

THE BEST PAPER FOR SCHOOL STORIES!

# The Schoolgirl's Own 2<sup>d</sup>



REMINDED OF  
HER GUILT!

(A dramatic moment in  
the splendid complete  
Morcove story within.)

The first story in a fine new series featuring Grace Garfield and Dolly Delane.

# THE LUCKIEST GIRL AT MORCOVE!

BY  
MARJORIE STANTON.



A fortune of five thousand pounds—for a schoolgirl! And no reason for the wonderful legacy given! No wonder Morcove was in an uproar of excitement when this happened to one of its girls! You will read all about it in this splendid complete story.

### Grace Garfield is "Wanted!"

"I'M going down to choose a book from the library," Polly Linton announced, jumping up from her seat at Study 12's table. "Anyone coming with me?"

"If you choose a book," said Betty, "you won't read it."

"I must do something," was Polly's desperate response. "This weather! And it will be a bit of excitement, anyhow, finding a book that I haven't read."

"Will it?" demurred Helen Craig. "I should like to find the book that you really have read—not skimmed!"

Polly tossed her head at that.

"Except for the dull bits, and the chapters with nothing in them, and perhaps the last twenty pages, I always read thoroughly—don't I, Paula? Hi, you I mean—wake up!"

And a hurred cushion landed plop! in Paula Creel's lap.

"Dwop it!" protested the elegant one. "As wegrads weading, Polly, by all means pprovide yourself with a book—an impwoving book—and wead. Then pewhaps I shall be allowed to west."

At this instant it was Paula's horror to find that her easy-chair was behaving in an alarming way. It heaved up at the back, and she thought she was going to be shot forward on to the floor. Then it sank back, and up went its front legs, so that she suddenly gazed at the ceiling.

"Heapl! Naomer, is that you, you wascal!"

It was. With a shriek of laughter, impish Naomer Nakara let the chair, behind which she was standing, fall crash! to its normal position, and now indeed Paula shot to the floor. She arose, the picture of offended dignity.

"Twoublesome cweature you are, Naomer!"

"Yes, Naomer, you should be more careful," said Polly severely, "and another time tip Paula out sideways, so that she doesn't claw the tablecloth and upset the ink. You might just wipe up that spilt ink, Paula!"

"Me?" yelled Paula.

And then, as Polly looked at her in a certain way:

"All wight, all wight—with pleasure! Yes, wather! If—er—if you'll kindly pprovide me with a duster, and—er— Oh, thanks—thanks, Dolly! So good of you!"

For Dolly Delane, true to her obliging disposition, was already blotting up the ink, which might have left a very disfiguring mark, only it had blobbed over just where a previous spill had occurred.

"Come on!" gaily proposed Polly, suddenly dashing to the door. "I shall want some help to bring back the Encyclopædia Britannica, in twenty vols."

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

It was a fine library that Morcove School boasted. Formed out of a spare classroom, its lofty walls were hidden by the hundreds and, perhaps, thousands of volumes which crammed the shelves. There were tables and chairs, so that a girl could fling open a book or magazine and sit for an odd half-hour, if she did not wish to take a volume away to her study.

But most of Morcove's reading was done either in study or, in summer weather, under the elms of the playing-fields.

On this soaking afternoon the chums of Study 12 reached the library to find it almost deserted. Here and there on the walls there hung the notice:

"SILENCE IS REQUESTED."

And there was silence, right enough. It was so intense that it made Naomer giggle aloud as she moved about with the rest on tip-toe.

Only two or three other girls were here. Grace Garfield was sitting at one of the tables, idly flicking over the pages of an illustrated weekly. Ella Elgood, another Fourth Form girl, could be seen prowling round in quest of a "real ripper."

"I think I shall borrow 'Drowsy's Recollections of Nothing,'" jested Polly, in such a serious tone that Paula was quite impressed.

"Bai Jove, Polly, deah, is that a new book? I love books of wecollections! Who was Dwowsy, howehav?"

"Not know Drowsy?" marvelled Polly. "He was the first man to suffer from loss of memory."

"Weally, bai Jove? But you are joking! 'Weollections of Nothing'—haw, haw, haw!"

"Hush! Don't you see the notice?" the madcap whispered sternly. "Look here, I've never sampled the upper shelves—have you, girls? Let's have that ladder—"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

"Hush!"

Grace Garfield looked up from her reading and grinned. The chums' exaggerated stealthiness in getting the library steps out of a corner was most amusing.

"Don't make a sound," breathed Polly. "I'll go up—"

"No, I will!"

"Ooo, let me!"

"I said," repeated Polly, "I will go up, and I'm going! Look out for dust, girls, when I pull out that great, hefty volume of 'What-is-it?' on the top shelf!"

Gingerly she climbed the steps, and then found a seat for herself at the top. Betty, one of those helping to steady the steps, resented this.

"Hurry up!"

"Hush!" requested Polly loudly. "You disturb Grace at her reading. It's nice and warm up here. I like it! Fine view—"

"Oh, get on, Polly!"

"Lot One!" said the madcap, standing up to reach a volume from the top shelf. "Gazetteer of Asia Minor for 1886. No, I think not," and she returned the book to its place. "Not on a wet afternoon! Hold tight, down there! I can see a beauty!"

Polly reached out another book, and she was beating the dust from its covers when it slipped from her hands.

This was unlucky for Paula, who suddenly received the dusty volume on the crown of her head, just as she was looking at herself in a pocket-mirror.

"Healp!"

"Hush!" pleaded Polly, smiling down from the top of the steps. "Do remember the notice on the walls, Paula! I say, you down there, would one of you like to read about the Geology of Central Europe? I don't see any story-books along these shelves. Sorry to keep you waiting!"

But Betty and the others were not kept waiting much longer.

The silence so earnestly requested by the printed notices was suddenly shattered violently by Polly's shrieking as she over-reached herself.

The ladder seemed so inclined to fall one way that the girls pushed it too much the other way. Amidst shrieks of laughter, Polly jumped—a fine, thudding jump—to the floor, whilst the ladder fell round, crash!

Paula danced about on one foot, holding the other.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Howwows, my focs! You silly lot of duffers!"

"Hush! Now you must go!" declared Polly sadly. "This larking about—it will not do."

Then, with the evident intention of leaving her

chums to put back the books and the ladder, she strolled across to Grace Garfield.

"Isn't this weather awful?" exclaimed that girl, glad enough to stop reading. "I came here—"

"For peace and quietness, of course," nodded Polly. "And it's too bad of Paula—for it's all Paula's doing—to make such a row. As for me, I don't see any book I like. Who's coming upstairs?"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

So off they went again, Paula limping.

"Dreadful, dreadful!" complained the oft-teased one. "First I'm dwaggged down here, then I'm dwaggged upstairs again. Weally, my life is one wound of twials!"

"Wet day!" was Polly's roguish excuse for the way they had been teasing the beloved duffer all the afternoon.

The chums could not forgive the "halfer" for being wet, and yet none could say that the bad weather was having a depressing effect upon their spirits.

On their way along the Fourth Form corridor to Study 12, Polly took a flying kick at an empty wastepaper-basket that happened to be stood outside one "den." A lively footer match developed, Paula Creel escaped into Study 12, and hastily closed the door, but the rest kept the fun going. Every time the "ball" went over the banisters at one end of the passage, or smote a certain door at the other end, it was "Goal!"

And presently there was quite the authentic number to each side, although the "field" was limited. The score was five-all when a much-battered basket was finally sat upon by Naomer and squashed flat.

Then some flushed faces were fanned, and many a mop of bobbed hair was smoothed to rights. Some of the girls departed, greatly exhilarated.

Betty looked at her wrist-watch.

"It's early yet; still, for a wet day, not too early for tea. Let's see what we can make up in the way of a special 'do.'"

"Bring your own mugs," was Polly's way of telling would-be members of the tea-party that all the rest would be provided, except possibly a few chairs, which would have to be fetched in from other studies.

Promptly, in Study 12, there ensued one of those lightning operations by which the den was often made to hold the best part of a dozen girls.

The larder was well stocked, and it was going to be a decent spread, that was evident, even before Paula went away, to return with an untouched cake of her own, bought yesterday at the Barncombe Creamery.

"My contribution, galls, if I may be allowed!" beamed the always polite duffer. "Bai Jove, flowers!"

For now Madge Minden was entering with a very charming vase of fresh-cut blooms for the centre.

It looked as if enough chairs were already set round the table. But when Polly counted up she shook her head, and so Dolly dashed off again, to return with two more chairs.

They were fitted in somehow. The lucky girls would be those who sat at the corners. The rest, apparently, were to be wedged shoulder to shoulder.

"That's the way!" approved Polly, whilst she jingled teaspoons into the saucers. "Hot water, and we're ready!"

It was Dolly who was off again, enamelled jug in hand. There was no keeping Dolly Delane from making herself useful. It was in the blood, for

she came of hard-working, thrifty farming folk, who had to work from morn to night to fight through hard times.

No fewer than twelve girls finally made up the tea-party, although they did not all sit at the table. Paula retained the easy-chair in a corner, and Naomer sat perched on one elbow-rest of that chair, a constant peril to the elegant one.

Betty poured out, and a busy time it was for her. She was used to it by now, however, managing to look after the cups and yet take part in all the gossip. Out-of-doors the wind and rain went on doing their worst, but Study 12 was now quite indifferent.

Then suddenly the door was tapped and opened. Ellen, most popular of all the Morcove parlour-maids, stood revealed.

"If you please," said Ellen, whilst she looked amused at the big crowd which packed the study, "I have been sent to find Grace Garfield."

"Me?" came from that girl, setting down her cup with a little crash. "What for?"

"Aha, what have you been doing now, Grace?" chuckled Polly. "Own up! You're going to catch it! Expulsion for you!"

"There's a gentleman with Miss Somerfield, and he's come about you, miss."

"About me, Ellen? What on earth—" cried Grace bewilderedly, pushing back her chair and jumping up. "Who is he? What's he like? It can't be my father!"

"No, miss; he's a Mr. Dawson, from London, for I took in his card. A lawyer, I fancy."

"Oh!"

"Worse and worse!" remarked Polly. "Libel action! But we'll bail you out, Grace!"

"Finish your cream bun before you go," advised Tess Trelawney, "just to calm your nerves."

But Grace decided that the best way to get over the excitement was to hurry down and see all about it.

"Mr. Dawson, from London? Never heard of him!" she was exclaiming to herself, as she sped for the stairs, Ellen following. "Whatever should a lawyer from London want with me? Why—why has he come to Morcove School, asking for me on a day like this?"

#### Lucky Girl!

MR. DAWSON, the lawyer, sat taking tea and chatting with the headmistress of Morcove School in that lady's drawing-room.

Outside, on the rain-washed gravel, stood the car which had brought this gentleman upon his strange mission on such a day of sousing rain.

"Thank you!" he said, returning his empty cup to the tray. "That was very acceptable at my journey's end."

"How good it was of you to come, instead of writing!" was Miss Somerfield's cordial remark. "You must have had a rough journey."

"I did not like to say it all by letter," the lawyer explained, resuming his seat. "The more so as I myself am a good deal in the dark, and a letter would have been even more puzzling to your scholar than anything I may be able to tell her."

"She should be here by now," the headmistress said, observing how he looked at the clock, as if pressed for time. "Such a wet afternoon, she is bound to be somewhere about the schoolhouse, and— Yes, come in, Grace Garfield!"

Next second mystified Grace was being introduced to the lawyer. She liked him straight away—a middle-aged, grey-haired, portly gentleman, with a very kind and courtly manner.

"Well, Grace," smiled Miss Somerfield, enjoying

the girl's bewilderment, "you wonder what this means? The gentleman himself will tell you, but first let me say that I think you are a most fortunate girl!"

Grace's brows went higher than ever. Her heart fluttered. Whatever was coming was something good—no doubt about that. But what on earth could it be?

"As a lawyer in London, I have a client, at present abroad," Mr. Dawson began genially. "He is a Mr. Cranford, a man who has got on wonderfully, acquiring quite a big fortune in the short space of a single year. I am instructed by him to make you a certain gift, young lady. By the way, do you know anything of this Mr. Cranford or his family?"



#### A SURPRISE FOR GRACE GARFIELD.

"Your people may be very well-off," said the lawyer. "Even so, I expect that a little fortune of five thousand pounds will be very useful to you, eh?"

"I—I'm afraid I don't," was Grace's stammered answer. "A gift for me, sir?"

"And one, I imagine, that you will not despise," the lawyer rejoined. "I don't know if your people are in very good circumstances, my girl. They may even be very well-off. Even so, I expect that a little fortune of five thousand pounds, all to yourself, when you come of age, will be useful—eh?"

Grace could not speak. She could hardly breathe. The room seemed to heave around her as if it were floating in a wild sea.

Five thousand pounds, for herself, when she came of age!

It was too good to be true!

What was she to Mr. Cranford and his people that he should confer this tremendous gift upon her? No relation, that was certain.

"You find it hard to believe, is that it?" smiled the lawyer. "Your headmistress and I felt sure it would be like this"

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed Miss Somerfield. "When Mr. Dawson explained the nature of his errand, Grace, I was completely astounded. But I do congratulate you, Grace. The whole school will be overjoyed at your good fortune."

Grace, after running a tongue-tip round her dry lips, could speak at last breathlessly:

"But—but why? Why is it, sir?"

"Then the lawyer gave a shrug.

"Ah, there you've got me, young lady! I have already told Miss Somerfield that I know nothing about the reason for this handsome gift. My instructions so far have been simply these—to go down to Moreove School, North Devon, and make known to a scholar named Grace Garfield that she should have this nice little fortune for herself."

"Then my father and mother don't know yet!"

"Not yet," agreed the lawyer. "How could they know in advance of you? Mr. Cranford said nothing about your people, and so I don't even know where they live. I shall have to get you to tell me—"

"Yes, sir, and will you let them know—"

"Oh, certainly!" Mr. Dawson said emphatically. "I will take their address and try to see them to-morrow. I wonder if they will be able to suggest why you have come into this money!"

And Grace Garfield echoed blankly:

"I wonder!"

She added, after a little silence of enduring bewilderment:

"I don't believe they will, sir. I don't believe they will know anything at all about it. Cranford? We've no relations or friends of that name, I am positive. Besides, why is the money for me, and not for dad and mother?"

"Extraordinary thing, to be sure!" was Miss Somerfield's astounded remark. "But your parents, Grace, will be just as pleased as if the money had come to them."

"Oh, yes!" Grace exclaimed fervently. "It's almost the same, isn't it? I mean to say, I shall let them have all they want. Not that my people are badly off; still, it will be nice to help them and—all that."

"Quite!" nodded the lawyer, entirely pleased with Grace's evident desire to make others happy with the money. "That's the spirit! Well, now, to come to the point. The fortune is yours at this moment, which means that you have an income of two hundred and fifty a year in your own right. Five pounds a week! Not bad for a girl still in her teens—eh?"

Grace suddenly laughed.

"Oh, it's just too absurd, sir! I mean to say— But, there, if you have it all in writing from Mr. Cranford to do this for me, what is there for me to do?"

"What, indeed," affably answered the lawyer, whilst he bestowed a fatherly pat of the hand, "except to be a good girl with the money, my dear, enjoy your good fortune, as you have the right to do, and always have a thought for others?"

"As I am sure Grace will not fail to do!" rejoined Miss Somerfield, her comely face wreathed in smiles.

The talk did not end there. But Grace, although she was with her headmistress and the lawyer for another twenty minutes, felt just as bemused as ever when at last she was free to go.

A windfall of five thousand pounds!

She simply could not get over the thrilling surprise. Yet, surprise or not, it was evidently quite authentic. The lawyer had acted on explicit, if strange, instructions. In actual writing he had

been authorised to find Grace Garfield, of Moreove School. That ruled out the possibility of any other Grace Garfield being intended.

It was not as if the lawyer had been asked to search for a girl of that name as a missing next of kin.

For some mysterious reason, the donor of the fortune had chosen to endow Grace Garfield, of Moreove School, with enough money to make her comfortable for life!

#### What the Form Said

SHE roamed about downstairs in a dream.

Five thousand pounds!

What stupendous luck for her, the daughter of parents who were not too well-off! The good she could do with the money, the glorious time she could have—at once, too! The income would be hers to spend, even whilst she was still a school-girl!

At last, with a sudden radiant smile, she thought she had better go upstairs and tell the others.

But when she got to the Fourth Form corridor she was seized with hesitation. The windfall was more than she could talk about at present. She was so excited she just couldn't stand the extra excitement of telling her chums. By-and-bye she would tell them—quietly.

Of a sudden, however, Dolly Delane chanced to come running out of Study 12, and at sight of Grace there was a jocular greeting:

"Hullo! How did you get on with the lawyer?" Grace laughed nervously. Dolly was in the usual hurry, and was ready to pass on.

"I am only going to get a letter off for home, Grace; then I'm coming back to Study 12. Shall you be there?"

"Yes—no—at least— I say, Dolly! What do you think? I—I've come into a lot of money!" Grace found herself blurting out, with a rather foolish grin.

"You have!" gasped Dolly. "You mean to say that that is what the lawyer came about! Well, I'm bothered! But, Grace, how awfully jolly for you! How much money, may I ask?"

"Oh—er—five thousand pounds!"

Dolly nearly swooned.

"Five—thous—and—pounds!" She brought it out like one tremendous word. "Good gracious, but that's—that's more money than you'll ever know what to do with! It's enormous!"

"It is rather, isn't it?" Grace returned, still smiling twitchily. "Only, I—I'd rather not talk about it at present. I feel—well, you know!"

"I should just think you do!" astounded Dolly said, passing into the study which Grace had been going to enter.

For these two girls shared a "den" between them.

Dolly stepped to her side of the table, slapped out a writing-pad, sat down, and then jumped up again. She laughed.

"No, I can't tackle that letter home now, Grace. What you have said has—oh, it's such a tremendous surprise! Besides, I expect you want to sit down and write to your people, and you don't want me on hand at a time like this."

"That's all right, Dolly," came in a half-attentive manner from the fortunate girl. "Don't start thinking that I shall be any different, simply because—"

"Grace, just as if—"

And Dolly was gone, her prancing exit from the study rather suggesting that she was going to let

excitement carry her straight to Betty & Co. with the sensational news.

Nor had lucky Grace Garfield enjoyed a couple of minutes of solitude before there was a rush of steps along the corridor, and then her door flew open. It banged round against the wall, and a whole crowd of girls fairly surged in. They all spoke at once—or, rather, shouted:

"Grace! You lucky girl!"

"Yes, wather! Good gwacious, Gwace, you're wick—frightfully wick for a geal to be!"

"Tell us all about it, Grace! Come on!"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

"You've got to tell us exactly what the lawyer said—every word!" was Polly's joyous command. "Five thousand pounds, did Dolly say? Not five thousand, Grace!"

"Yes!"

"My word, don't I wish I were you!" cried Tess. "Why haven't I some rich old uncle or aunt to make over a fortune to me?"

"But it's nothing like that," Grace said, shaking her head and smiling. "That's what I myself can't get over. Until an hour ago I had never even heard of the person who has given me all this money. He's no relation. I don't in the least understand the gift!"

"But the lawyer—"

"He doesn't know, either!"

"Bai Jove! Geals, geals, this is weally too remarkable—what? Gwace comes into a pwodigious fowtune without knowing the weason why!"

An astounded silence was ended at last by one and another of the girls breaking into laughter.

"But what does it matter, anyhow, Grace? You've got the money, and that's good enough!"

"Yes, wather! And don't you start wowwyng, Gwace!"

"Just take what comes, I would," said Tess, whilst she sat doing a lightning sketch of Grace on Dolly's writing-pad. "Keep still, Grace; I want to catch that expression. Study of a girl just come into a fortune!"

"Then next you can do me," said Polly, with mock dolefulness. She made her face as long as possible. "Study of a girl who has not come into a fortune—although she's a most deserving case. I'm sure!"

In a few minutes the news was all over the school. It had spread like wildfire. Grace began to feel her shoulders smarting with the number of congratulatory slaps they received. There was no ill-natured envy. She was deemed to be just as well entitled to such a slice of luck as any other girl. Why not?

Even if Grace Garfield had not always been as nice a girl as she was to-day, the school had no desire to harp on that. The Form could say that she had been playing the game in real earnest for a long time now. So three cheers for her in her enjoyment of a bit of luck which it would have been malicious to begrudge her!

Just in time for the evening post, Grace got a few minutes for letter-writing. The girls recognised her eagerness to write home about it all. But, whilst they left her alone for the time being, they still discussed the windfall amongst themselves. It was the one topic in all the studies.

At last Grace thumped a stamp on to her gummed-up envelope, and raced downstairs to shoot the letter into the box. She took it for granted that the lawyer would have seen her parents by the time they got her letter, and so she had asked them to let her know at once—"at once" in italics—if they knew what it all meant.

And if they didn't—then what?

That was the question which kept her half amused and half frightened.

It was funny to be coming into all this money without knowing the reason why. At the same time, it was disquieting—kept one a bit nervous. Supposing—supposing some mistake was being made, after all?

But how could there have been any mistake? Hadn't she argued that out, to her own satisfaction, within five minutes of seeing the lawyer?

In all the school was there a scholar or mistress who had not advised her to stop puzzling and wondering, and to leave others to find out—if they could!

Grace raced upstairs again, and scampered along the Fourth Form corridor, for she was due at Study 12. At least, they had asked her to come along as soon as she was free. Yet now, as she opened the door, she was met with the general cry:

"Don't come in for a bit, Grace! We shan't be long!"

What did this mean? Some bit of pleasant nonsense, no doubt, arising out of a desire to felicitate her. She laughed as she stepped back, pulling the door shut.

Then Cora Grandways came round the corner from her study.

"Hullo, Grace! Oh, I say, I want to speak to you! Come round into my den, won't you? I'm all by myself. Judy's downstairs."

"I don't think I'll come now," Grace declined gently.

She disliked Cora, as did the rest of the Form, but she did not want to be too curt. The good fortune had naturally made her feel magnanimous.

"I say, though, Grace! Come to tea to-morrow afternoon, will you?"

"I don't think so, thanks!"

"I wish you would!" wheedled Cora, following Grace into that girl's study. "How nice it must be for you, Grace, having money of your own all at once! I'd quite envy you, only, of course, my people are so well-off I really don't need a wind-fall. How soon do you expect to be given an allowance, Grace? Can I lend you a pound or two to go on with?"

"Oh, I've already had five pounds! The lawyer—"

"Splendid! Grace, you ought to let me run you into Barncombe to-morrow, after school. There are one or two decent shops—"

"But I don't know that I want anything," was the careless remark that made Cora stare.

"Not want to treat yourself out of that first five?"

"No, not particularly. And now I must go. They're calling out for me in Study 12."

Cora was looking put out as her schoolfellow left her. She was sorry to find that the sudden wind-fall had not sent Grace off her head. Cora was no better off for friends these days than she had been for a long while.

When she heard about the fortune she had thought:

"Here's my chance! Grace, of all girls—Grace Garfield, who used to be chummy with me at one time! I expect she'll start flinging herself about now she's got money. I must get after her again now!"

At present, however, Cora's overtures were being coldly met. It annoyed her to see Grace responding so eagerly to Study 12's friendly hail.

"Yes, come in, Grace!" said the Form captain gaily. "We have been having a bit of an argument,

and are still undecided. We feel we ought to do something in celebration. After all, you are in our Form!"

"Yes, wather!"

"On the other hand," stated Betty, "we don't want it to seem as if we are making a sudden fuss of you, Grace, just because you have come into this money."

"Just as if—I!" laughed Grace. "The school knows you better than to think anything like that. But, look here, I'm in a fix, too."

"How?"

"I want to celebrate, yet I don't want it to appear as if I were—well, starting to swank! You girls won't think I am showing off if I—if I try to arrange something for the whole Form?"

"A sort of tea?" conjectured Polly.

"Or supper," answered Grace.

"Suppah, bai Jove! Geals, geals—"

"Ooo, yes; queek—queek!"

Some of them laughed at Naomer's excitable cry.

"Naomer thinks it can be held to-night," said Madge, running a loving hand over the dusky one's head. "Funny little thing!"

"I wonder," exclaimed Grace, rather nervously—

"I wonder if I could do this? Ask for a half-holiday for the Form, so that we can all enjoy ourselves? Miss Somerfield might—"

"She will, for certain, Grace!"

"Yes, wather! Hooway! Geals, geals—"

"I'll try her, anyhow," decided Grace. "She was so awfully pleased herself over my good luck, she'll quite understand."

Thereupon the fortunate girl went off to put in



### CONGRATS FROM THE FORM!

Suddenly the door swung open, and a crowd of girls surged in. "Grace, you lucky girl!" they cried.

her plea for the special holiday, leaving behind a very excited batch of girls.

Miss Somerfield acted up to her reputation for being indulgent when the circumstances warranted it.

"Certainly, Grace!" she granted the favour promptly. "In fact, even if you had not asked, I would have done something of the sort. It is quite usual for a girl who has been given cause for great happiness to be allowed to let others share in it. When would you like to have the half-day off—to-morrow?"

"May I ask the others about that?" suggested Grace. "I—I want it to be as best pleases them."

"Very well!"

So Grace sped back to Study 12 with the grand news. Loud cheers brought the rest of the Form upon the scene, so that there was an overflow crowd in the corridor. The question as to which day it should be was eagerly debated. Finally, it was resolved to have the following Friday afternoon. This would allow two or three days for the weather to improve.

On the way upstairs to bed that night, lucky Grace drew Dolly Delane aside for a bit of confidential talk.

"I want your help, Dolly, over next Friday's 'do,'" Grace pleaded, glad to have such a shrewd, bustling, practical girl as Dolly for her study-mate.

"My idea is to have a sort of evening spread—"

"In the music-room, do you mean?" nodded Dolly, with great enthusiasm. "We can get the loan of it, of course."

"Yes," said Grace. "And, as the Form will sort of be my guests, I can't exactly ask them to prepare for their own treat. But you—"

"Come to me for any help, Grace. I see what you want to do, and I'll go at it with you. We'll make it a really jolly evening for the Form!"

"It's good of you, Dolly."

"Rubbish!"

"Oh, but it is! There'll be a lot to arrange, I'm sure, and I'm not much use at organising. But I knew, if I asked you, it would be all right."

"Well, we share the same study, so it rather seems as if I ought to be the one, doesn't it?"

Grace felt very fond of Dolly just then. It was so perfectly evident that "Dolly the Doormat" had no thought of toadying to her—Grace—on account of the sudden windfall. No one who knew Dolly's disposition could ever suspect such a thing.

It was simply her obliging disposition asserting itself again. If Grace, instead of being raised up by fortune, had been suddenly dashed down by misfortune, Dolly would have been even more eager to stand by her.

After lights out, and when at last the chatter had died down into restful silence, Grace guessed that her study-mate was even then devising and planning. And she was right.

With her head down to the pillow, homely Dolly was joyfully settling all details in that capable mind of hers. And was there at any moment an envious thought about the windfall?

Not one!

Dolly was the last girl in the world to wish that she and not Grace could have come into such a lot of money.

She was never going to wonder bitterly why such luck should have come just to one girl—and for no known reason!

She was only going to be as good a chum as possible to that girl now, as she had been before ever the luck came!

## Dolly in Her Element!

**A**FTER morning school next day, Grace and Dolly went off by cycle to Barncombe, alone together.

The Form turned a blind eye to this excursion, knowing what it meant!

For a certainty, the two girls had gone into town to make preliminary arrangements with the Barncombe Creamery for next Friday evening.

The school's midday dinner was over by the time Grace and Dolly returned, but this did not matter, as they had lunched at the Creamery. They were taking off their outdoor things in the coat-lobby when the telephone rang, and suddenly Grace realised that she was wanted. For she heard the maid at the 'phone say: "Grace Garfield? Hold on, please, and I will find her!"

Grace rushed round to the instrument.

"Hullo! Hullo! Oh, is that you, dad?"

"Yes, Grace!" came her father's hearty voice from a hundred miles away. "I say, I've got your letter, and I've seen Mr. Dawson! He's just gone. What an amazing thing, Grace!"

"Isn't it, dad! I still can't believe it is true! But how can there have been any mistake?" was Grace's excitable cry. "What do you make of it, dad?"

Then Mr. Garfield said just what his lucky laughter had expected. He and Mrs. Garfield were at their wits' end to know the reason why Grace should have come in for the five thousand pounds.

They had never heard of anybody of the name of Cranford.

"And it seems to me, Grace," her father spoke on through the telephone, "Mr. Cranford has never seen or heard of me and your mother. He seems only to have known of you at Morcov School."

"Yes, dad, that's the extraordinary part about it. That's what makes it so very strange. But I suppose it's all right?"

Her father laughed back over the 'phone.

"It must be all right, Grace, and don't you spoil it all by fretting! All the same, I have told the lawyer we simply must know why the money has been bestowed upon you. He is going to cable to Mr. Cranford, in New York."

"Oh, good!" Grace exclaimed at her end of the wire. "And let me know, won't you, dad, as soon as you hear? I am so mystified!"

Her father answered that she could rely upon his ringing her up as soon as he knew. He added that he and Mrs. Garfield wanted to come to the school, but for a day or two, at any rate, they were absolutely prevented. The glad news had come at a time when they could not possibly get away.

Then the time limit for the trunk call expired, and Grace was compelled to return the receiver to its hook.

"So dad thinks it all right, anyhow, and that's good enough!" she said to herself blithely. "I simply won't fidget any more. It would be too silly!"

She told Dolly and the others the gist of what had passed over the 'phone. Like Grace herself, they all looked forward to the time when an explanation should be forthcoming from the mysterious donor of the gift. Perhaps they would know by Friday!

Meantime, lucky Grace and her study-mate went ahead with their preparations for the festive evening.

The actual "spread" was a matter for the famous Creamery to handle. After one or two calls at the shop, both girls could rest assured that the managers quite understood how things were to



**IF SHE BUT KNEW!** "You have managed the arrangements for my party so well," Grace Garfield said. "I was just thinking what a success you'd be as a rich girl, Dolly!" Little did Grace realise then the significance of her words!

be done. It was to be a really nice repast, without ostentation.

But there were certain details about which some of the other girls had to be consulted as the time drew nigh, and Betty & Co. did not fail to notice how nicely Grace herself approached them on these matters.

Never once did she show herself to be getting the least bit high and mighty. Coming into money had not spoiled Grace, that was certain.

"Madge, you won't mind playing on Friday evening, if we feel like some singing and dancing?" Grace asked the music-mad member of the Fourth.

"If you would rather not, just say so!"

"Silly! Of course I'll love to play any old tunes you like!"

"Thanks! I thought I'd ask in advance," Grace explained, with charming delicacy. "In case you should feel a bit off fox-trots. I could get gramophone records, but the girls would much rather have you at the piano."

And then there was the little matter of the "souvenir of the evening." Grace would never have thought of this, but Dolly suggested it, like she was suggesting so much else. Only, Dolly felt that Grace had better be the one to approach Tess, the artist. So Grace sought out Tess.

"Er—about Friday evening, Tess," the lucky scholar began diffidently, when she had caught Tess Trelawney by herself. "It would be rather nice—I mean, the girls might like it—if we could have a sort of souvenir card."

"Menu and programme combined, so to speak? I know the thing," smiled Tess. "Comic or—decorative?"

"Oh, comic, I suppose! I leave it to you."



So Tess went to work, more or less in secret. She had to have the "menu" confided to her, and we shall not say whether she dropped a hint to some of the other girls that there were to be such items as chicken jelly, fruit salad, and ice cream!

It was Friday dinner-time when Tess whisked into Grace's and Dolly's study to show the finished card. Dolly had cycled into Barncombe to see about one or two things. Grace took a look at the card, then went off into shrieks of laughter.

"Tess! Oh, how very good! It must have taken you ages!"

"Will it do, Grace? If so, my idea is to print it off on the cyclostyle straight away," said Tess, receiving back the artistic card. "Haven't offended you?"

This was an allusion to Tess' tiny picture of Grace herself, perched on heaps of sacks, labelled £ s. d. If Grace was going to be offended—but, of course, she was only amused—there were other girls who would feel wrathful when they saw the card.

Paula Creel had been vignotted—Paula Creel to the life, screwing up her lips as if she wished she could kiss her pretty self in the mirror she was consulting. There was Naomer, for another, eating a monster ice with a monster spoon. Madge, at the piano, had notes of music floating out of her dark head.

Dolly came into the study just before two o'clock, bringing cut flowers with her.

"Flowers, Dolly!"

"I thought they would be nice on the table."

"You are the one for thinking of things. Flowers never entered my head!" Grace owned, taking up one of the bunches of fresh-cut blooms. "Lovely! And flowers don't—don't look like swank, do they?"

"Oh, no!" was Dolly's emphatic answer. "But I've spent all the money you gave me, Grace, except a shilling."

"That's quite all right, dear."

"I made a point of coming back with at least a shilling," Dolly said, taking off her hat. "Never spend your last shilling, mother always says."

She touched her hair to rights, then came out of a happy muse to find Grace gazing at her.

"Well?"

"I was thinking, Dolly. The way you have been arranging everything for me, planning so nicely, what a success you would be as a rich girl!"

Dolly laughed.

"I! I'd like to see myself! You are much more used to money than I am, Grace. My people are really poor, as you know."

"Yet you understand much better than I how to do things the right way with money," insisted Grace admiringly. "But for you, Dolly, I'd have been a laughing-stock by now."

"Oh, no!" dissented Dolly strenuously. "You're all right. They all say so."

She stepped to the window.

"Well, we've had good luck with the weather, Grace! It should be a splendid hockey match this afternoon."

For the girls had decided to make that a feature of the special holiday. Excepting Cora Grandways, who was a law unto herself, none wanted to frivel away the day. It had been agreed that an afternoon on the games-field would be a nice preliminary to the evening's gaiety. So the Fourth Form team had challenged the Fifth, with the result that the higher Form had also obtained a half-day off, anyhow!

"You are not forgetting, Grace, that the Creamery things arrive any time this afternoon?"

went on Dolly. "As soon as they come, shall I let you know on the field?"

"But I can trust you to see to everything, Dolly. I was relying upon you when I said I would play in the match."

"If you'd really like me to—to do everything, Grace, of course I will! Only, I—I'm not taking too much upon myself, am I?"

Grace conferred a chummy pat as she went by her study-mate to the door.

"I'll tell you when you are, Dolly. You do as you think best, and it will be all right."

Such a harmonious arrangement suited both girls admirably. Grace was on the field at the appointed time, with the rest of the team, whilst Dolly could revel in all the activities that appealed to her domesticated nature.

She was like a little housewife, taking in all the things from the roundsman and checking the invoice. Then, rejoicing in the reliance placed upon her by Grace, she set about arranging the white-clothed tables in the music-room.

Dear to the heart of homely Dolly was a task of this sort. She felt just as happy, for the time being, as if she herself were the girl who had come into a fortune. She took as much pains to make the tables look nice as she would have done had she been giving the "spread."

Ellen, the parlourmaid, helped, but even Ellen was not allowed to put the finishing touches. It was Dolly who had to give every glass a special polish; it was she who arranged the flowers and other decorations. As for Ellen, she laughed at being asked to do no more than bring in a few extra chairs and forms.

"Well, miss, I do think you have made it all look lovely!" Ellen exclaimed towards the end of the afternoon.

"You think it is all right, Ellen?"

"Perfect, miss! I can't remember such a wonderful 'do' before!"

Dolly, standing away from the tables, looked more critical than satisfied, even now. She went to one table, and shifted a bowl of flowers an inch.

"That's better! Well, Ellen, I don't think you need stay any longer, thanks ever so! You'll be on hand this evening? Thanks!"

Shortly after this the hockeyists came charging in from the field, and Dolly knew at once that her Form had won. Still in the music-room, adding little touches to the festive scene, she heard Polly and others go storming up to the studies, full of proud delight. They had whacked the Fifth by three goals to two!

Then there came a quick, light step towards the music-room doorway, and Grace entered.

"Well, Dolly, how goes it? Oh, I say!"

"Is it—all right?" asked Dolly, with genuine anxiety.

"It's just wonderful! How on earth did you manage, all alone, for so many? I didn't realise what labour it meant, Dolly!"

"Ellen has helped. By the way, she will be here to-night to help serve round. You'd like her to come?"

"I—I hadn't thought of that, either. But, of course, that will be awfully nice!" was Grace's impressed remark. She did a wander round. "You have been a sport, Dolly!"

"I thought you'd like to keep this seat for Miss Redgrave, in case she looks in?"

"Quite right, Dolly. Come to think of it, she's bound to pay us a visit. How you do think of things! And these tickets, to show each girl where to sit—"

"It saves a lot of bother when the time comes."

"Rather! Where are you sitting, Dolly?"

"Oh, I— Let me see—er— Yes, I'm here,"

Dolly said, finding her own place in a very out-of-the-way corner.

"That won't do!" objected Grace firmly. "Next to me, Dolly!"

"But if I sit in this corner, I can jump up to—"

"You'll sit next to me! I am not going to have you—"

There was a sudden interruption. Ellen, the parlourmaid, came at a rush to the doorway, panting:

"Grace Garfield—the telephone, miss! You're wanted on the 'phone. I think it's your father, miss."

"Oh!"

The moment, then, had come at last—the thrilling moment when the mystery about the windfall was to be explained! In time for the evening's festivities! What could be better?

So Grace was thinking joyfully as she sped down to the hall and darted to the 'phone.

"There? There? Yes, dad, it's me—Grace!" The lapse in grammar could be excused, no doubt, when she was so excited. "Have you heard anything?"

"Just got the whole story from the lawyer. He has been on the 'phone with Mr. Cranford, in New York. Mr. Cranford rang up London."

"Just fancy! And what is the explanation, dad?"

"You ought to have guessed, my dear!" came the father's hearty response over the wire. "You have come into all that money, Grace, simply because you once saved a girl's life!"

The receiver of the telephone almost fell from Grace's nerveless hand.

Saved a girl's life? When—when had she done anything of the kind? Never! One could not do a thing like that and forget it.

"What—what do you mean, dad?" she faltered back, with an awful sinking of the heart. "Who—who was the girl?"

"I quite understand your asking that," answered Mr. Garfield. "For I'm told that the girl did not give you her name at the time. She is Daphne Cranford, Mr. Cranford's only daughter!"

#### The Reason Why.

**A** MISTAKE—some dreadful mistake, after all! That was the appalling conviction in Grace's mind now.

Still connected with her father, on the 'phone, she had to fight hard to save herself from going to pieces utterly. He could not see her, of course; but her very voice would tell him, unless she were very careful, that the money should not have come to her!

"Dad, I— Say that again, will you, please?"

"You must remember, Grace; but I expect it means that you have been too modest about what you did," came her father's chuckling voice. "It appears that some time back, near Morcove, you saved Daphne Cranford from being knocked down and trampled upon by a runaway farm-horse. It was on a lonely road. Are you there, Grace? Now do you remember?"

Yes, she remembered now! It had all come back to her as vividly as if it had happened only yesterday. She and another girl—Dolly Delane—had been out for a ramble together, when the thrilling scare had come about. But it was Dolly who had saved the girl—a complete stranger to them: a

poorly dressed girl. It was Dolly, not she—Grace—who had performed the actual deed of heroism.

"You were with one of your schoolfellows, Grace—"

"Yes, dad, I remember now!"

"Ah, that's better!" laughed back Mr. Garfield. "Well, it's like this. The girl you saved—her people were quite poor at the time. But lately they have become very wealthy, and Daphne has told her father what you did for her that time. So, Grace, no wonder he has bestowed that little fortune upon you!"

"But—but—"

"The girl you saved asked for your name, and that of your chum, after the scare, didn't she? And she has always remembered your name—Grace Garfield, Morcove School. That's all the information she could give her father—you see?"

All a mistake, it was certain now! That was what Grace saw, quite clearly. The rescued girl, in her upset state after the rescue, had confused the two names!

There was the simple, but fatal, explanation of the awful mistake. Daphne Cranford had innocently given her father, not the name of her actual rescuer, but the name of the girl who had been a mere onlooker at the rescue!

It was not that Grace, at the time, had feared to lend a hand. There had really been no chance for her to do anything. It had fallen to Dolly to act so promptly and heroically, certainly saving the girl from injury, if not death!

Again, in Grace's hearing, came her father's jovial voice through the telephone.

"Mother and I had hoped to come and see you before this, Grace. But one of the maids has got whooping cough. We mustn't bring it to the school! Going on all right, are you?"

"Yes, dad, thanks. I—I—"

"I've got the Cranfords' address in New York. I'm writing, and you must write, too, Grace. Pennsylvania Hotel—remember that? Well, good-bye—"

"Good-bye, dad! But—dad!"

Too late. The trunk call had run out; the line was disconnected.

She hung up the receiver, then stood utterly dazed by the blow that her father's words had given.

It was all a mistake after all!

She had been going to tell her father so, but there had not been time. Dolly, though—Dolly, to whom the money was rightfully due—she was here in the school. She could be told at once, and she must be! It was only fair.

For a moment, poor Grace could do nothing. Of course, it would be wonderful for Dolly, one of the best and most deserving always! Five thousand pounds for Dolly, the daughter of really poor, struggling, tenant farmers!

It was as it should be, this. Apart from the fact that Dolly had earned the reward, by her heroic deed, she deserved a bit of luck like this.

But this first generous impulse of Grace's lasted only the moment or so. Then she felt her heart becoming as heavy as lead.

Five thousand pounds to be given up to another girl!

But it was no use grieving. Dolly had simply got to have the money. It was hers by rights. Just because there had been an innocent mistake—one that did not look like ever being found out—for the Cranfords were in America—that must not mean sticking to the money unfairly. No!

Pulling herself together, Grace drifted away in the direction of the stairs. Slowly she was going

in quest of Dolly, to tell her. But, when she came to the music-room, the door was closed and locked and the key gone.

It meant that Dolly had been able to find no more to do to the festive scene, and so she had gone away, taking the key with her to hand to her, Grace, in the study.

The disillusioned girl turned slowly, still in a sort of daze, to go up to that study. As she came to the stairs again, Betty, Polly and others came pelting down. They were going to get tea at the school tables, this afternoon.

"Hallo, Grace! I say, is it right that your father has rung you up again?" Betty asked gaily, as they all paused.

"Yes—"

"And what's the latest?" clamoured Polly. "Is the mystery cleared up?"

"He—I got cut off," blurted out Grace, whilst she experienced a pang of horror at the fib this was. "I—I can't exactly say what—what dad was telling me."

Her listeners accepted this with light-hearted comments. They had all had experience, at some time or other, of the aggravating way in which telephones can behave.

"We are not bothering to have tea in study this afternoon," announced Betty. "Not worth it, when there's this evening!"

"Yes, wather, Gwace! A cup of tea, and then I wun up to dweess for the gwand occasion, what? My best fwock, wather!"

"I hope there are to be specnes," added Polly. "But you have a lot to do Grace—ta-ta for the present! Dolly's waiting for you in your study."

They all continued on their way, helter-skelter downstairs, whilst Grace, after passing a hand across her brow, mounted to the Fourth-Form quarters. She had failed to tell her father; she had withheld the news, just then, from Betty and the rest. But—Oh, it was no use going on like this. She must tell—Dolly!

"Oh, there you are, Grace," said her study-mate, as she came into the study. "Here's the key, Grace. Everything is done now, so I thought I'd lock up. Had any tea?"

"No, Dolly. I—I feel rather—queer, all at once."

"You do! Oh, Grace, don't say that you are going to be out of sorts for the evening! Sit here," Dolly entreated, offering a chair quickly. "Can I do anything for you, dear?"

"No, Dolly, thanks—no," panted the other girl, sinking into the easy-chair breathlessly.

"I'll bring your tea up to you, Grace. If you keep quiet for a bit, you'll feel better. Stay there, dear."

And suddenly the ever-neighbourly one was gone from the room. She soon returned—all too soon for Grace—hearing a loaded tray.

"There, Grace; have this tea, and mind you eat the bread-and-butter. I've told the girls—"

"Oh, Dolly, but—"

"They are so sorry, but they are going to be very good and leave you to yourself for a bit, so that you can pull round."

Dolly stayed near the seated girl, compassionately attentive. Then suddenly:

"Some eau-de-Cologne on a hanky, Grace—I'll get it!"

Left alone again, mechanically and drearily Grace sipped her tea and nibbled a thin slice of bread. How good of Dolly it was, again, to be looking after her like this, in the supposed indisposition! But the girl must be told—she must be! To go on like this was unfair, dishonest, cruel!

But, an hour later, when there was all the merriment of dressing as for a party, amongst the members of the Form, Grace Garfield was also dressing; and still no one knew!

Nor, by now, did Grace feel capable of speaking out.

To give up the five thousand pounds to its rightful owner was simply more than she could do!

#### No Right to Such Happiness!

"HEALP! Naomer, stop it—dwoip it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Now that the appointed time had come, the Fourth-Form girls were romping down to the music-room.

Paula Creel, after a skirmish with roguish Naomer, was arriving with the prettiest of frocks looking rather rumpled. There was a general run of high spirits that augured well for the success of the evening's celebrations.

"But where's Grace? Fancy Grace herself not being here!"

"She'll be down in a jiffy—she is feeling much better now, she says," Dolly hastened to allay all anxiety. "I feel we are going to have a grand evening, don't you?"

"Wather, bai Jove," Paula joined the others in agreeing, whilst she adjusted a few frills and then smoothed her hair. "Geals, geals, Gwace has done things in style, what?"

"Spiffing! How lovely the tables look!"

"Just perfect!"

"What it means to be rich!" Polly said, with a mock sigh. "Hands off the eatables, Naomer. Not yet, dear!"

"Ooo, no! I only look at zem!" exclaimed the dusky one, prowling round with eyes like round O's. "Skumptuous!"

"Band!" sang out several of them, as Madge strolled in. "Musical honours for Grace, when she comes in, Madge!"

"Yes, wather!"

So Madge stepped to the piano, and started to bang out a rousing tune, ready to change into suitable strains the moment Grace should appear.

Meantime, Cora Grandways flaunted in, undeniably good-looking in a very lavish frock. But she had put on lots of jewellery—bracelets and bangles, and a glittering crystal necklace and a brooch. Polly screened her eyes from the dazzling effect of this walking jeweller's shop, and at that Cora bridled up.

"What's the matter with you, Polly Linton? Don't try to be funny!"

"I'd rather try to be funny than—well, I don't know what you are trying to be. Are those the Grandways heirlooms?"

"Order!" laughed Betty. "No squabbling this evening, please!"

Tossing her head, Cora marched round the tables, looking for her seat. She became aware of girls going off into shrieks of laughter over the "souvenir"—a complete surprise for most of them. She snatched up one of the cards, and she was not amused at the way in which she had been worked into the scheme by Tess.

"Who did this—you, Tess?"

"You don't like it?" regretted the over-modest artist.

"No, I don't!"

"But we do!" grinned Polly. "How splendid!"

"Yes, wather! Haw, haw, haw! Geals, geals—Oh, Cora, how can you?"

For that girl had suddenly torn her card across and flung the pieces to the floor.

"That's what I think of your attempt to be funny, Tess Trelawney! The next time you do a sketch of me, on those lines, you'll be sorry!"

"I don't see anything wrong," said Polly demurely. "Tess has drawn you wearing rather a lot of diamond things. Well, you are wearing all you could put on!"

"Look here!" shrieked Cora, rushing up to Polly. "If I have any more—"

"Cora, order!" requested Betty appeasingly. "Goodness, Cora, can't you take a joke on an evening like this? We can't have you upsetting everything!"

"Hear, hear!"

This general cry should have warned Cora to change her tune; but she chose to use a few expressions which the Form resented. Hilariously it was proposed by Polly that Cora should be "outed" for the present, and if she liked to come back in a sweeter temper, she would be welcome.

"Here!"

The ever-reliable one, always on hand when wanted! Yes, here she was, for Grace to turn to in a very flustered way.

"Er—Dolly—er—we can all sit down? Will you all take your seats, girls, and—er—we'll—"

Fortunately for unhappy Grace, she had no need to say more. With a shriek: "Ooo, yes, queek—queek!" Naomer dashed for her seat. Amidst great laughter, followed by a fresh burst of chatter, the others sat down. Dolly ran to the door, and signed to Ellen to come in. Cora was skulking in the passage, and she took the opportunity of slipping into the room and going quietly to her seat.

Then the banquet started—for it really was a banquet, in miniature. The Barncombe Creamery had done well by its constant patron, the school. At the same time, none could say that here was wasteful showing-off by a new-rich girl.

As the Form sampled the dishes, with Ellen



**CORA COMES TO THE FEAST!** Polly screened her eyes from the dazzling figure Cora Grandways made as she sauntered in, in all the glory of her best frock and jewellery. Cora bridled. "What's the matter with you, Polly Linton!" she flashed.

So, whilst Madge still rattled away at the "joanner," there was the great fun of expelling the spitfire from the festive scene. Resisting to the last, and making a noise like a half-throttled hen, she was gently but forcibly propelled into the passage.

Then there were loud cheers—changing to a genuine ovation as Grace suddenly appeared, pale and uneasy.

"Hurrah! At last, Grace!"

"Ooo, yes, queek—queek!"

Silence fell. The girls thought that Grace might be wanting to make a few remarks which politeness demanded. In any case, she looked so nervous, so frightened, they hardly liked to continue the jubilant babel.

"Feel better, Grace?" several asked at last.

"Oh, yes, thanks! I— Where's Dolly?"

going round and round to offer any little service, there was a general longing to tell Grace how nicely she had done things.

Naomer, who had freakishly begun with an ice, found Ellen asking her what she would like next.

"Oh, I zink I have anuzzer ice, yes, plis!" decided Naomer.

"Howwows!" was Paula's comment. "You should twy one of these chicken jellies, Naomer dear. Much bettah for you, bai Jove!"

"I try him afterwards," promised Naomer, accepting the second ice. "I try everything!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Speech!" broke out madcap Polly suddenly. "Who is going to make a start with the speeches? Or must I?"

"Yes, go on, Polly! Ha, ha, ha!"

But Polly preferred to nudge Paula, at the same time winking round the table. Beaming, the duffer stood up.

"Weal, geals, since no one else will! Er—yes, wather! On behalf of you geals and—er—all of you, bai Jove, I am sure I may be allowed to congratulate our chum Gwace Garfield, what? I wecollect, geals—"

"Oh, don't!" whispered Polly.

"I weal wecollect—but I have forgotten for the moment!" floundered Paula. "Howrah, there it is, what? And here are we—yes, wather! Fwiends all wound, bai Jove! I have nothing weally to say, you know, except that—er—talking of getting wick quickly, geals. I wecollect a stowy—it was the Empewow Napoleon, I think. Or was it Fwedewick the Gweat?"

At this point, the mingled groans and laughter became so loud, Paula paused and took a sip of lemonade, which went the wrong way. She resumed her seat—or, rather, amidst shrieks of laughter, she dropped back, to realise that Polly had discreetly removed the chair.

Whilst she was still grovelling on the floor, the remains of Naomer's second ice plopped on to Paula's head. Naomer said she was sorry. Apparently, the trifling mishap was due to Naomer's eagerness to help Paula up.

But now, as someone had got to make a few becoming remarks, in all seriousness, Betty allowed herself to be called upon, as Form captain. Betty stood up.

"What we want Grace to know, I suppose, is this—and I dare say she knows it already. It's still a mystery, Grace, as to why you have come in for such a wonderful lot of money. But we are sure you deserved it—had done something to earn the Cranfords' gratitude—"

"Hear, hear! That's it, Grace—must be!"

"We envy you, Grace!" spoke on Betty. "But we don't begrudge you the fortune. Good luck to you over it—"

"Hear, hear!" and much hand-clapping.

"Just one thing more. We're all jolly glad to see that the money hasn't altered you. Morcove's proud of you, Grace. It isn't every girl who could have had your sudden good fortune, and not lost her head."

Tremendous applause!

"Speech, spee-eech! Speech, Grace—up with you!"

"Come on, Grace! Ha, ha, ha! But you must!" dimmed the Form.

She sat mute and motionless, her only response a rather ghastly smile.

Then, suddenly, she felt Dolly, sitting on her left, pluck her by the sleeve, at the same time advancing a slip of paper on which something was typewritten very clearly. Grace duly stared down at the slip, then realised that Dolly, in case of need, had actually prepared an appropriate reply to Betty's nice remarks.

Was there any end to the staunch, practical friendship of this girl Dolly? And yet this was the very girl who, unless she spoke out, would be robbed of her due!

And now Dolly was nudging her again, and whispering:

"Go on, Grace! They expect you to say a few words. Up with you!"

She heaved to her feet. Again there was tremendous cheering, and then polite silence.

Suddenly, however, she gave a feeble cry of great distress, and Dolly jumped up to catch the girl who was falling backwards in a swoon.

They were all on their feet, looking to where Dolly, holding the half-fainting girl, was putting her own ear down to catch some whispered entreaty.

"She wants to be alone," Dolly softly announced, next moment. "She wants you to carry on, girls—enjoy yourselves—"

"But how can we—now!"

Nothing more was said. Dumbstruck stood most of the girls, whilst Dolly and Ellen, between them, helped the tottering girl to the door. Grace herself hardly knew what was happening. When next her wits were functioning, she found herself alone with Dolly, in the study, with a glass of cold water held to her lips.

"That's better, Grace! The scare you have given us! Ellen has gone to tell Miss Redgrave."

"What! Oh, but I—I'm all right—"

"No, dear—"

"I am!" wildly insisted Grace, putting Dolly from her and standing up. "It was nothing. At least—"

"We know why it was, dear."

The wretched girl stared, as that gentle remark came. For the moment she took it to mean that the whole school knew about the fatal mistake; that she herself had babbled about it, whilst coming round from her faint.

"It was simply the excitement, wasn't it, Grace?"

"Ye-yes. Yes, that's it," she assented stupidly. Then she laughed jerkily. "Yes, Dolly, that's all I—I'm all right now. I'd like to go back."

There was, indeed, a sudden fling back of colour into her cheeks, a feeling of regained strength. She was under the sudden impulse of a mad recklessness. After this she was saying to herself desperately, she would let her conscience bother her no more. She would stick to the money! Why not, when there was not the slightest risk of the mistake being found out?

As for Dolly, that girl felt quite reassured now that she saw Grace hurrying down to the music-room. Another minute, and the general anxiety was being set at rest, such was Grace's unforced jollity.

"So sorry; I've been silly!" she laughed, resuming her place at the table. "Sit down again, girls, and carry on with the doings! By the way, it was awfully nice of you to get Betty to make that little speech. Thanks!"

Her schoolfellows looked at one another in a relieved manner as they also resumed their seats. This was better!

And so, after all, the Fourth Form spent the jolliest of evenings as the guests of their new-rich scholar.

And Dolly, rather tired out though she was by having done so much for her study-mate, felt that here was her reward. To see how splendidly the evening was passing off, and to see Grace herself looking at her strangely, at times—emotionally—as if in gratitude!

(END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

Little does Dolly suspect the real reason for those glances of Grace's. But—can she long remain in ignorance of something that so vitally concerns her? Next week's fine story will show. It is "Robbed of Her Reward." Make sure you do not miss reading it!