stand by him?" demanded Larry. "You won't renounce him? Corinne doesn't want any scandal about this ring, which I shall give back to her. The police don't know why I rang up, except that I did so out of curiosity."

"I'll stand by him anywhere," said Sheila warmly.

"Then here's my decision," declared Larry. "I'm sorry, Sheila, after the way you've helped so largely to make our show a success, but we shall have to consider your position by a full vote of the club, whether you remain with us or not. With the ice carnival so near, and so much to do, we can't afford a split in the ranks of the club, or association of any one of them with a person of doubtful character."

He looked around.

"Does that meet with general approval?" he asked.

The majority signified that it did.

"Very well," said Larry. "Then we'll hold a full meeting to-morrow night at the club at seven o'clock."

Sheila sat still, her heart freezing within her. It had come at last, the fruit of all Corinne's scheming and plotting. She was to be tried by her own friends, and if the vote went against her she would be expelled from the club. That would mean she would be out of the ice ballet; would mean the end of her dream of achieving film fame.

RED EAGLE EXPLAINS



THE Christmas party broke up without the hilarity and cheerful farewells that should characterize such a celebration. Mavis Poynter, to whose home Sheila was going for the night, did her best to cheer up Sheila, but it was unhappily that Sheila went to bed.

Next morning she prepared to return home, but first of all she rang up Dr. Luke's nursing home to inquire about Toddlers. To her delight she learnt he was progressing well.

When she reached Chinook Lodge, her father greeted her warmly. He congratulated her on her skating success, then referred to the compliments which had been passed on the ballet dresses he had helped to design, and on the back-cloth he had painted.

"Someone might take an interest in me, reading this," he declared, as he laid down the morning paper. "I believe there were cameramen there, too. I think I'll send one of these reports to my agent in Toronto. You could take it down for me after tea, and catch the post."

Sheila gave a little frown.

"We've a meeting to-night, dad, about seven," she told him. "But I should have plenty of time to manage if Gracie washes up and we have tea early."

John Mayne nodded.

"That'll be all right with me, Sheila," he declared. "After the show you've put up I want you to get as much time with the Bluebirds as possible. Practise hard, and maybe that dream will come true when Lee Farrell comes. I'm very proud of you, my dear."

It was good to see him so happy and hopeful, Sheila thought. But he did not guess what the Bluebirds' meeting was to be about, or how it might affect her future.

If she was expelled, how would she be able to explain matters to him?

Oh, if she could just see Red Eagle! He would be able to advise and help her. Where could he be at present?

"The bivouac—where Jerry took me to test out his new toboggan," Sheila murmured. "Perhaps I could find him there. When I'm coming back from the post I'll come home the roundabout way and climb up. Then I'll have a straight run back to the lakeside."

So, once early tea was over, Sheila set out on skis for Juniper Bend. Having posted her father's letter, she called in at the nursing home and saw Toddlers for a few minutes.

He was ever so much brighter, sitting up and playing with his toys.

Sheila hugged him hard, and promised to come back again next day. Then, knowing she had little enough time to spare, she hurried out of town and took the high trail.

It was hard climbing for a spell, and when she gained the summit she was breathless. It had been dark when she started, but now a moon was rising above the hills, making Emerald Lake glisten like a solid sheet of silver.

She would just have time to see if Red Eagle was anywhere about his old haunt, and then get down to the clubhouse.

Skiing skilfully, she coasted down the slope to where the cleverly camouflaged shelter had stood. So well hidden was it that it took her quite a while to locate it.

"Oh," she panted, "I believe he's there! I smell smoke."

She hastened on, sniffing, and a few minutes later she saw the tiny fire that had been built on the sheltered side of the structure, and a figure bending over it.

"Red Eagle!" she called.

He was up in a moment, and running over to her.

"Sheila! I've just been wondering about you!" he cried. "Red Eagle is very proud of

your success. The little owl totem has brought you luck. Also I have news for you."

"News?" she queried eagerly. He led her into the shelter, made a place for her on the spruce boughs that were piled on the floor, and gave her a bowl of the soup he had been cooking. And as she sipped it gratefully, for the night was cold, he told her.

"The time has come to tell you something of the truth," he intimated. "Long ago there were three men, two white, and one red, who made a compact. They went away into the wilds, far north, when everyone was hunting for gold."

"Yes," said Sheila. "The Redman was your ancestor, the Red Eagle in the picture?"

Red Eagle nodded. "It was so," he went on. "The other was your father's uncle, Rupert Mayne. The third was a man Joubert, a French-Canadian. To each of them my ancestor gave a totem from his necklace. On these totems were Indian signs which marked the location of a gold pocket they had found, and from which they brought back a fortune in nuggets, which they shared. They also paid back the man who had outfitted them. His name was Green."

Sheila listened, fascinated, then cried out:

"Larry's grandfather!"

Red Eagle nodded.

"They set out on a second trip secretly to get more gold, clean out the pocket. But they did not all come back together."

Sheila stared.

"What happened?" she demanded.

"That I do not know yet," he said quietly. "There was some kind of quarrel, I think. Joubert was never seen again alive. Then, after a great blizzard, my ancestor and your Uncle Rupert were found frozen and half-dead. They carried no gold."

"They'd failed!" exclaimed Sheila.

"I cannot say. I do not think so," said Red Eagle. "But the grandfather of your paleface friend Larry was found murdered one day. Your uncle never recovered mentally from the experiences in the blizzard. He would not talk of anything, but lived here at Chinook, which he had bought after the first trip, and painted pictures. Red Eagle, my ancestor, disappeared mysteriously."

The young Redskin frowned.

"He never came back. People said if there had been any gold he had taken it, that he had killed Joubert for his share, and Larry's grandfather because he knew something, having backed them. The only one who could know the truth was your great-uncle Rupert, but his mind was affected."

Red Eagle sighed.

"I do not believe my ancestor was false. Red Eagle is here to clear his name. By chance one of the totems fell into my hands. I lost it, then you found it. All three totems will give a clue to the gold, whether it was brought here or not—a fortune."

Sheila's heart throbbed.

"Then daddy would have a share in it," she cried. "I see now what you mean. But the portrait of Red Eagle—"

"It was the last thing your great-uncle Rupert worked on, and he presented it to Green, the fourth man, who had backed them, before he died. When I heard of it I said here are my clues, all together."

"And did you find them?" asked Sheila breathlessly.

Red Eagle shook his head.

"No, the marks on the portrait are too faint," he said. "I have sent it back without name or word, to whom it belongs. We have one totem, the Owl, and we can have moulds made of the Bear. Someone else has the Wolf. Together they provide the complete clue. It is my belief that this Joubert had the Wolf, that somehow he is connected with the paleface girl, Corinne Lefevre, and that the gold is here at Chinook—untouched, hidden—"

Sheila raised her eyes, then stood up, looking over towards her home. If this were true,

and she and Red Eagle could foil Corinne, then—

Sheila stiffened, let out a gasp.

"Look, Red Eagle!" she cried. "Men—three of them—ski-ing down here. Two of them are Mounties, I'm sure of it. Perhaps they're looking for you."

Red Eagle was at her side in a moment. One glance was sufficient for the young Redskin.

"Sheila has guessed right," he panted. "These men come to take me. It is all a plot to get me locked up so that I cannot finish my task. Red Eagle knows that burglary was faked. It was at the paleface girl Corinne's home I found the portrait."

He started blanketing out the fire with snow. But the ski-ers still came on. One pulled something from under his parka and fired a warning shot.

Sheila clutched Red Eagle in dismay. If she were caught with him when he was arrested it would blacken her completely with all the Bluebirds. And if he was arrested their enemies would be free to solve the mystery unhindered.

The speed with which the trio were approaching the camouflaged shelter gave them little chance of escape. It seemed as if she and Red Eagle would be trapped.

HOW WOULD THE BLUEBIRDS VOTE?



"SHEILA! Quick! Behind, this way!"

As the men vanished into a dip for a moment, the young Redskin tugged Sheila to the other side of the bivouac and indicated a toboggan there piled with furs.

"Quick, there is just a chance of getting clear," he panted. "I know a secret quick way down to the lake. Lie down, cover yourself up, and trust everything to me."

Sheila obeyed, lay down on the toboggan, and felt him dragging it off. He was blowing when at last he stopped close to the edge of a frozen mountain stream that zigzagged down through the firs and spruces for the lake.

"We are going on the ice," whispered Red Eagle. "I have done it many times before. The stream goes down into a deep gorge, then through a tunnel in the earth, and out, into the lake."

He smiled at her encouragingly as he slipped the toboggan down on to the ice.

"My toboggan is strong. It will just be like a bobrun. Do not be afraid, and we will yet outwit them. See, snow is beginning to fall, and will obliterate our tracks."

There was nothing Sheila could do but trust to him. The last thing she wanted was for him to be caught now that he had told her so much. She could see things so much more clearly now.

A push or two, and they were off, Red Eagle lying in front, with two short, pointed sticks in his hands to aid in steering the toboggan.

On they sped, and then all at once they were engulfed in darkness.

"This is the tunnel," announced Red Eagle.

It was a nightmare journey that rush over the frozen stream in the semi-darkness, but at last from ahead came a gleam.

"We're almost at the lake," Red Eagle said. "It will go very quickly at the finish. Hang on, Sheila. Red Eagle will take you safely."

Sheila caught her breath in a gasp as the toboggan increased its speed till it seemed as if they were shooting down a precipice.

Then she felt a rush of colder air, while the toboggan bounced and bumped on rough ice. She opened her eyes to see that they had shot out from under some hazel bushes guarding the stream's exit on to the frozen lake.

"Oh, we've done it, Red Eagle!" she cried. "You're safe. They won't know where you've gone."

THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED GIRL

(Continued from page 248.)

As she spoke, the toboggan gave a sudden lurch and spun right round as it struck an ice hummock. Sheila managed to keep on, but Red Eagle was thrown sideways. He went slithering over the ice, then lay still.

Sheila scrambled off as the toboggan stopped, and ran to him. He was lifting himself painfully, for he had wrenched his ankle badly.

"Ugh, this is bad medicine," he panted.

Sheila looked round the lake bank. She saw that she was not far from where the clubhouse stood. And then she remembered. She had no idea of the time now, for her wrist-watch was at home, and this was the evening her fate was to be decided.

They might be waiting for her, or perhaps already they had taken the vote which might expel her from the Bluebirds. Now she remembered, too, that she had not even had time to tell Red Eagle of this latest development.

He was limping stoically over the ice, to drag the toboggan into the cover of some bushes. Again she realised that his liberty was endangered, that the officers of the Mounted were still after him.

"Red Eagle!" she called. "Let me help you. You must do just as I tell you. I can't have you caught now."

It stopped snowing as she helped him up the bank.

"I've got to get to the club," she informed him. "It's terribly important. You've no idea of the time, Red Eagle?"

"Red Eagle cannot say," he muttered. "But Red Eagle will be safe. Let Sheila go."

"No," she said. "Not until I've seen you safe. There's a lean-to, half buried under the snow, behind the clubhouse. You know it?"

Red Eagle nodded.

"Well," she insisted, "you go in there and hide till I can come and attend to you."

"You are a faithful friend," said Red Eagle. "My ankle does not hurt so badly now. Look, we have only a little way to go. I will manage. See, sleighs and sulkies. Your friends are there, waiting for you."

Sheila hurried up the steps and, opening the door, stepped into the clubhouse. It was to see that the Bluebirds were all seated round the big table, with a ballot-box in front of them. A huge fire blazed in the hearth, but its cheerful glow was not reflected in the faces of the Bluebirds.

"Sheila!" cried Mabel Rowan. "Wherever have you been? You're almost an hour late."

Sheila leaned back against the door, throwing open her fur jacket. She saw Corinne Lefevre looking at her with a sneer on her lips.

"Off on one of her usual stunts," said the girl who was now Sheila's declared enemy. "Well, she'll be in time to hear the result of the ballot, anyhow, and we can all guess what that's going to be."

Larry, presiding, silenced Corinne with an angry glance, then rose and placed a chair for Sheila by the fire.

"Warm yourself, Sheila," he said kindly, and patted her shoulder. "I know this will be an ordeal for you, but I am afraid I must ask you to face it. Things have gone too far to be hushed up. For the good of the club, a decision, one way or another, has to be taken."

"I—I understand," Sheila said.

"Right, then we'll get down to business," Larry gave a heavy sigh. Plainly he disliked the role he was forced to play. "Everyone will vote in the usual way," he declared, looking round. "Those who are in favour of Sheila remaining a member of the club will place a white ball in the box. Those who think she should be expelled will put in a black ball."

The little wooden balls were distributed, and, white and anxious, Sheila watched and waited.

Next Friday's **GIRLS' CRYSTAL** will contain another dramatic instalment of this engrossing serial.

mine and I only met him once or twice. But just before he died he called at my office and told me that he was expecting an important package to arrive from India during the next six months or so, and hinted that its contents concerned some secret he was trying to solve. He wouldn't say what it was—he was a very secretive, eccentric old man, you know; fiery-tempered and touchy, too—but I gathered that package contained something of great importance. He said that he was arranging for the package to be sent to my office, and asked me to keep it in safe custody until he sent for it. Well, a few days later he died, and it was not until last week that this mysterious package arrived from India. I was out of London at the time—up here for the Christmas festivities—so I arranged for Mr. Standish to call and collect it on his way back from France."

"That's right." Roger Standish turned to June with a smile. "You see, I was Colonel Ralke's partner. We met in India years ago. When I heard about this package, I was very interested, for I thought it might contain some rare Indian curio, but now—" He shrugged his shoulders disappointedly. "Now," he repeated, "I'm afraid our curiosity will never be satisfied. That impostor has got safely away with the package."

"But he hasn't!" cried June. "I've got it!" There came startled gasps from Mr. Standish and the Henleys. June nodded, and her lips curved into a happy smile. There was still a good chance of her getting the better of the impostor who had tricked her. That package, when opened, might provide her with the key to the whole astonishing mystery.

"Yes—I have got it," she repeated. "In fact, it's locked up in this very house!"

And quickly she related all that had happened. Her three companions listened in increasing amazement. When she had finished, Mr. Standish and Mr. Henley regarded each other excitedly.

"Then the impostor and this Green Rajah fellow must be one and the same!" exclaimed the solicitor, then impulsively he patted June on the shoulder. "You have nothing to reproach yourself with, my dear," he declared. "In fact, you have done very well. It's the parcel that matters."

"Then may we open it, Mr. Henley?" she asked. "I'm positive that its contents will help us to track down the Green Rajah—will enable us to solve the whole mystery."

To her delight the solicitor nodded.

"Certainly," he said. "Come along, all of you."

June's pulses were racing, as she accompanied the others back along the corridor. Once again she felt a queer premonition that she was on the verge of a big discovery, and her heart pounded as she realised that at long last she was going to break those tantalising green seals.

Her eyes gleamed with eager expectancy as Mr. Henley led the way into the library. He pulled aside the bookcase, and, taking the key of the secret cupboard from her pocket, June bent over the locked door. But first she examined the web of black cotton with anxious eyes, only to give a sigh of satisfaction.

"It's O.K.," she murmured. "It hasn't been tampered with, so—here goes!"

And almost breathless with excitement, she inserted the key in the lock and turned it.

This is indeed a dramatic moment for June—as well as for the others. What will the mystery package be found to contain? Be sure not to miss the exciting chapters of this serial in next Friday's **GIRLS' CRYSTAL**.

Silver Cup



By DAPHNE GRAYSON

THE MYSTERIOUS IMPERSONATOR

"WE'VE just got to win the sleigh race, Merry-makers—just got to win the silver cup, and discover its secret!" Sally Warner said.

"And we're not the only ones who're after it!" Don Weston remarked grimly.

"You're right, Don. What about that chap who came here, impersonating you?" agreed Fay Manners.

"And those helpers of his—the couple who decoyed us to the wrong house yesterday!" Johnny Briggs supplemented. "I suppose your uncle doesn't know what the secret of the silver cup is, Linda?"

"No, he's as mystified as we are!" Pretty Linda Carson, with whom the chums were spending Christmas in her uncle's mountain chalet, looked puzzled. "But it's obviously something that means a tremendous lot! If only we can win that cup and solve its secret, it would be a wonderful Christmas present for uncle!"

Linda and the chums were hurrying down the stairs from the Turret Room, their eyes gleaming with purpose. The chums had experienced thrilling and unlooked-for adventures since they had broken up at Roxburgh Co-ed College a few days ago.

They had been tricked to a house some miles away, while an impostor had stayed at Mr. Carson's, impersonating Don Weston, in a vain attempt to steal the mysterious silver cup made famous in a Debroy painting of Mr. Carson's. The cup was—for the time being—safe in the hands of the ice carnival committee, until it was awarded as prize to the winner of the sleigh race.

"Where do we enter our names, uncle?" Linda asked eagerly, as they met him in the hall.

"At Denver Stadium—but that's five miles from here, and all entries have to be in by twelve noon!" he said apprehensively. "You've not much time! My sleigh is laid up for overhaul. I'm afraid you'll be too late!"

"Not us!" cried Johnny, dashing for the door. "We've got a sleigh waiting for us, sir—the one we borrowed from those frauds who took us to the wrong house. Come on, Merry-makers."

He led the rush out on to the snowy drive, then pulled up in blank amazement. For of the sleigh there was no sign.

"Hey! Who's made off with the sleigh?" he cried, looking towards a plump manservant who stood puzzledly contemplating the spot on which the sleigh had stood.

"Simply beats me!" the servant gasped. "All I did was to take your luggage out of the sleigh and carry it upstairs. When I came back the sleigh was gone and the horses, too!"

"No need to ask who's taken it, Johnny. It was the boy who impersonated Don," Sally guessed. "He's scooted back with it to his confederates, the Mulletts, where it belongs!" She turned to the manservant. "What did the fellow—the one who called himself Don Weston—look like, Sam?"

"Black, wavy hair—er—well, much the same build as your friend here"—and he indicated Don—"only a bit stouter like!"

Sally nodded bitterly. But the sleigh 'was gone. How, now, were they to reach the stadium in time to enter their names for the race? Something must be done—and quickly, too. There was not a moment to lose.

"We'll have to use Shanks's pony, everybody!" she said, making a dash for the gates. "You're the sprinter, Don. We'll pace you. We've got to do it by twelve somehow!"

It was tricky work, pelting on foot down the icy mountain slopes, and exhilarating, too, if only time hadn't been so short. By the time they reached the valley below, all were thoroughly tired out, though they would not admit it.

"If only there was a train," panted Sally, as they hurried past the little wooden station. And then she caught sight of a signpost in the roadway. "Wh—what? Three miles to Denver!" she gasped.

There were groans from the others, then Don gave a sudden gasp.

"Hey, look there! Aren't they the Roxburgh colours?"

The chums followed his gaze, then all gaped. Sure enough, at that moment a cyclist pedalled out of the station yard, and that cyclist was certainly wearing the colours of Roxburgh Coll.

"It's Walpole!" Johnny shouted. "Rex Walpole of K House!"

The cyclist was no less amazed than themselves at this chance encounter. He brought his cycle to a standstill at their sides, a dazed grin of pleasure on his face.

"Well, this is a small world!" he exclaimed

"Who'd have thought of meeting you J-ites here!"

"We're staying with my uncle. When did you arrive, Rex?" cried Linda, who knew him better than Sally & Co. did, as they were both in the art section at Roxburgh.

"This morning. Came on the ten o'clock train!" Rex Walpole beamed. "Hope I'm going to see something of you all over the hols. I'm staying with relatives on a farm two miles out."

"Sure, we'll be seeing you, Rex!" Sally said breathlessly, her eyes on his bike. "Just now we're in a tearing hurry—"

"So am I!" he broke in. "Just off to the Stadium, to put my name in for the sleigh race!"

"Why, that's just what we were going to do—but, I say, will you do it for us, Rex?" Sally asked breathlessly. "Save us trudging another three miles!"

"Of course!" he said heartily. "Say, were you going to walk to the Stadium?"

Sally nodded.

"You left it pretty late, didn't you? All names of entrants have to be in by twelve."

"You won't have too much time yourself if we stand here gassing!" Don chuckled. "Gosh, we were lucky to meet you, Walpole! Where shall we see you again?"

"In the station buffet," Walpole said, pushing off. "I'll meet you there as soon as I've put the names through!" he added over his shoulder.

The chums saw him off down the road, then made their way to the station buffet.

"Is Walpole any good with a sleigh, does anyone know?" Johnny asked eagerly, as they made their way to a table, steaming cups of coffee in their hands.

"Golly, we must let him into the secret!" cried Linda.

"He might be able to help us! Perhaps, if we don't win the cup, he could!" echoed Sally. "He's probably had a lot of practice at sleighing, seeing that he's got relatives living here. Good old Rex. Fate was on our side when she sent Rex along to the station."

For a time they sat, sipping their coffee and discussing their plans for the holiday until Fay, glancing at the clock, gave a start.

"Half-past twelve!" she exclaimed. "Golly, but—where's Rex? I thought he was coming straight back here to join us?"

"That's what he said!" And Don looked blankly at the clock. "Wonder what's keeping him?"

"Let's walk up the road—we're bound to meet him then," suggested Sally.

It was a lonely, winding road that ran to Denver, stretching away between high snow-banks and miles of desolate wasteland. So lonely that the chums began to feel, after a time, that they would never meet anyone on it, and gradually grew more and more perplexed.

Where was Rex Walpole?

"Look!" The sudden cry burst from Sally.

"There's his cycle!"

She rushed forward, her heart in her mouth. The cycle was lying at the edge of the road, the snow around it violently trampled and dotted here and there with the spilt contents of the saddlebag. The chums looked at each other. There had evidently been either an accident or a struggle! And where was Rex now? What had happened to him? Had he been hurt?

"Rex!" Sally shouted wildly. "Where are you, Rex?"

From somewhere near by came a painful groan. The chums turned in the direction of the sound, and Sally rushed forward.

"Rex!" she panted. And then she saw him.

A limp, shaken figure, Walpole was staggering to his feet, one hand reaching weakly to a tree to steady himself. His other hand was pressed to his head. His clothes were dishevelled and caked with snow, and he looked dazed.

"Rex—what happened? Did you skid?" Sally, concern in her voice, was at his side, supporting him.

"N-no!" he groaned. "Someone sprang out at me! Struck me on the head with something. Phew!" He tenderly felt the back of his head.

"Struck you!" The chums looked horrified.

"Did you see who it was, Rex?" asked Fay.

"Didn't have much time to see—I think I must have p-passed out," he faltered, trying dazedly to remember. "He was a man of about six foot. Black clothes and topboots. L-looked quite respectable—"

"Like a manservant?" came a cry from Sally.

"Yes! Yes, that was the type!" Walpole said eagerly. "That just describes him. There was a young chap with him. Bit like you, Weston—only stouter. But it was the man who hit me—"

"It must have been Mullet!" Don burst in tensely. "That crook who took us to the wrong house and tried to keep us there! The other was the chap who's been impersonating me at Linda's uncle's!"

Then this was another blow to cheat them of the secret of the silver cup.

"Rex," began Sally, "have you entered our names?"

Rex shook his head apologetically.

"No, Sally, I—I only—got as far as here. Then I was set upon—"

"Poor old Rex, you wouldn't have had this knock if you hadn't been helping us!" Sally said in warm compassion, but trying hard to find some way of countering this blow. "You take it easy! The others'll look after you—I'll look after the race. I'll get our names in somehow! Yours, too!"

She rushed to the fallen bike, telling the others that she'd meet them at the chalet. Then she was scorching off on the road to the stadium—a full hour later than the time stipulated for the last entries!

The first thing she saw as she reached the stadium was the secretary's office. The next thing she saw was the secretary, a sheaf of papers under his arm, just preparing to lock the door and depart.

"I say, just a minute, please!" And Sally slid down, panting, from the saddle. "I've got some more entries for the sleigh race!"

"Sorry! Too late!" came the crisp answer.

"But our entries have come all the way from California!"

"Say, are you another of these collegians?" he asked. "Roxburgh?"

"That's right!" And Sally's heart leapt.

"Will you take our names?"

His hard mouth widened into a grin.

"O.K.!" He took the list of sleigh race competitors from under his arm, holding it against the door of the office while he drew out his pen.

"You're too late, really, but still—let's have your names!"

But Sally was silent. She was staring electrified at the last name on the list. It was the name of a Roxburgh boy entered this very morning, and that name was—Rex Walpole!

SALLY'S SUSPICIONS



IN dazed incredulity Sally stared at the list. How had Rex Walpole's name come to be entered on the list when he had told them that he had been attacked before he reached the stadium? Had he—fibbed?

And if he had—why?

"Let's have these names of yours, miss!" the secretary repeated a little sharply. "How many sleighs are you entering?"

"Oh!" Sally gave a start. "Only one sleigh," she blurted.

"Then you can only enter one driver. He

doesn't take passengers, you know!" the secretary said. "What's the name of this crack driver of yours from California? Easton, did you say?"

"Weston," corrected Sally. "Don Weston, of Roxburgh!"

"Right!" Briskly he entered the name and turned to go. "The race is at seven prompt to-morrow evening. Good-afternoon, miss!"

And off he went, while Sally, her thoughts seething, remounted the cycle and streaked back to the chalet.

Why had Walpole fibbed to them? Did he know the secret of the cup, and, consequently, not want them to win the race? Was it no chance coincidence that had brought Walpole here? Was he in the plot to steal the secret?

When Sally arrived at the chalet she discovered Don & Co., with Linda, waiting for her in the library. But of Rex Walpole there was no sign.

"Where's Rex Walpole, Don?" she asked quickly.

"Phoning his uncle. He's all right now," Don said, and rushed on eagerly. "How did you get on, Sally? Did you get our names in?"

"Yes!" muttered Sally, but her tone simply stupefied her jubilant chums.

"Hey, we're in the race, after all!" grinned Johnny. "Is this how you break the big news, Sally? You look as mournful as—"

"Listen!" Sally interrupted. "There's something fishy about Walpole and his story!"

The chums stared bewilderedly.

"He wasn't attacked!" Sally declared. "He's been to the stadium—he's put his name in for the race—his name, but not ours!"

"Wh-a-a-at?" Don & Co. gaped incredulously.

"He's after the secret—he's in with Mullet and the other fellow!" Sally ran on recklessly. "It couldn't mean anything else, since he described them exactly and—"

She broke off hastily as the door opened and Rex Walpole came hurrying into the room.

"I've phoned my uncle, Linda, and I've told him that you've very kindly invited me to stay with you to-day," he said, and went on in quick confusion. "And I say—it's awfully tough on you people if you're to be left out, but uncle didn't know where I'd gone, and he tells me he phoned the stadium this morning and got my name entered for the sleigh race."

Sally's suspicions exploded in a shock of remorse. She saw her chums' bewildered faces clear, and she felt her own cheeks burn for the wrong she had done Walpole.

"That's all right, old man!" Don said heartily.

"We're in it, too!" cried Johnny. "Sally managed to get our names entered, after all."

Sally's eyes were on Walpole as Johnny spoke, and it was then that her thoughts took another somersault. She saw him give a sickly start at Johnny's words, though he recovered himself in a flash.

"Oh!" he said, and his smile was the same, but his eyes were suddenly cold and dismayed. "Oh, then we're all going to be in it! That's fine!"

Sally's suspicions were mounting again. She was certain the news had come as a blow to him, and she felt pleased, now, that Linda had invited him to spend the rest of the day with them, because she would have an opportunity to watch him.

"We might have known it was a crazy idea of yours, Sally," Johnny said, the moment Walpole went out of the room. "He couldn't have anything to do with the Mullet's little game, because he didn't arrive here till this morning!"

"Not till the ten o'clock train!" Don added. "Perhaps I'm mistaken," murmured Sally, then, softly, "perhaps I'm not." She went on brightly before her chums could speak: "I suppose you boys will be getting in some sleighing practice this afternoon? I'll stay in,

if you don't mind, Linda." She paused. "I could fix up a treasure hunt—"

"Whoopie! Jolly good idea, Sally!" Linda sparkled.

Sally spent the whole afternoon learning the run of the house, and distributing clues in all the most out-of-the-way places.

After dinner, in high spirits, the hunt began. Sally watched Rex Walpole, and her heart thumped with excitement as soon as she saw him outstripping Don & Co. His knowledge of the house seemed uncanny. He never had to ask the way. A startling suspicion crossed Sally's mind. Could he be the boy who had impersonated Don? She would test him. Set a trap!

Eagerly she awaited a suitable moment when Walpole was searching for a clue in the linen-room. The door was open, and he could not help but hear Sally speak to Linda in the passage outside.

"Did the maid tell you what she found in Don's room, Linda?" she asked in excited tones. "Something much more important than a treasure-hunt clue!"

"No! What was it?" asked Linda in real amazement.

"A letter that was dropped there!" Sally said tensely. "The maid thought it belonged to Don or Johnny, of course, as they're using the room now. She just popped it back on the mantelpiece, behind the clock. But neither Don nor Johnny have dropped a letter, so—"

"So it was dropped by Don's impersonator? The boy who slept in the room before they came?" burst in Linda.

"That's right—by Don's impersonator! It's the one vital piece of evidence he's left behind!" Sally said, with high excitement. "It may help the police to trace him. Tell you what, Linda, we'll go up to Don's room and get it directly the treasure hunt's over!"

"Can't we go now?" asked Linda. "I'm dying to see it."

"Better not," advised Sally. "We'd be interrupting the treasure hunt. See you later, then, Linda."

She moved away then, knowing that Walpole must have heard every word, and if he was the impersonator, he would at all costs want to get hold of that imaginary letter. And, she surmised grimly, he wouldn't lose any time about it, either. Now to hide in Don's room and catch him in the act!

Sally darted upstairs. Johnny was wandering about the passage up there, browsing for treasure clues, and Sally pulled up in the nick of time, as she was about to dive into his room.

"I don't think much of these clues of yours, Sally!" he said, eyeing her gloomily. "I'm sure the last one was wrong."

"Perhaps it's you that's wrong, old thing?" suggested Sally. "Sure you've come to the right passage?"

Johnny blinked at her quickly, then went galloping upstairs to the next passage. Sally flitted noiselessly into his room and concealed herself inside the wardrobe.

Through a crack she had a clear view of anyone who might come in through the door—and a clear view of the clock on the mantelpiece, behind which the pretended letter was supposed to be hidden.

Would Walpole come? Sally asked herself breathlessly. Almost in the next breath she heard a low creak as slowly the door began opening inch by inch. Sally's heart thumped as Rex Walpole's furtive figure peered into the room.

His eyes darted left and right. Then with guilty haste he dodged into the room, carefully closing the door behind him. Nervously he moved towards the mantelpiece.

He had already betrayed himself! Sally thought tensely. He had come to get the letter he thought he had dropped. Then suddenly he whirled round as the door burst open and Johnny dashed in.

"I know who you're after, Walpole!" he said breathlessly. "I saw you creep in, too!"

Next instant the door of the wardrobe was pulled open, and Johnny was dragging Sally out.

"Soon stopped your little jape, Sally!" he chuckled triumphantly. "I saw you before Walpole did! I knew you were up to something. Thought you'd got me out of the way nicely, didn't you?"

"You s-silly old chump—" gasped Sally. But what was the use of going on? Johnny had spoilt everything! He had given Walpole the chance to save himself—and Walpole seized it.

"So that's where she was hiding!" he laughed. "I'd never have found her myself, Briggs! What was she up to?"

His eyes flickered swiftly to the mantelpiece as he spoke. He could see now that there was no letter hidden behind the clock. He knew, too, Sally suspected. Well, what if she did? he thought. Her trick had failed. He turned to her, and in his eyes Sally read a challenge, and in her mind she grimly accepted it.

"You'll know what I'm up to, both of you," she said mysteriously, "by this time tomorrow!"

And she sailed out of the room. She had found out all she wanted to know about Rex Walpole, and she would prove it—before the sleigh race!

All next morning the chums spent grooming and exercising the horses, decorating the sleigh, and polishing up the bells till they gleamed. The race was the only subject between them. Walpole had returned to his relatives, and his name wasn't mentioned till late in the afternoon, when Sally suggested a walk down to the station.

It was at the station where we met Walpole yesterday, wasn't it?" she remarked.

"Quite soon after he arrived on the ten o'clock train," agreed Johnny.

Sally nodded. "That's right," she agreed. "But you haven't asked me what that jape was that I was supposed to be hatching in your room last night. It's an interesting story, you know. I'll tell you exactly what happened, only don't jump to any conclusions!"

As the chums walked, they listened to Sally's account of her suspicions of Walpole. The chums were incredulous—they insisted she was just imagining it. After all, Johnny pointed out, how could Rex have impersonated Don when he hadn't arrived till a day after themselves?

Still arguing, they arrived at the station, and halted at the barrier.

"Porter!" Sally called the man on duty. "I say, were you here when the ten o'clock train came in yesterday?"

"Yes, miss, I was here!" he said. "Did one of our chaps arrive on it?" And Sally pointed to the Roxburgh scarf she wore. "A chap wearing these colours?"

"No, miss!" said the porter promptly. "No passengers got off the ten o'clock—no passengers at all!"

There was a gasp from the chums, and Sally's eyes gleamed triumphantly.

"Thanks very much—that's all we wanted to know. Good-bye!" And she turned, leading the way out of the station, while the elderly porter shook his head puzzledly after them.

Don's face was set grimly.

"You were right, Sally. Walpole's nothing but a fraud! He thinks he's going to beat me in the race to-night, does he? Well, he can have another think. Come on, Merry-makers!"

Sally felt elated. She knew that Don, in his present mood, couldn't lose the sleigh race. The horses seemed to know it, too, as he unstabled them and harnessed them to the sleigh.

The chums clambered aboard, and with Don's masterful hand on the reins, the sleigh went skimming down the icy slopes, heading for

Moose Gap Bridge and the road to Denver Stadium.

The miles slipped by as the chums, still furious at Rex Walpole's deception, discussed it between them.

Then—
"Hi! Look out!" Johnny gave a sudden shout.

The sleigh skidded wildly, pitching the chums headlong into the snow—as Don swerved to avoid the great yawning gap before them—Moose Gap!

There came a gasping cry from Don.
"The bridge is up! Someone's swung the bridge over to the other side—we're cut off!"

A THRILLING SLEIGH RACE



"IT'S Walpole's work!" Sally guessed immediately.

"But—but we crossed the bridge coming back from the station—not half an hour ago," Fay gasped.

"It's Walpole's work—he's done it to keep us out of the race!" Sally panted.

The truth crashed upon the chums. Rex Walpole had beaten them after all! The mighty abyss of Moose Gap lay between them and the stadium! There was no other way to Denver! They were cut off by that bridgeless gulf, hopelessly stranded!

"What are we to do?" whispered Linda.
"The race starts at seven. We'll never be able—"

"Oh, yes, we will!" Sally spoke determinedly. "There must be some way across—down in the heart of the valley!" she cried, gazing down the slippery, rocky incline. "If I could climb down and find my way across to the other side, then I could swing the bridge back across the gap. I'm going to chance it!"

"Sally!" came a frantic cry from Don and Johnny. "Sally, you'll break your neck—"

But Sally was already lowering herself doggedly down the icy, trackless slope of the mountain. She'd got to chance it. It was their only hope.

REX WALPOLE stood near the paddock of the floodlit stadium, his eyes gleaming excitedly as a voice boomed out over the loud-speakers:

"Runners for the sleigh race, get ready! Five minutes to go! Five minutes!"

"And in another ten minutes, uncle, that cup's going to be ours!" Walpole said triumphantly.

The man he called "uncle" was a tall, domestic-looking individual in black clothes and top-boots. No one would have suspected the cunning that was concealed by his homely countenance. No more than Sally and her chums had suspected it, when they had first met him and had been tricked to the wrong house, in the belief that he was Mr. Carson's trusted servant.

"You have disposed very nicely of your—er—college friends, Rex," he said now with a smile. "They would be surprised if they knew that I only sent you to Roxburgh for the purpose that I shall see you achieve to-night!"

"I knew I'd get hold of that secret somehow, uncle, and it was easy work once I knew it was hidden in the silver cup!" gloated Walpole. "Sally Warner and her crowd are well out of the way, stranded at Moose Gap. They can't get across because I shifted the bridge to the other side. They won't see any sleigh racing to-night!"

"Well, come along. We'll get into the paddock, and I'll see you all ready for the start!"

(Please turn to the back page.)



JEAN and HER WONDER DOG



(Continued from page 244.)

to recognise her; he was to pass on as if he had not seen her.

But would he remember? It was some time since she had tested his cleverness in that particular way. Her heart in her mouth, she watched the dog advancing along the line, with Roger Corrigan gripping the rope and encouraging him, dangling the white handkerchief.

"Find her, boy—find her!" the rancher kept muttering grimly, determinedly.

Jean held her breath as she stood there in her overall and dark glasses. He had almost reached her now. She saw his ears prick up, his sleek body begin to tremble; in another moment he would break out into joyous, noisy welcome.

She gave those three sharp little coughs. Would he remember?

A surge of relief ran through her as she saw the change that suddenly came over the big Alsatian. His ears were laid back, his tail sank between his legs; he gave a doleful little whimper, walking on with only a fleeting side-long glance at Jean.

"Oh, you wonder, Kim!" she thought, her eyes glistening behind the dark glasses. "You're longing to greet me—just as I'm longing to greet you—but you've played the game, boy. You've outwitted Mr. Big-shot Corrigan!"

She could have laughed at the crestfallen look on Roger Corrigan's face as he reached the end of the line, and still Kim had given no sign of recognising anybody.

"You've been wasting our time, Mr. Corrigan!" someone called. "That dog doesn't know anyone here."

"Maybe not," snapped Corrigan. "All the same, I'm not giving up!"

With a muttered word to his men the rancher went out, taking Kim with him. Before Jean could make any move Mrs. Clark called her and the other girl, Maisie, back to their work, and she had no chance to find out where Kim was being taken.

"I must find him—quickly!" she thought.

It was vital that she should secure the map hidden in his collar. There was still a chance that she might succeed in discovering the hidden title deeds and get safely away before Corrigan could stop her.

From somewhere in the township a mournful howl rose up and died away. She felt sure it was Kim—a prisoner somewhere.

At that moment Mrs. Clark bustled in with a can of coffee and some cakes.

"Sam Deedes at the livery stables is too busy to come along for his usual coffee, and I promised I'd send it across to him," she said. "Maybe one of you girls would take it."

"Sure! I'll go, Mrs. Clark," Jean offered at once, glad of the chance to slip away.

An alley at the back of the hotel led to the stables, and as she hurried along it, Jean heard that doggy howl again, much closer. Perhaps they had shut Kim up somewhere in the stables! She reached the stable yard, her heart thudding as she saw two of Corrigan's men lounging in the entrance.

She sauntered along with the coffee, pre-

tending to look for Sam Deedes, but contriving to glance into each shed and stable as she passed. And suddenly, as she peered through the barred window of a small shed in one corner, she saw what she was seeking.

There lay Kim, his head on his paws, no doubt pondering over all the strange and unlucky things that had happened to him to-day.

She gave a whispered call, and saw the joyful gleam that flashed into his eyes as he recognised her. Cautiously she signed to him to keep silent.

"Quiet, Kim! Quiet!"

The shed was not under observation from the yard entrance, and she flew to the door. But, as she feared, it was locked. She was so close to Kim, yet still could not rescue him!

And at that moment she heard a heavy footstep which she recognised as belonging to Sam Deedes, the owner of the stables.

Jean acted on impulse, as an idea sprang into her mind. Quick as a flash, she dropped the bag of cakes through the window, so that they fell inside the shed. Then, with a doleful look on her face, she turned to meet Sam Deedes.

"Gosh! I'm mighty sorry, Mr. Deedes!" she gasped. "I was looking at that big dog in the shed, and—and I kind of dropped your cakes through the window. Reckon that dog will gobble them up." He looks real fierce!"

Luckily Sam Deedes was a good-natured man. "That was careless of you, lassie, but don't worry," he said, fumbling for the bunch of keys at his belt. "That dog's gone off his appetite—won't eat a thing. Guess he is worrying about something or other. So I don't reckon he'll eat my cakes." I'll just open up the shed and fetch 'em out!"

It was the very thing Jean had been planning for. She placed the can of coffee on the ground, and watched Sam unlock the door. He stepped inside, closing it behind him; but no sooner had he done so than Jean pushed it open again softly, beckoning to Kim while Sam Deedes bent down in the dim shed to pick up the bag of cakes.

As silently as a shadow Kim darted out and joined her, and she noiselessly closed the door again. She pointed to a gap between two stables, and Kim darted there, out of sight.

It had been done so quickly and silently that Sam had no idea that the dog was no longer in the shed.

Picking up his cakes, he opened the door again, closed and locked it behind him.

"O.K., Mr. Deedes. I must be getting back to the Lucky Horseshoe," Jean mumbled.

She stepped between the stables, where there was a back entrance which led to the alley. Kim was waiting for her, quivering with excitement; the happiest dog alive now that he had found his mistress again.

"We must hurry, boy!" Jean gasped. Together they sped up the shadowy alley. Jean turned into an outhouse behind the hotel, with the Alsatian at her heels. Safely in there, she unbuckled his collar with trembling fingers.

She was cutting the leather with her pocket knife, to secure the map, when she heard faint shouts from the direction of the stables.

"Hey! The dog's gone! He's escaped from the shed!"

Already they had discovered that Kim was missing. They would begin a hue and cry at once, but—would they search this way? There might still be time, with the help of the map, to find the missing title deeds and get away with them.

But first she must hide Kim. She dared not risk taking the Alsatian into the hotel, with the search going on all around. Already she fancied that some of those angry shouts were nearer than before.

A large empty corn-bin stood close by. Jean lifted the lid, and turned to Kim.

"In here, boy!" she whispered. "I'll come and fetch you later. Jump in, and keep quiet!"

He obeyed at once, but there was a wistful look in his eyes as he glanced up at her before she lowered the lid, being careful to leave a space for air to get in.

Breathlessly Jean darted into the hotel, making her way up a back stairway to a quiet landing where she could examine the map.

She had already made a study of the layout of the rambling old building, and the rough map was plainer to her now. The room marked with a cross had the faint words "behind picture" scrawled against it.

"That room must be the back attic!" she told herself. These squiggly lines represent that little winding stairway leading up to it.

She could hear shouts, and hurrying footsteps all round the hotel now. She pictured faithful Kim, crouching silently in the corn-bin, waiting for her. She sped along a dim passage, up the winding stairs to the top corridor.

"It's the door at the end," she panted.

She raced to it, and then her face fell, for the door was locked. Again and again, in a frenzy of despair, she flung herself against it.

It didn't seem a very strong kind of lock. A little more weight behind Jean's efforts, and she might have burst it open. As it was, it proved just beyond her strength.

And then, from the yard behind the hotel, she heard a shout that drained the blood from her cheeks.

"Here he is, boss! I've found the dog—here, in the corn-bin!"

She heard sounds of a scuffle, a sharp yelp from Kim, more running footsteps. Jean's face whitened. But fearful that they might even yet secure the precious map as well, she slipped it between two loose boards in the wooden wall, at a spot where she could easily find it again.

"Say, look here! The dog's collar has gone!" shouted that harsh voice again. "The girl must have taken his collar off before she hid him in there."

"And I guess I know why!" That was Roger Corrigan's sneering tone. "That information we want was hidden in that collar, I reckon—that was why the girl was so mighty keen to get hold of the dog. She's got the clue, and she must be somewhere near. We'll find her. I've got the hotel surrounded."

"And what about the dog, boss?" a third voice demanded. "It has given us a whole heap of trouble."

"The dog?" Roger Corrigan's tone was harsh now. "I reckon the dog is no further use to us, now that the girl has got what she's after. One of you boys had better shoot the animal right away, before it makes more trouble for us."

Those harsh, pitiless words rang in Jean's ears like a knell of doom. These scoundrels were planning to shoot Kim—brave, faithful Kim, the best dog chum any girl had ever had. "They shan't—they mustn't!" she panted.

In that tense moment she forgot her disguise; she forgot her quest for the hidden

papers that would save Rainbow Ranch. All that mattered was Kim, and her one thought was to save him.

Like a whirlwind she rushed downstairs. Without thought of danger to herself, she raced into the yard.

She saw that Eddie Gibson had already produced a heavy Colt revolver, and was loading it. Kim sat forlornly in the centre of them, secured by a raw-hide rope.

"You shan't shoot Kim!" Jean cried, throwing her arms round her dog. "Let him go!"

For a moment there was an astonished silence. Then Roger Corrigan, with a mocking gesture, raised his white Stetson hat.

"Well, if it isn't Miss Jean Wayland!" he exclaimed. "Pleased to meet you, my dear!"

"I want my dog!" Jean flared out.

"And why not?" said Corrigan, with that false smile of his. "You want your dog. I want the map that was hidden in his collar. Hand that to me and you can have your dog. If not—well, it's just too bad for the dog!"

Jean caught her breath. So he was offering her this bitter choice—either to give him the papers that would ruin her father, or else lose Kim for ever. Her lips trembled at the thought.

The mocking look had come back to Corrigan's face now. Clearly he felt that he had the whip-hand over Jean.

"Take your time, my dear," he taunted her. "You can have to-night to think it over. We'll meet you here at nine to-morrow morning. If you hand over the clue, your dog will go back to you, safe and sound. If not, you will never see him alive again."

Jean's heart seemed to stop. She heard Kim's eager whimper; saw him straining in vain to reach her.

"Oh, Kim!" she whispered. She bent and pressed a little kiss on the sleek fur between his ears.

Then she turned away, her face pale and her eyes blurred with tears, and walked slowly back into the hotel.

A DOG IN A MILLION!



PERHAPS in all Canada there was not a more worried or bothered dog than Kim, as the hours of darkness were slowly on.

He had been taken to a house on the outskirts of the township, owned by one of Roger Corrigan's friends. He had been left in an empty room, tied

up with that hateful raw-hide rope, which even his powerful jaws could not sever.

So many strange, puzzling things had happened. But of one thing he was quite sure. These men who had shut him up were not friends; they were enemies. They were Jean's enemies. He had seen her defying them, sensed the hostility in their manner towards her.

He could not know the grim threat that hung over his head. But as the night wore on, a stern resolve grew in his doggie mind.

He would go back to Jean. They had been parted long enough. He would go back.

AT half-past eight next morning, Eddie Gibson unlocked the door.

"Come on out of it, boy," he grunted. "This is where Jean Wayland has got to make up her mind whether she wants you back or not, and—"

He broke off in surprise. Kim was lying on his side in a very odd attitude, his legs stuck out straight in front of him, looking utterly stiff and motionless.

"Hey, wake up!" called Eddie. Not a sign of life from the big Alsatian. A look of alarm on his face, Eddie stepped close to the dog, and lifted one paw; it fell back stiffly, lifelessly, to the floor.

"Say! Has the dog had a fit or something?" he muttered.

He hurried back to the door, calling the others. Roger Corrigan and several more of them came hurrying in, and an angry look came to Corrigan's face as he bent over Kim.

"Did one of you blockheads tie that noose too tight?" he exclaimed. "If anything has happened to the dog, then we're sunk. We can only bargain with the girl if we can show her the dog, alive and well."

"Looks as if he's passed right out, boss," Slim muttered.

Anxiously the rancher loosened the raw-hide noose and slipped it clear of Kim's neck. Still no sign of life in the dog; he lay stiff and silent. They gathered round him, peering uneasily. Behind them the door gaped wide open.

And suddenly Kim came to life. It was as if a thunderbolt had struck them!

Without the slightest warning the big Alsatian sprang up, knocking Corrigan back against one of the other men, so that both rolled headlong to the floor. Meanwhile, like a streak of light, Kim was out of the doorway, heading for the woods.

"After him!" shouted Roger Corrigan, purple with rage. "The pesky brute has tricked us. It was just put on!"

They rushed out on to the woodland trail, scattering this way and that in an effort to overtake the dog. No sooner had they passed than, from a hollow tree-trunk, Kim crept out cautiously, his tongue lolling out, his brown eyes gleam.

He had no intention of making for the woods! Having put his enemies off the scent he sped silently into the township, making for the hotel where he had last seen Jean.

Jean was standing in the back doorway, looking out on the yard. She had spent a sleepless night, and her face was pale and tense. She was still faced by the grim choice that Corrigan had put before her.

"I can't sacrifice Kim!" she told herself, for the hundredth time. "I can't! And yet I—"

Something warm touched her hand. Looking down, she had the most joyful surprise of her life. There was Kim himself, licking her hand. She rubbed her eyes, half afraid that she was dreaming.

"Kim! You've come back!" she breathed. "You have escaped—tricked them somehow!"

There was no time for welcoming, no time to give her dog chum more than the briefest of hugs.

Kim had escaped! No longer did that grim threat hang over his head. She was free, now, to continue her search for the missing documents.

"Oh, Kim boy, we must hurry!" she breathed.

She sped upstairs, the Alsatian at her heels. In a twinkling she had secured the map from its hiding-place in the upper corridor. The attic door was still locked, and once more she threw herself at it, striving to break the cheap lock which secured it.

Again her strength was not sufficient for the task. But this time help was at hand.

Kim had been watching her, head on one side, ears pricked up. And suddenly, realising what she was trying to do, he lent his weight of bone and muscle to the task. He crashed into the door beside her, and with a final creak the lock gave way.

"Good work, boy!" Jean panted.

She hurried into the attic, consulting the map. Yes, this was certainly the room indicated; on the map there was a cross marked in the far corner with the words "behind picture" scrawled against it.

"But there are no pictures here at all," she thought in sudden dismay.

In the far corner, however, she found a patch of lighter-coloured paint on the boarded wall, showing where a picture had hung. Prob-

ably it had been taken down since the map was drawn. And she found, too, a loose board, which she quickly removed.

"The deeds are here, boy!" she smiled breathlessly down at Kim. "We've found them—between us."

Kim gave a little whimper as he sensed Jean's pleasure. Then together they sped joyfully downstairs.

Their hardest task was yet to come, however, as Jean realised. They had to make their escape from Prairie Corner, and in face of Corrigan's opposition that might prove a perilous venture.

At first everything seemed to go almost too smoothly. There was no sign of Corrigan or his men around the stables. Jean, who had thrown off her disguise, was about to pay the stable charges, saddle Bess and start away with Kim racing beside her.

And then came what she had feared.

A hoarse shout, and the swift drumming of hoofs, echoed behind them. As she turned Bess down the lonely trail towards the new bridge over the river, Jean glanced over her shoulder and saw a bunch of horsemen galloping after her at reckless speed.

She urged Bess on. The mare responded, straining forward in a breathless gallop.

And then—disaster!

Bess caught her forefoot in a rut, stumbled and fell, throwing Jean to the ground. Neither Jean nor her mount was hurt; both scrambled up breathlessly. But already the pursuers were almost upon them, and Roger Corrigan's shout of triumph rang in Jean's ears.

It was then that Kim did the cleverest thing that Jean had ever known him to do.

Perhaps he was thinking of the chase two days ago, when Slim Barker had tried to rob him of the letters he was carrying. Or perhaps his thoughts were on the documents Jean had recently taken from their hiding-place.

However that may be, he realised that these men were after papers of some kind.

It so happened that a piece of waste-paper lay by the roadside. Kim picked it up. Then, in full view of the pursuers, he darted away from the trail, the paper gripped between his teeth, glancing over his shoulder at the horsemen.

Roger Corrigan flung out his arm, pointing.

"The dog's got those papers!" he shouted hoarsely. "The girl has given them to the dog, hoping he will get away with them. Never mind about the girl now. After the dog, all of you!"

Jean caught her breath as she watched.

"Oh, Kim, you've tricked them again!" she breathed. "You're luring them away from me!"

But there was a pang of fear at her heart as she mounted Bess again, and rode off towards the bridge. She could still watch the pursuit of Kim, and she saw that Corrigan had drawn his gun. She knew he would have no hesitation in shooting the dog to gain his purpose.

Kim was risking his life to save the title-deeds of Rainbow Ranch, which were safe inside Jean's saddle-bag.

She could see, now, that he was leading the pursuit towards the old Indian Bridge, already broken and weakened when Bess had tried to cross yesterday.

A shot rang out. But it could not have touched Kim, for still he sped on. He was bounding across the old bridge now, clearing the broken part with one mighty leap.

"The bridge won't stand the horses' weight!" yelled Corrigan. "Dismount, all of you, and get after him on foot. Use your guns if necessary. Hurry!"

They sprang from their saddles, leaving the horses and making a rush across the bridge. But their combined weight was more than the weakened structure could stand.

As Jean galloped for the other bridge, she

heard a distant splintering and crashing of wood. A laugh of breathless excitement broke from her as she saw the wealthy rancher and his men tumble headlong into the foaming stream, as the bridge gave way beneath them.

"You've beaten them, Kim!" she panted. "You've tricked them with a scrap of waste-paper!"

With a light heart she galloped over the bridge. Kim met her, with a joyful bark, on the farther side, and together they took the trail for Rainbow Ranch.

Mr. Wayland had arrived home, and was anxiously waiting for Jean. With him was a young trooper of the Canadian Mounted Police, who sometimes called at the ranch on his patrols. They listened in wonder to Jean's story.

It was worth all she had been through, to see her father's face light up at sight of those precious deeds. With them was a paper proving that it was Roger Corrigan who had bribed the thief to steal them.

"So that was Corrigan's game," Trooper Tex said slowly. "He'll have something to answer for in a court of law over this. And I can guess why he wanted your ranch, Mr. Wayland. The Saskoon River on your land. Corrigan could have dammed it, and cut off the water supply from all those ranches to the northward. They'd have been glad enough then to sell him their land at any price."

With a smile on his bronzed face, Tex turned and saluted Jean.

"You're a grand girl, Jean," he said.

"Gosh! Don't salute me!" Jean laughed happily. "It's Kim you've got to salute, Tex."

Laughingly, Tex faced Kim and once more raised his hand in salute. Kim had never been saluted before! He gave an eager little whimper, looking at Jean as if wondering what he ought to do. Then suddenly he sat back on his hind legs and held out a forepaw to Tex—ready to shake hands, as Jean had taught him to do.

THE END.

PRINCESS FOR A WEEK-END—that is the title of next Friday's grand long complete story.

THE MERRYMAKERS AT COLLEGE

(Continued from page 256.)

But when he reached the paddock he pulled up with an amazed gasp. So did Walpole. A gaily decorated sleigh stood at the end of the line—bearing the Roxburgh colours; and round it were grouped Sally & Co.

"They're—they're here!" stuttered Walpole.

"But you said you'd taken the bridge up—stranded them at Moose Gap!" growled Mr. Mullet.

Rex Walpole had no time to reply, because the starter was hustling them all to their sleighs for the line-up. Sally clambered up on to the roof of the shed for a grandstand view of the race. Her chums did the same.

Crack! went the starter's pistol. The line of sleighs leapt forward. The floodlights blazed brilliantly out.

Sally's pulses throbbed. Don and Walpole were driving neck to neck. They were already outstripping the others.

Johnny gave a sudden shout.

"Foul! Foul!"

Walpole had deliberately bumped Don. The sleighs collided. Don swayed perilously, as Walpole streaked forward and cut in on the inside of him. Don was forced now on to the steep-sloping bank.

The sleighs came whizzing round the track. Walpole was a length ahead, and gaining. Don was following desperately at a dangerous tilt on the banking. The first lap ended, and Walpole was still leading.

"Don! Don!" Sally & Co. shouted. "Come on, Don!"

With superb driving Don kept his position. The lights shone and sparkled on his runners. He was edging steadily nearer, nearer, to Walpole. When they finished the second lap he was almost level with Walpole again.

A gong boomed out to signal the third and last lap.

The chums held their breath, silent and tense, as they watched Don's sleigh curving the bend. He was gaining—gaining.

A sudden cheer went up from the crowd.

"He's done it! Hooray! Don's won!" Sally sang jubilantly.

And Don had, two lengths ahead of Walpole. Joyfully the Merry-makers waved their scarves and cheered him. The secret of the silver cup was theirs at last!

SALLY & CO. stood in the Turret Room of Noel Chalet, watching spellbound, while, with unsteady hands, Linda's uncle fumbled with the base of the silver cup.

"I cannot guess what the secret can be, Linda—if there is a secret," he was saying incredulously. "Before this cup was made the trophy of the annual sleigh race, it stood in this room year after year—here in the very room where Debroy painted the famous picture that I lent you. I assure you that I did not value the picture for this ornament that appeared in it—but only for the charming little lady who sat for the picture. Look again, Linda! Do you know who that lady was?"

Involuntarily Sally followed Linda's gaze to the little painting. It showed a sweet-faced girl sitting at a spinning-wheel, the sun trickling through the latticed window, and glistening upon the silver cup on the shelf above her, and the bright green necklace that hung at her throat.

"No, uncle," Linda answered, mystified. "Who was she?"

"She was your great-aunt my dear," he said softly. "My own mother——" Then, with a little cry, he broke off.

The base of the silver cup had come away in his hand. From it dropped a gorgeous emerald necklace. It was the original necklace of that worn by the girl in the picture!

"It belonged to my great-aunt!" Linda whispered in a daze. "But—but why, uncle, was it hidden in the cup?"

"I think"—he drew a deep breath—"I think your great-aunt hid it here, my dear, for safety. She wanted it to be handed down to a daughter of mine—or a niece, Linda, as I have no daughter. She was afraid that thieves were after it at the time her portrait was being painted. In those days, you see, these mountains were infested with bandits——"

"Walpole and Mullet's ancestors," guessed Johnny.

"It's going to be a wonderful Christmas present for you, Linda," smiled her uncle.

"But uncle," Linda began wistfully, "I wanted it to be a present for you——"

He laughed as he clasped the emeralds round her neck. The finest present he could have had, as he said over and over again, was the jolly Christmas he enjoyed with her friends, Sally & Co., the Merry-makers from Roxburgh College.

(End of this week's story.)

There will be another exciting complete story featuring Sally and her chums in next Friday's **GIRLS' CRYSTAL**. Be sure not to miss it!