

Read MARJORIE STANTON'S "At the Cost of the Captaincy!"  
wonderful tale of Betty & Co.

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



**Morcove Aids  
the Rebel  
Schoolboys!**

An exciting incident from the long, complete story inside.

*Thrills and High Adventure, Mingling With Real Heart Appeal, in This Fine Tale—*

# at the Cost of the



*Stirring times at Grangemoor School! And Polly Linton and Judy Cardew each with a brother in the thick of it! No wonder the chums feel they must aid the boys in their fight for Fairplay! But at what a cost to their chum, the Form Captain, only Betty Barton knows—as yet!*

## Lull Before the Storm!

**T**R-R-RING!

Tr-r-ring, ring, ring!

It was the telephone in the outer hall of Morcove's great schoolhouse, sounding an impatient call.

That popular parlourmaid with all the scholars, Ellen, hastened to the telephone-box and took up the receiver.

"Morcove School, yes. Pardon?"

Something of a rather startling nature must have been said over the wire, for listening Ellen became round-eyed.

"Will you hold the line, please, and I will see what I can do for you."

With that cautiously-murmured promise Ellen came away from the box, to run upstairs very quickly. She was questing Betty Barton, the captain of the Fourth Form, in Study 12, and very speedily Ellen was at that door.

"Come in. Oh, is that you, Ellen. I thought it might be—"

"Miss, can you slip down to the 'phone and speak to Polly Linton, please? I said I would fetch you, although I'm afraid the headmistress wouldn't approve."

Betty's answer to that low-spoken remark was a look which plainly said: she was very sure the headmistress wouldn't be pleased, if she knew.

"Right, Ellen, and thanks ever so much. If there's any bother I'll get you out of it."

And away sped Betty, leaving a deserted

study behind her. She had three study-mates normally, but they were all absent from Morcove School this evening. The Polly Linton who had rung up was one of them—madcap Polly Linton, life and soul of the study when it knew her blithesome presence.

Rather warily Betty ran downstairs and made her way to the 'phone, shutting the glass door behind her very tightly before taking up the receiver to speak. Then:

"Polly, that you?" in a whisper.

"Yes. That you, Betty? Oh, splendid! I say, can you hear me?"

"Yes."

"Got to be careful, Betty," the madcap's subdued voice came over the wire again. "I'm speaking from Grangemoor School, as you've guessed—Fenwick's House, yes. Mrs. Fenwick has been a great sport, letting me ring you up. I say, how are things your end, Betty?"

"Oh, nothing to worry about, Polly!"

"Listen, Betty. You know the awful fog that came on this afternoon has meant we've got to sleep the night here? So I felt I must ring up to let you know the latest. I have had just a minute or two with Jack, and Judy has been able to get a talk with Dave. But things are in a pretty lively state, I can tell you."

She whispered on, with Betty an eager listener at this end of the line:

"Judy and I, with Paula and Naomer, we got here this afternoon just when Fenwick's boys were holding an indignation meeting. They resolved to send a deputation to the new Head,

—Featuring Betty and Co. of Morcove School, and Jack Linton and Co. of Grangemoor.



## By Marjorie Stanton

Study 12, in its strangely deserted state, received her once more, and there were her books, spread out for "prep." She had been doing her evening work when called away to the phone. But now, after closing the door, Betty found herself unable to sit down and resume work.

To and fro she paced, looking very worried for a little while; then she laughed softly to herself.

"I can just imagine Polly is finding it fun. She's the one, especially as her brother Jack seems to be taking the lead. Oh dear, though," and the perplexed look returned. "Just as well Polly doesn't know what Miss Somerfield said to me a couple of hours ago."

The unaccustomed solitude, the silence prevailing in Morcove's schoolhouse at this moment—for scholars were all at "prep"—it helped to make Betty Barton live over again the minute or two that she had spent facing her headmistress a couple of hours ago.

As in a vision Betty saw the headmistress in a mood of annoyance and disappointment. Miss Somerfield, usually so kind, had shown what she could be when greatly vexed. And whilst Betty had this vivid recollection of the stern-set face, she seemed also to hear a voice as stern saying:

"Understand, Betty, if I hear of Polly and those others taking part in any of that trouble over at Grangemoor School I shall blame you. I must, for you are a Form captain, and you admit that you knew when you were getting leave for them to cycle over to Grangemoor that there was this trouble."

But it was not like Betty Barton to be glum for long, especially over any menace to her own happiness. She gave a rallying shrug and sat down to her books.

"Can't be helped!" she summed up to herself philosophically. "All I know is, Polly would have done the same for me, and so would Judy—of course they would. And that's all there is to it."

GRANGEMOOR, ONE of the most famous Public schools for boys. Not much could be seen of its numerous buildings to-night, for the fog that had come off the moorland wastes and the giant Tors of Devon was lying thickest in this valley.

It had even got into the various buildings at last, and Polly Linton, as she went up the main staircase of Fenwick's House, would have been a rather dim figure for anyone to glimpse. Lights everywhere were blurred and dimmed by the penetrating mist.

She tapped at a door on the first floor, the door of Mrs. Fenwick's drawing-room it was. But no response came, and to her surprise when she looked into the room it was deserted.

"Um! Where can they have got to, then? Oh, I know." Polly nodded to herself brightly.

protesting against his methods. The result was, he threatened to cane the deputation before the whole school this evening."

"Has he done so, Polly?"

"No, and he won't. For the simple reason—Can you hear me, Betty?" the voice inquired, more guardedly than ever. "I have jolly well collared every one of his canes and destroyed them."

"What! Goodness, Polly!"

"Well, if you were here, Betty, you wouldn't wonder," chuckled the madcap. "Isn't it a scream? The canings are due in an hour's time, but he won't find a single can to lay hands upon."

"There will be a row, Polly. That Dr. Trouncer is such a—"

"Betty, he's fifty times worse than we imagined. Coming over here to-day has opened my eyes to a lot, I can tell you. But the boys are just splendid; they're going to make a stand against it all."

"Don't blame them."

"Should think not. Jack and Dave were two of the deputation."

"Be back in the morning, Polly?"

"Don't know. Hope not. It's such fun here. But I wish you were with us, Betty. Don't you?"

"I do, Polly. I'd give anything."

"But you're a Form captain, Betty. Just as well that you're not getting mixed up in this. I don't know how it will end. So I must ring off now, dear. 'Bye."

"Good-night, Polly. Love to Judy and Paula and Naomer."

"I will."

And then the line buzzed.

BETTY BARTON replaced the receiver, let herself out of the telephone-box, and lost not a moment in getting upstairs again.

"They must have gone up to the bed-room Mrs. Fenwick has got ready for—"

"Sh! Polly!" a whisper came at her.

She flashed round.

On the dim landing was a schoolboy, looking full of fun. As if her brother Jack—for he it was—could ever have looked otherwise.

"Jack!" was her thrilled response, voiced very softly. "Oh!"

"Mo again, yep," he grinned, stepping closer.

"I slipped away from my study on the chance of getting another word with you."

"I've just been phoning to Morcove—to Betty. I did so want her to know, Jack."

"Gosh, you're the limit," he chuckled. "Old Shudders would have a fit if he knew that you'd been using the phone."

"Mrs. Fenwick said I might. She's a dear."

"She is. Only what she can do for you girls, and what she and her husband can do for us chaps, are two different matters, Polly! You're not under Old Shudders' rule. He can't come you!"

"Shall I whisper something," smiled Polly, with all her charming roguishness. "He can't come you and Dave and the others—"

"Can't he! That's all you know, Polly-wolly!"

"But I do know," she insisted. "There isn't a cane to cane you with, so there!"

"What! Gosh, Polly, you don't mean to say you have—"

"Yes-s-s!" she laughed as if it were all a delicious joke. "That's just what I have done, Jack. Broken up the lot!"

"Gee!" he said and ran a finger round his white collar. "Oh, heck, that means the end of the world, Polly! That's the crack of doom for Grangemore."

"Then we shall face it together," she jested dramatically, taking his hand.

"Don't know that I want to," he demurred. "Life isn't so bad, Polly, even though we have got this Trouncer Johnny for a new Head. In a way it's proving great fun."

"Just what I told Betty!"

"But you oughtn't to be mixed up in it all," he objected seriously. "You and the other girls ought to be at your own school, swooting away at prep; working hard to win all the prizes!"

"Instead of which," she rippled, "this! And I wouldn't have missed it for worlds, Jack. Tell me, what's going to happen next?"

"I've told you; the end of the world! When Old Shudders finds that he can't find his canes—he'll fall back on walking-sticks. Polly—with mock tragedy—you've only made it a hundred times worse for me and the others!"

"Don't believe you. He daren't use anything but a cane. 'Tisn't legal! That's where I've got him whacked!"

"Legal! Fat lot he cares about that. Where are they putting you girls for the night, Polly?"

"A maid's bed-room at the top of the house. That'll be a scream, too," Polly chuckled. "All four of us in two beds. Poor Paula, you can imagine how she is 'wishing the prospect'!"

"Yes, wather." He imitated the amiable drawl of Morcove's adored duffer. "Well, I musn't stay. I want to get hold of a few things to make an effigy."

"A what!"

"Guy. Don't they teach you anything at Morcove?" he snorted. "Say, Polly; you and the others look out of window, at bed-time, and

you'll see some fun. Gee, Guy Fawkes Day won't be in it!"

"Oh, you mean—"

But Jack was not going to be more explicit. Suddenly he was retiring by the way he had come, on tip-toe, making signs to his madcap sister not to follow.

She stood, with a smile on her bonny face, watching him until he tip-toed out of sight along a passage. Then, drawing a big breath like one who feels full of energy and has much to get on with, she raced upstairs to the top of the house.

Girlish voices were issuing from that room, the door of which was Polly's immediate goal.

"Weally, Naomer deah, you would have done much better not to weawage the bed—"

"Yes, bekas ze roof is so slopy-like, ze one who sleeps near ze wall would get ze bump-on ze head every time she sat up!"

"Dweadful," came Paula Creel's doleful voice again. "I am quite pwepared, Naomer, to be the one to sleep on the wall side. In fact, I would much pwefer—"

"No, bekas I want you to sleep on zis side!"

"Er—"

"To keep me from falling out, you see!"

"Wetched-awwangement," moaned Paula. "I shall hev to speak to Polly about it all. I shall be a weck, a wuin, in the morning."

Then Polly opened the door and walked in.

"All for a good cause, Paula darling!"

"Good cause is all very well, bai Jove!" said the Morcove comfort-lover. "But is that any reason why I should be wobbled of my night's west—with only a bowwowed nightdress to sleep in, and you know," sighed Paula, "you know very well, Polly darling, I always sleep in pyjamas!"

Polly met the eyes of Judy Cardew, who was smiling. As for that dusky imp, Naomer Nakara, she was one huge grin.

"Don't worry," the madcap said to Paula. "I'll borrow you a pair of Jack's!"

Judy Cardew burst out laughing—not so much at what Polly had said, as at the expression it had called up in Paula's pretty face.

"Bai Jove, Polly, how can you be so fivulous!"

"I call it being most practical."

"In any case, Polly deah, I don't welish the idea of sleeping with Naomer."

"Gosh! In ten minutes from now it will be time for the whole of Grangemore to muster over in Head's House," broke in Polly with a glance at her wrist-watch. "And that's when the canings are not to be. Jack says it will be the end of the world instead. Well, I want to see the end of the world—I must! Girls—"

"Er—Polly deah, I wouldn't be too wash, don't you know!"

"You wouldn't, no—"

"Bekas—cowardy!"

"On the contwawy—"

"Oh, you're just a dictionary," Polly cut the elegant one short. "Let's go down, and, somehow, I for one simply must manage to— Hark, though! Who said that Fenwick's House was quiet!"

It certainly had been, up to a moment ago. Then suddenly a few boyish voices had started a chorus in one of the studies.

Now, as the four girls listened, they heard the chorus being taken up with great heartiness by

other studies. At the finish they started all over again:

"Jolly good pals are Fenwick's lot,

Hurrah, hooray!

Caring for nobody, not one jot—

Hip, pip—hooray!

So, Trouncer, look out, for we're about.

And what do we care if you hear us shout:

Boo, boo, BOOO!

That's all we care for you!"

This was followed by sundry cries of: "Sez you!" and shouts of laughter.

Polly was at the opened door, ready to go down with her schoolmates.

"Plenty of pep in that," was her whispered comment on the defiant singing. "They're the lads! After this, I'll never, never scorn my brother again—I won't!"

Judy, also with a brother involved in the great crisis smiled understandingly.

"Get ze move on," urged Naomer, "Bekas you never know! Mrs. Fenwick may be zinking about some supper for us!"

Polly conferred a withering look upon the ever-hungry one, then led the way downstairs. For two flights or so they encountered not a sign of life. But at the first-floor landing, off which various passages turned, they all four quite jumped—such a start had it given them to find two schoolboys, rather dim and vague in the foggy light, keeping watch at the stairs' end of one passage.

The most intriguing sounds now came from that passage, causing Polly and her fellow Morcovians to long for a peep. The madcap, accordingly, went towards the two sentries.

"Friend!" Polly declared herself dramatically, and one of the sentries said:

"Pass, friend!"

It was one of the most pleasing things that had happened to Polly for many a day. She took one look along the corridor, then made frantic signs to Judy, Paula and Naomer to come and look as well.

They did so. There in the corridor, which served the studies, were many boys having great fun over the construction of the "effigy."

Material had been hastily and furtively collected, and of course it was Jack Linton—it would be—who was directing present operations.

Not that Judy's brother Dave was idle; only his activities were of a less nonsensical nature. Dave, the quiet and serious one, ordinarily, was quietly helping in the construction of a guy that would have an almost lifelike resemblance to Dr. Trouncer.

"Lovely!" gurgled Polly. "Do look at them, girls!"

"Bah-Jove—"

"Gorjus!"

"What are they going to do with it?" laughed Judy.

"That," said Polly, "remains to be seen!"

Meanwhile, it was quite a finishing touch when an old mortar-board was clapped upon the head of the black-gowned dummy. The head being a pillow borrowed from the dormitory, the white linen pillow-slip had offered scope for a most unflattering representation of Dr. Trouncer's features.

"Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled Fenwick's young rebels. "Good Old Shudders!"

"Just a sec, boys," said Jack; and he took off the dummy's mortarboard, to bash it about a bit, then clapped it back.

"That's better, I think?"

From where they looked on, the four girls could see the enhanced effect, and they fairly doubled up with suppressed laughter.

They heard Jack gaily resuming, but in stage whispers:

"Quick, boys, where's the placard? Gosh, we must look slippy. It's nearly time for canings! You miserable old tyrant, you!" he addressed the dummy, whilst the placard was being slung round its neck. "Hold you fat head up, you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep your big feet out of the way!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You great, big, bull-necked bully, hold up! Oh, don't hurt him, boys; only kick him! Sorry, sir," Jack apologised to the effigy, after knocking its hat over its eyes. "My mistake. Boys, what's the matter with him; he can't stand up!"

The whole corridor roared with laughter.

"Ugly old fraud. You've got your M.A., have you?" said Jack, straightening the placard on which was inscribed: "Dr. Shudders, M.A.D." "Come on, boys, up with him. Now to get him downstairs, to hide him until— Whoa! Gee, there goes the bell in Head's house."

The greatest excitement now mingled with all the merriment.

"Assembly! The canings!"

"Well, one thing at a time," said Jack, in the best Drake fashion. "Come on, boys!"

And on they came, Polly and her chums of Morcove falling aside to let the joyous procession go past, with the effigy in its midst.

Ding, ling; ding, ling, the bell was going



"I want you to sleep on zis side," said Naomer, pointing to the outer edge of the large bed. "Zen you keep me from falling out, see!" she finished.

meanwhile, over at the much larger Head's house.

"Just a mo., boys," requested Jack. "May I introduce my sister, sir?"—to the dummy. "Say good-bye to him, Polly, for you won't see him again. And it's not a bit of use your looking like that"—to the dummy again. "You're for it, my lad!"

"Good job!" applauded Naomer, capering with delight. "Bekas, you shouldn't be ze bully!"

At this instant the voice of Mrs. Fenwick sounded from the hall below, and, whilst Jack and his fellow-rebels acted accordingly, the four girls flashed away to the drawing-room, so that the master's wife might find them there—looking most demure, of course, as became scholars of Morcove School!

### Three Cheers For Morcove!

"GIRLS, I am sorry to have to tell you something."

They had noticed instantly, as Mrs. Fenwick came into her drawing-room, that she looked very upset again.

"I wish I could spare you," she continued distressfully; "but you know how we are placed. Dr. Trouncer has just told me that he insists; you girls shall attend the evening Assembly."

"But, Mrs. Fenwick, that's all right!" cried Polly. "If that's the only trouble—"

"Yes, bekas—"

"My dears, I fear you do not appreciate what it will mean for you. The new Head says that he will not have you, as scholars, staying the night at Grangemoor unless you attend a final Assembly, as you would at your own school. That would be a perfectly reasonable argument, of course; only—"

Pausing, Mrs. Fenwick heaved a sigh.

"The earnings—"

"Oh," Polly laughed, "don't worry about that on our account, Mrs. Fenwick, please!"

"No, bekas—"

"The fact is," put in Judy hastily, "anything is better than to be kept apart from— I mean, Polly and I, each having a brother here—"

"I know!" exclaimed the Housemaster's wife, very feelingly. "And that, of course, is the one thing that excuses your having come over here to-day. At least, I can excuse it, if others cannot."

She added, with a slight touch of scorn:

"Dr. Trouncer is a bachelor, and so he does not appear to understand affection of any sort. I must say again, girls, I am astonished that our former Head, whom we so greatly admired, should have expected us to tolerate this Dr. Trouncer as a successor. Not that Dr. Halden asked us to 'tolerate' Dr. Trouncer. We were, it seemed to all of us, to expect a very different type!"

By now the bell over at Head's house had stopped ringing, and a resumed hush upon the whole place caused Mrs. Fenwick to exclaim:

"We must go down then, girls, at once, and go across."

There was nothing but eagerness in the way Morcove responded to that remark. Next moment they were all following the Housemaster's wife downstairs. This schoolhouse was lifeless now, and Polly for one had the thought: "What a change from a couple of minutes ago!"

She wondered, too, what had become of that effigy. The boys could not have taken it into Head's house, to attend Assembly!

"My husband is not back yet," murmured Mrs.

Fenwick, as they were hastily crossing the fog-bound quad. "It is this fog that has delayed him, no doubt."

"Was he driving?" asked Judy.

"Our own little car, yes."

There was no time for more. Even now they were at the great porch of that larger building which was the Head's own schoolhouse. Going straight across the foggy front hall, they passed through some swing-doors serving a really vast hall, capable of holding the whole of Grangemoor's scholars.

And here were all the boys now, line behind line all down the body of the hall, whilst at the upper end was the dais on which the headmaster was expected to appear at any moment. Several of the other masters were already there, occupying their usual seats in a rather unhappy frame of mind, the girls thought.

Here and there amongst the ranks of scholars prefects prowled, looking desperately anxious to repress all whisperings, all nudgings and titterings. Most of these prefects, like the masters, seemed to be ill at ease; but the girls saw "Renard the Fox," looking as if he were enjoying himself.

Mrs. Fenwick made a sigh to Polly and the others to keep with her, and she led them to almost the only place available—between the dais and the first row of boys. She whispered that she was sorry they would have to stand, and then they smilingly whispered back that it was "Quite all right!"

Inevitably, a good many of the boys were soon on the grin at Naomer, having found that dusky imp grinning at them. Then there was Paula, from sheer force of habit given an absent-minded touch to her hair. First one took example from Morcove's elegant one, and touched his hair, caressingly at the temples, then another did the same. Soon, a whole row of Grangemoor boys had entered into the joke, and then Renard strode up.

"Stop that!"

He remained, full of a swaggering authority which hardly any of the other prefects cared to display. Once again, Morcove felt how it detested that particular prefect.

But neither Polly nor Judy had more than a glance for the fellow who had played up to Dr. Trouncer's harsh nature. Those two girls were watching each a brother.

Jack and Dave. There they were, two rows back, shoulder to shoulder in their Form, as they were likely to remain through life!

And yet, such contrasts! How amused, how full of bottled-up levity Polly's madcap brother looked! As for Dave, there he was, serious as ever, but not at all depressingly so. Strong, silent Dave! It made Judy's heart swell with pride again, to see him.

Suddenly all the prefects spoke together, whilst the masters on the dais rose.

"Silence, silence!"

The Head.

Here he was, coming in by a side door giving direct access to the dais. A very giant he looked, his bulk being exaggerated by the loose black gown. His face looked white and hard, and all could see the white firm line of his pursed mouth.

He coughed importantly, after reaching his desk in the centre of the dais. Somewhere at the back of the hall a boy coughed much the same kind of cough, and Dr. Trouncer sent a piercing stare in that direction.

"Who was that boy!"

No answer.

"Very good. I will find out afterwards!"

Then, rounding his shoulders as he took hold of his gown with both hands at the chest, so that he looked more aggressive than ever:

"To-night," he said in a ringing voice, "I have certain words to say, and a certain duty to perform, before the usual routine is followed. As the school appears to have got into that state of mind which means expecting to have everything its own way, I will remark, it is now only going to get what it has asked for."

He laughed mirthlessly, and coughed again.

"To-day—this afternoon—I was, so to speak, waited upon by a deputation. Four boys! Four members of Mr. Fenwick's House had the presumption to expect me to listen to—grievances! Well, I did not listen. I do not concede the least right of any of you scholars to adopt these methods. Grangemoor will remember that it is a school, not a factory!"

He must have thought this very fine and unnerving to his hearers, for he smiled his unpleasant smile.

"Call out those four boys!" he suddenly thundered.

The girls saw that Prefect Rennard was to be the one to obey this injunction.

"Linton, Cardew, Halliday, Calligan! Go up!"

Out they stepped from the ranks, to file towards the top of the hall and then mount three steps to the dais. They had to go past Polly and her chums of Moreove, and although neither sister ventured a whisper even, it was more than Naomer could do to withhold a cheering word.

"Best of luck, boys, bekas—"

"Silence!" rapped out Rennard loudly.

But the headmaster on the dais was not content with that rebuke. He glared towards the girls.

"One of you spoke just then?"

"Yes, bekas—"

"Girl—"

"Eef you plis, Dr. Shudders—I mean—"

The rest was drowned in a burst of laughter all over the crowded hall. Hardly a boy had been able to bottle up his mirthfulness over Naomer's slip of the tongue.

Dr. Trouncer's own voice banged out:

"Silence there! Now, girl—"

"Eef you plis, I am called her Majesty away from my school!"

"What!"

"Yes, bekas—"

"Bah!" Dr. Trouncer closed the argument, as if he knew he had got the worst of it that time.

Jack and the three other members of the famous "deputation" were now on the dais.

"Stand forward—there, where you can be seen!" glowered the headmaster. "And would



"I wish to say, sir, that I took those canes—and I've destroyed them!" spoke up Polly Linton fearlessly. From the assembled boys went up a tremendous gasp of admiration.

you still, perhaps, like to voice those grievances?"

"Yes, sir," they answered, as with one voice, "we would."

A sigh went over the assembled scholars like wind going through a cornfield.

"I regret," said Dr. Trouncer unctuously, "that your presence in front of the whole school must be the occasion for a very different ceremony. Ha, ha, yes! Somebody fetch my cane! Rennard, the cane, please!"

"Yes, sir," Polly nudged Judy.

"There has been," Dr. Trouncer resumed, speaking to the four boys on the dais, and at the same time speaking at the rest of the scholars, "far too much insubordination, far too much impudence! I have come to Grangemoor, in the absence of Dr. Halden, to pull the school together, not to let it go to pieces. And what have I found? Simply that too many of you boys are trying to pit your strength against mine! Well, we shall see in a minute whose strength is the greater, morally and physically! Ha, ha, yes, physically, too!"

He paused, and looked towards the door by which Rennard would return. And again Polly nudged Judy, who looked down to her toe-tips, so as not to be seen laughing. Under her breath, Naomer said to Paula:

"Gorjus! Ooo, when we tell Moreove!"

Paula, however, made frantic signs to Naomer to "wefwain" even from the merest whisper.

Dr. Trouncer walked back, to stand in front of his intended victims again.

"Impudence, that is what it was! And two of you, I observe, the self-same boys whom I caned earlier in the day! I did not cane you hard enough, was that it? Very well, we will see what can be done this time. Ha, ha, yes! And so, I think, it will be a lesson to the whole school. Come along, Rennard—come along!"

The prefect's returning step was audible. Next moment he came in by that side door.

"Er—er—"

"Well, Rennard?"

"The cane, sir—"

"Well?"

"I can't find it, sir!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"It isn't there, sir—"

"It must be there! There are a dozen canes at least in my study!" thundered Dr. Trouncer.

"Bring me—"

"I can't, sir, for there's not a single cane there. I know you had quite a batch, sir," mumbled Rennard, coming forward uncomfortably; "but they're all gone now. I looked—not one!"

"YOU MEAN to tell me," jerked out Grange-moor's new Head at last, "those canes have been removed from my study?"

"Er—must have been, sir!"

"Stolen—from my study? But," rising to a roar of anger, "that means that this public caning has been—Ah, I understand! So this, this is the latest, is it!" And he glared over the lined-up scholars.

"One of you—or perhaps it was another 'deputation,' ha, ha, yes! In any case, now," he thundered, so that his voice awoke echoes in the lofty roof, "now let whoever did this thing stand forth! Who did it, I ask?" Who is the culprit! Or am I, failing an answer, to thrash the whole school!"

His right hand fumbled out a watch, which he consulted whilst adding:

"I give the school five seconds! The culprit will either stand forward and let me deal with him, or the school will be gated for a week; there will be drill instead of games; there will be no rest for any one of you! Five seconds!"

It seemed to the girls that they could hear the watch ticking off those seconds, with extra rapidly—tick, tick, tick! There was just a breathing space, and then the time limit had expired, and the watch went back to its owner's pocket.

"Very well! No one is going to answer, is that it? Afraid, ha, ha, yes! And well may the culprit be afraid, perhaps! Very well, I say; now let the whole school understand from me, I shall not ask again—What?" he broke off, staring. "What?"

For, suddenly, Polly had moved a few steps to attract his attention.

"I wish to say, sir, you won't need to ask again, in any case. I don't mind telling you, I took those canes."

He tried to speak but could not. In the body of the hall there was one vast "Phev!" from nearly two hundred astounded schoolboys.

"And I've destroyed them," Polly added, with the calmest and sweetest of smiles.

"WHAT! YOU—you—"

"Yes, Dr. Trouncer—"

"You took those canes? Destroyed them! You, a girl, a—mere chit of a thing! I never did!" volleyed Dr. Trouncer. "I—Pon my soul! You—you—And why, why, girl? Answer

me, this instant! Explain! How dared you, I ask!"

It was another girl who suddenly shrieked: "Bekas, she wasn't going to see her brother and ze rest caned by you, and jolly good job, too, bekas—"

Most unfortunate for well-meaning Naomer. She never could be allowed to say all that was in her mind without a shout of laughter such as came now.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared all the schoolboys, whilst even some of the under masters were shaken with merriment in their chairs on the dais. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mrs. Fenwick," shouted Dr. Trouncer, "first of all, send that dark girl out of the hall!"

But Mrs. Fenwick chose to disregard this command. She joined Polly as the latter mounted the few steps on to the dais.

"Dr. Trouncer, surely you will understand and excuse—"

"Understand! Excuse!"

"Certainly," insisted Mrs. Fenwick. "The girl is sister to one of these boys who were to be caned. Do, do make a little allowance for natural affection, doctor!"

"I will do nothing of the kind," he answered passionately. "And I am surprised, Mrs. Fenwick—I am amazed that you, a Housemaster's wife, should—"

"If my husband were here—"

"And why is he not here, let me ask! It has been the practice, has it, for your husband to absent himself after morning school on Saturdays?"

"Oh, no—"

"He should be here, not you, madam!"

"He would be here, but for the fog. And I am only here, because you insisted that these girls should be present at Assembly. I can assure you," added Mrs. Fenwick, drawing herself up, "I would never have wished it to be present—"

"Oh, no doubt!" he barked. "My methods are not to your liking! But they are my methods; I have no intention of altering them either. Now, please, take these girls away. Remove them! They offend my sight! Let them be gone first thing in the morning!"

"Come—"

"But wait!" His strident voice overrode Mrs. Fenwick's. "One word to you, my girl, before you go. As soon as I have a moment, I will ring up your headmistress, and if you are not expelled for what you have done at my school to-day, I shall be more surprised than ever."

He waved Polly away.

Suddenly, however, a cheer was started at the back of the great hall, and instantly that cheer was taken up by dozens, scores, of other Grange-morvians.

"Hurrah! Hurrah-ah-ah!"

Grange-moor—cheering Polly!

Fearless in front of Dr. Trouncer, she was in utter confusion now—couldn't stand the fuss; felt herself becoming hot all over. Worse than having to go up for a prize at Morcove—a thousand times worse, this cheering.

And yet it still went on! In vain the cry of "Silence!" was being vociferated. In vain the new Head himself was raging about on the dais, gesturing, shouting. Nearly two hundred spirited schoolboys were letting themselves go, and Polly and her chums, with Mrs. Fenwick, did not hear the cheering die down until they were outside the hall.



"Phew!" said Polly then. "Oh, dear! I didn't bargain for that! Mrs. Fenwick—"

The demureness of Morcove's madcap, all in a moment, was too much for Mrs. Fenwick's sense of humour. She suddenly went off into a fit of laughter as if she were still only a schoolgirl herself.

"Really," she laughed on, "the thing has its humorous side. Oh, but Polly, how could you do what you did!"

"It was easy enough."

This, as an answer, seemed to amuse Mrs. Fenwick more than ever.

"Come back with me to my husband's House," she rippled. "And the best thing, I am sure, will be to pack you all off to bed at once! Then you'll be out of all the mischief until the morning, when I must get you away after breakfast, somehow. If there is no other means, I must squeeze you all into my husband's car and drive myself."

As they hastened across the dark and foggy quad, they heard Dr. Trouncer shouting away at all the boys. By the way in which he continually interrupted himself, to demand some boy's name, it was evident that he was getting anything but silence. At any instant, the girls felt, he would have the whole school booing him—to his face!

But it was not to be as bad as that, after all. Grangemoor was restraining itself—under what provocation the girls could easily imagine!

"Now, girls, will you stay here while I go and see if my husband has got back at last."

Thus Mrs. Fenwick, when she had ushered her charges back into the drawing-room.

Promptly, then, Polly flopped on to a settee and went off into convulsions of mirth. She buried her face into a cushion, trying to stifle her laughter, which was not checked by her seeing Naomer dance round the room in high glee.

"Oh, dear!" the madcap breathlessly gurgled at last. "Judy—ha, ha, ha! Did you ever know such a scream! Hark, though!"

They all four darted to windows looking on to the foggy quad. Some scholars were now marching out of Head's House. They were boys of "Fenwick's," and many of them must have been looking up to these windows, to see the blinds being held aside that girlish faces might get a peep.

Into the schoolhouse they could be heard storming, a few moments later, making as much noise as possible.

As for other masters, the girls learned afterwards that they had quite enough to do, endeavouring to control the rising rebellion in their own spheres of activity.

Somebody started the singing of the House Song, and then somebody else must have supplied a new version. For suddenly the girls were hearing this chorus being sung in the study-coriors:

"Jolly good sports are the Morcove chums,  
Hoorah, hooray!

The sort to stand by you, whatever comes,  
Hip, pip—hooray!

So, Grangemoor, look out, for some are about,  
Come along, boys, and give them a shout!

The whole quartette—  
That's what we think of you!"

With a finishing: "Ta-ra!" as of trombones.  
Then Polly searched for a coin and found one—

a ha'penny. With this, she opened the door and went far enough out of the room to be able to throw the halfpenny to the songsters.

"Thank you so much," said Morcove's madcap sweetly as the coin tinkled on to the floor. "It's all we can spare to-night, and now, will you please go round into some other street?"

She came back. She closed the door. But she and her chums could still hear a score of boys all talking at once.

Great were the jokes being made about the Tyrant and great were the shouts of laughter.

Then suddenly they heard a bang, bang upon an outer door and the voice of Sergeant Japp, who drilled Grangemoor's scholars, bellowed in his best parade-ground manner:

"Less noise in there!"

"Sez you!" he was answered derisively from above stairs. "Fall in! Ha, ha, ha!"

From the porch of Head's House came, then, the voice of Dr. Trouncer:

"Go in, Japp, and keep those boys quiet, since no one else can."

"Very good, sir."

But next instant Polly and her chums heard Sergeant Japp exclaiming:

"What's this—hi! This door has no right to be shut! Sir, they're locking me out!"

Dr. Trouncer had gone back in his own schoolhouse, out of the foggy darkness, and he did not hear.

"Queek, queek!" said Naomer, in the drawing-room, and she flew to one of the windows again. "Bekas we can see from here."

Her schoolmates, joining her at that window, raised the bottom sash high enough for putting heads over the sill. They looked out into the quad, and were just in time to see Sergeant Japp as he kept on banging at the closed outer door, meet with a most discomfiting experience.

Unbeknown to him, some of the rebels had opened a window just above the outer doorway. One of them now held forth a jug, turning it upside down, and the falling contents of that jug Sergeant Japp received upon his head—splash!

"Wow!" howled those young rascals who were able to see, as did the girls, how the cold douche had swamped the bully of the drill-ground. "Night, night, Jappy, now you're happy! Ha, ha, ha!"

And a closing window went slam!

#### Four in An Attic!

"GORJUS!" capered Naomer.

"Bai Jove, though—"

"Now they really have done it!" chuckled Polly Linton. "Well, can you wonder?"

Judy Cardew, smiling, shook her head.

"Anybody with any sense would know; boys can't be expected to stand for what they've been given lately. And unless Mr. Fenwick gets back soon—"

There was a quiet interruption. Mrs. Fenwick had re-entered, looking rather agitated.

"A nice thing!" she exclaimed. "I have just had a 'phone call about my husband. He won't be back to-night."

"What!" gasped Morcove.

"He may not be back for several days."

"Goodness!"

"He met with an accident in the fog—got lost with the car, and there was a slight smash. Now he's in hospital."

"Hurt?" cried the girls. "Oh, Mrs. Fenwick."

"No—at least, nothing serious. But he was badly cut and is suffering from shock. He's in

hospital twenty-five miles from here, and I can't possibly get to him to-night. How can I?"

Silence fell. Polly and her chums realised that no suggestions could be made; nothing indeed was possible on such a night and in such a district. The fog had placed a standstill order upon all forms of traffic, except the railways. And Grangemoor was miles from the nearest railway-station.

"Oh, we are sorry, Mrs. Fenwick," exclaimed Polly at last. "Just at this time, too."

"Yes, bekas—"

"They told me on the 'phone not to worry, and so I shall not," said the Housemaster's wife determinedly. "But, oh, how I wish, if it had to happen, it could have happened at some other time. My husband would have managed the boys as no one else will be able to now. They're roused. There is that sense of real grievance which makes them feel ready to go to any length."

She took a few thoughtful turns about the room, then spoke again.

"You girls would like something to eat before you go to bed?"

"Ooo, yes, pls, bekas—"

"Trust Naomer to speak for all of us," Polly smiled grimly. "But, Mrs. Fenwick, you're sure we're not being a bother to you."

"No, you are not, girls. I— Perhaps I ought not to say it, but somehow I am glad to have you."

"Oh!"

"Bai Jove!"

"I know this, at least," said Mrs. Fenwick; "if those canings had started the whole school might have been in a state of riot by now. So it is just as well that one of you did prevent the canings. Go down to the dining-room now. There is some supper put out, and possibly some of the boys will join you. I think it is wise to offer them a little supper to-night. It may serve to—well, to keep them quiet."

So the four Morcovians passed out, to find their way to the dining-room downstairs. Mrs. Fenwick did not accompany them, and they imagined that she was going to speak with the boys.

The large dining-room of this schoolhouse received Polly and her chums. Places had not been laid at the table, but a sort of buffet had been set out, and Rosalie the parlourmaid and another rather matronly servant had come in to help, it being certain that the boys would surge to this room as soon as they knew there was refreshment on hand.

Nor was it half a minute later when the first contingent romped in, to be followed by other joyous batches. High spirits prevailed, but they were all very polite to the girls.

"Hallo, Polly—hallo, girls!" was Jack's gay cry as he came upon them lined along a corner bench, plates on laps. "Got all you want?"

"Yes, zank you. Bekas, we were first."

"Bad look-out for those who're last," was Jack's remark, as he went off to get something from the besieged buffet. "Gee, ham-and-tongue!" they heard him exulting. "Come on, boys!"

Dave, a sandwich on his plate, worked through the press of schoolmates and took his stand beside his sister and her chums.

"Rotten business about Mr. Fenwick. Dave," said Judy.

"Would you like some lemonade?"

"Ooo, yes, pls! Bekas—"

"Your plate empty, Naomer?" Dave noticed, on the point of going away. "Can I bring you—"

But there was no need for Dave to go off foraging after all. Jack now returned with plates of cakes and sandwiches to offer. Other boys came crowding round to press eatables upon the girls. Never had the chums had so many boys waiting upon them all at the same time. And for Naomer, at any rate, it was the time of her life.

"Bekas, I don't like to say no," she shrilled over and over again.

The Honourable Bob Halliday was here, and so was "Comrade" Calligan. Polly inquired about the effigy, and received promising winks in reply. Now that the first uproar of getting served had abated the boys were lapsing into talk that seemed to the girls almost ominous. Further oppressive measures were expected, in which case—well, Fenwick's would make history.

Presently Mrs. Fenwick came in. She had been across to Head's House to tell Dr. Trouncer about her husband's accident. She was all cheerfulness now, but they could see that her latest encounter with "Shudders" had left her very exasperated. Doubtless he had been unsympathetic, brusque and tactless.

"I did not like to tell the boys," she said softly to the Morcove chums, when seeing them up to their room a quarter of an hour later.

"Dr. Trouncer suggested sending in Sergeant Japp to keep order during the night. I had to object most strongly. I told Dr. Trouncer I considered it would be a most unwise thing—the boys would be resentful. He gave way in the end, but was very rude about it all. The man is impossible."

"Surely," murmured Judy, "he'll not be allowed to go like it."

"My dear, nothing can be done to remove him, except by the Board of Governors. Three of them are wintering aboard; they are very old fogeys, you know. My husband, as you know, has been trying to find the only other member of the Board, but with what success I cannot say."

"Bai Jove," came from Paula dismally, "it is enough to worry anyone, Mrs. Fenwick."

But that lady laughed.

"Oh, I don't know! I would much rather have this than some awful illness going through the whole school. Well, girls, I must say good-night, and hope that you will sleep well. Sure you have everything you want?"

"Yes-s, Mrs. Fenwick, thanks ever so!"

"Bekas, Paula will jolly well have to manage with ze nightdress."

"Yes; wather, that's quite all wight, Mrs. Fenwick," beamed the comfort-lover of Morcove. "In the circumstances—"

"Oh, but I have put you out a pair of my pyjamas," was Mrs. Fenwick's merry remark, as she went to the door. "Silk. So good-night, girls."

"Good-night, Mrs. Fenwick."

"And look!" cried Naomer, so that the lady glanced back to see a kiss being blown at her. "Bekas, you are ze sport, and so say all of us."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

FIVE MINUTES later.

"All quiet on the Fenwick front," said Polly Linton.

"Gweat welief, yes, wather! Now to get a good night's west, bai Jove!"

Paula Creel had got into the loaned pyjamas, and was admiring herself in them in front of a full-length mirror.

Naomer, on the other hand, had just donned a nightdress, borrowed from one of the maids, that was so long it had quite a train.

"What ze diggings! Bekas, look at me."

The other looked and chuckled.

"Society Doings," quoth Polly. "Her Majesty Queen Naomer of Nakara, in her coronation robes. On the right, Miss Paula Creel, as the Lido Lady in that great film: 'Make Way For Morcove!'"

"Ewivolous as evah, Polly."

"Fours into two!" was the madcap's next jest, in allusion to the couple of beds that were to sleep them all. "Won't go. Won't it!"

"Foggy as ever," remarked Judy, taking a last look out of window. "What a night! But, girls—"

Her eyes were set closer to the dark glass that she might peer out the better.

"There's something doing down below, girls. Come and look."

Across to her flashed the others, and when they also peered out and down they discerned shadowy shapes in the centre of the quad in a state of great activity.

The night, as Judy had implied, was foggier than ever, but there was a moon somewhere, and its light was filtering down, causing a kind of ghostly radiance.

"It's the boys!" whispered Polly. "Oh, they've got the guy with them!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Gorjus!" danced Naomer in her bare feet.

"Bekas—"

"Sh'rrp! We mustn't attract their attention."

With the word Polly nipped across the room to switch off the light, then she sped back to her chums at the window.

"Now," she whispered. "Watch!"

#### "Dr. Trouncer" Has His Due!

SWIFTLY, silently, Jack Linton & Co. were going about their daring business down there in the quad.

Not a sound came up to the four girls who, unknown to the boys, were watching from their window. But Polly and her chums could imagine; many a subdued chuckle was being given by the young rebels.

Eyes that had become accustomed to the foggy darkness were able to see the guy being dumped upon a waste-paper basket. The basket was right side up, and it only formed as good a seat as it did because it was full of waste paper.

A few moments more, and other participants in the fun came stealing up, each with an armful of shaving, probably gathered from the carpentry shop.

"Goodness!" breathed Polly. "They're going to burn him!"

"Good job, bekas—"

"Sh'rrp!"

"Shan't sh'rrp! I never can spik, but you can always spik!" Naomer not unfairly protested, softly. "Besides, how ze diggings can I—Ooo, look! Zere eet goes, girls!"

A match had been struck. It burned up steadily in the windless night, and as it did so the girls

could see that Jack Linton was to have the honour of setting fire to the guy. It was he who held the match.

"How lovely," grugled Polly. "Oh, look at it!"

The shavings had been ignited in several places. It was a suddenly blazing bonfire in the centre of the quad, with the floppy guy on top of the pyre.

Higher and higher leapt the flames, and now the boys linked arms all in a ring, and began a kind of country jig round the burning guy.

There may have been the intention to do all this in complete silence. But there is always something about a bonfire that inspires noise, and in the present case Fenwick's had this special joy—the effigy of Dr. Trouncer, the tyrant, looking floppier and floppier as the flames gained more and more of a hold of him.

So, suddenly, there bust upon the night air a great, ringing cheer. Fenwick's awoke every possible echo with one tremendous "Hurrah!" after another.

Then, under the eyes of four delighted Morcovians, the young rascals fled back into the schoolhouse. The din in the yard changed to all the hurry-scurry sounds of boys rushing indoors and up to their sleeping quarters.

Still at the window, Polly and her chums saw the bonfire quickly dying down. The guy was going to lie in a half-consumed, collapsed state,



The contents of the jug swirled on to the head of the bullying Sergeant Japp. The Morcove chums, watching from another window, could not help laughing. It was no more than the drill-master deserved!

amidst smouldering ashes, there to be found by Dr. Trouncer in the morning—so Morcove supposed. But Dr. Trouncer was to find his half-burnt effigy sooner than that. No sooner were the four girls getting in to bed, believing the fun to be over, than they were fetched back to the window by a bellow of rage.

Again they peered out, and they saw that Dr. Trouncer, having fallen over the dead bonfire, effigy and all, hardly seemed to know where he was or what to do!

At which hilarious moment for Morcove and Fenwick's, a boyish voice called down from a dormitory window, with great solicitation:

"Is that Dr. Trouncer?"

The only immediate response was a half-choked howl. Dr. Trouncer had created much smoke by kicking the black embers about after his unlucky stumble. But, when he had floundered clear and had got the smoke out of his lungs, he shouted:

"This fire! Groogh, I'll have the boys who lit—puff—this fire—"

It was again unlucky that he had twice belloved the word "fire," for it so happened that Prefect Rennard, having seen a blaze in the foggy darkness, had seized a fire extinguisher, to rush with it in this direction.

To Rennard—zealous Rennard, so anxious to distinguish himself in the eyes of the new Head—the spluttering cry of "Fire" had given him an idea of showing how useful in an emergency he was. He now dashed upon the scene, with the appliance already spraying chemicals from its nozzle.

"Where, sir—where?" he panted, but Dr. Trouncer was not in a position to explain.

Dr. Trouncer, in fact, came in the way of the brass nozzle—got the spraying chemicals full in his face!

All this, seen and enjoyed by four girls watching from their window, left them in utter convulsions.

It was such a complete extinction of the fiery tyrant, he was seen and heard no more that night. In their dormitories, Fenwick's young rebels were able to hold a council of war, and, although Morcove could not then be aware of decisions reached, one thing was apparent—Fenwick's would fight, and Fenwick's would be right!

Four Morcovians, laughing themselves to sleep at last in their own temporary dorm, heard the song of the rebels being sung once more with great heartiness—proof enough that the boys were on their mettle still.

Then all was quiet once more, and soon the Housemaster's wife came stealing in, to make sure that her four stranded girls were quite comfortable. She found them fast asleep.

#### The Form's Captain's Duty.

"BETTY, you're to go to the headmistress. At once, I was told to tell you."

"Am I? Um!"

"Right—ho, then!"

And Morcove's Fourth Form captain did a right-about turn.

It was Monday's mid-morning "break" at Morcove School, and Betty, let out of class a few moments ago with the rest of the Form, had been going to get a bit of exercise. But now—

Ominous, this summons from the headmistress! Monday morning—and Polly and those other girls not back even now! All yesterday there had been no news for the studies to gossip about, although it was incredible that the headmistress

was remaining in the dark about events at Grangemoor.

Betty and others had quite expected their absent schoolmates to be got home to Morcove somehow during Sunday. But they had not turned up, and now it was past eleven o'clock on this Monday morning, and still they had not come!

Whatever else it might mean, it meant un-easiness for Betty, as she now made her way to the headmistress' private room.

Miss Somerfield was alone, gumming up a note. "You are not to go back into class, Betty, but you are to go in my car over to Grangemoor with this note for Mrs. Fenwick. Get some lunch at once—and you had better take one other girl with you. Pam Willoughby, your Form-mistress has suggested, so let it be Pam."

"Yes, Miss Somerfield. And, please—"

"Betty, I prefer not to say anything about affairs at Grangemoor School. I have only the most meagre information, and to know the rights and wrongs in the matter one must know all. In any case, however, you quite understand; what I said the other evening still holds good!"

Betty felt herself reddening. It gave her a feeling of shame, to realise that she was still in such disfavour.

"If I find that those girls of ours have taken any part in the disturbance at Grangemoor, I shall blame you, not them! It is only right I should do so, as I made clear to you," the headmistress added. "Once those girls were over at Grangemoor—two of them each with a brother in that school—they would be almost certain to become involved. The fault lies with you, Betty, in having obtained leave for them to go, when you knew how things were!"

A stern, dismissing gesture followed the words, and Betty, the note in her hand, turned to quit the room.

"Um!"

Once again she could not keep back the glum monosyllable that meant: "Nice pickle I'm in!"

But she would not let any of her Form-mates see her looking dejected, as she sought Pam amongst them. As long ago as last Saturday evening, Betty had known what was hanging over her—the loss of the Form captaincy, if Polly and those three others should prove, later, to have taken sides with the Grangemoor rebels! Not a word, however, had Betty said about that. She knew how upset on her account chums like Pam and Madge and others would be.

Pam received the news that she had been selected to accompany Betty upon the run to Grangemoor with her usual serenity.

Fifteen minutes later they were off. They could lounge on the richly-upholstered back seat of a fine car capable of holding six passengers comfortably. The day was brilliant, Sunday having witnessed the gradual dispersal of the fog. Miss Somerfield's chauffeur knew every inch of the way, as did the two girls, and although they were much by-road work for the greater part of the journey they got along rapidly.

"How was Miss Somerfield about it all, Betty?" was Pam's casual inquiry, towards the end of the run. "Inclined to treat it as a joke?"

"Well, hardly."

"It must have been great fun for Polly and the rest, anyhow," Pam smilingly continued. "Can you imagine Polly, for one, missing any chance to lend a hand?"

Betty would have laughed some answer that would have still cloaked her personal anxiety, but at this instant the chauffeur had to give a sharp blare on the hooter. The car, purring swiftly and softly round a bend, had overtaken a cyclist—a girl cyclist, well in the middle of the road.

She slewed aside to let the car flash ahead of her, and as it did so both Morcovians glanced at her. It began as a glance of only the slightest interest, but it developed into a stare of recognition.

"Why, Pam, did you notice?"

"Yes," Pam nodded. "That girl who is staying all by herself in Barncombe."

"The one whom Cora Grandways has got to know," Betty spoke on. "What was the name?" We were told—Elsie Jackson? Cora brought her along to the school last Saturday to let her see round it. By the way."

Betty sat round to speak with a kind of glowing excitement.

"Now I think of it, Pam, it was that girl who gave Morcove the first news about the trouble at Grangemoor. She told Cora, and Cora, of course, soon spread it around."

"Yes, well, Cora would."

Betty received that with a nod and a frown. "You're right, Pam; somehow, if ever things don't go as we hoped they would, Cora seems to be the cause."

"But things are not going wrong, are they, Betty?"

"Oh—er—well, I suppose it might have been better if Morcove had got to know in a different way," stammered the captain. Then she brightened. "Never mind. Pam, we're nearly there."

"Yes, this is the last mile," was the other's comment on the straight bit of road they were now covering. "Just on twelve, Betty. The boys will be coming out of school."

"If they have been into school this morning," smiled Betty. "About that Jackson girl, Pam; strange, her riding on all this distance, as if she were making for Grangemoor, too."

"Perhaps she thought she would like to bike over and see something of what's going on. If anything is going on, and it is!" Pam added, sitting more erect suddenly, so as to see the road in front the better. "Look!"

Then Betty gazed through the glass partition which separated the car's roomy interior from the driver's seat. They were whizzing towards a sentinel-like figure on this straight stretch of road, and it was a Grangemoor senior.

Betty and Pam had one moment in which to become quite certain of this, and they were both exclaiming: "A pre.!" when on went the car's brakes.

Not without reason, either. The chauffeur had seen a number of other schoolboys scrambling and breaking through the school's boundary hedge in joyous fashion. The car was too far short of them all to be in any danger of running them down as they swarmed on to the road; but there was that prefect, shouting and gesturing to them, and altogether it looked like being a scene. So Miss Somerfield's expert and cautious driver was "going slow."

He touched the hooter warningly, and then the prefect gave a most police-like signal for the car not to come on until he had dealt with this lively and apparently lawless crew.

"Pretty cool of him," said Pam.



"Polly! Judy! Naomer! Come back—come back!" Betty Barton shouted. But her voice was lost in the hubbub made by the boys in the tower, and the runaways did not hear.

"Why, I know that pre.!" cried Betty. "It's the one they call Rennard the Fox—always so officious. Oh, Pam—and look! There's Jack Linton, there's Dave!"

"There's Polly herself!" was Pam's cry. For once even her serenity was upset. And no wonder.

Betty now observed four girls looking over the boundary hedge of Grangemoor School. They had not noticed the car, or if they had, had not recognised it. Polly, Judy, Naomer and Paula—they were much too taken up with the altercation which had instantly started between the prefect and the Fenwick boys.

Rennard the Fox was ordering them back, and the boys were refusing to go back. More, they were mobbing around him very hostilely. From the car Betty and Pam could even see him being hustled, whilst a lot of boing came to their ears.

Then suddenly the prefect struck at one of the boys and there was uproar. Rennard went down and was seen no more by Pam and Betty until the riotous crowd split apart to let him be dragged in the grasp of Jack Linton and two or three more off the road.

Pam and Betty wanted to jump out of the car and rush to make themselves known to their girl chums; but they felt they had better sit still for a moment or two longer. The excitement was so great. Rennard, they now realised, was being swung along, held by arms and shoulders, towards a roadside pond

"My goodness!" gasped Betty. "See what they are going to do."

Pam nodded, smiling serenely. Like Betty, she not only saw what the boys were going to do; in a few moments she even saw them do it.

With all those other boys standing by, as so many jocular onlookers, the three or four who had hold of that yelling prefect swung him as for a throw. Twice they swung him; and then the third time out he went, almost in the middle of the pond.

Splash!

He landed flat, with a frightful unthrowing of the agitated waters. It was a prolonged splash, leaving him floundering like a half-stranded whale.

Betty threw open the door of the car and jumped out, Pam following.

"Just a moment," they said to the chauffeur, whose countenance was a study in impassivity.

\* \* \* \* \*

"BYE-BYE!" THE Fenwickians were shouting at the floundering prefect. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"So now you know, Rennard," one shouted. "Boo!"

"Come on, boys," cried Jack Linton. "He won't cuff my sister again in a hurry, I guess. Wasn't going to stand that."

"Should think not. Boo!" the roused youngsters again hooted Rennard. "Now go and report it to the Head. Go on, show yourself to him. Ha, ha, ha!"

Then suddenly dead silence, bewilderment. Jack Linton & Co. were amazed to find two girls amongst them as if they had dropped from the sky. It was a recognising cry from Jack that broke the spell.

"Gosh! Gee, boys, here's Betty Barton, from Morcove, and Pam! Two more of them. Oh, heck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But neither Betty nor Pam had word or look for the gleeful boys. Both girls were in haste to get through that boundary hedge, to join four schoolmates who were now in the very throes of a fresh sensation.

One behind the other, Betty and Pam scrambled through a breach in the hedge, to find themselves with Polly again at last, and the rest of Morcove's absentees.

Every tongue went. It became a babel of glad cries.

"Betty dear, how splendid of you to work it!" was Polly's thrilled outburst.

"Yes, bekas— Gorjus! Now zere are two more of us, hooway! We can do wiz you two."

"Yes, wather, bai Jove! That is, geals, pwesuming you have come to stay; but have you?" doubted Paula.

"We have NOT," laughed Betty. "We've come to fetch you home to Morcove this instant."

"What!" moaned Polly, although she must have known it had meant that. "Oh, dear, how can I go back? I won't, so there!"

"No, bekas—"

"You!" the madcap playfully rounded on the dusky one. "The sooner you beat it, the better, Nøomer. Hasn't she been a trial to us over the week-end? But here are all the boys. Betty, let me introduce—General Jack Linton, commanding the Fenwick Filibusters."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a name that struck Betty as being exceedingly funny, as well as—apt!

"How goes the day, general?" she gaily inquired.

"Just scored another goal; perhaps you saw?" grinned Jack, in allusion to the ducking of Rennard. "Oh, but something had to be done to the fellow. To say nothing about his playing up for the old Tyrant's favour, at our expense, the beggar had the cheek to box Polly's ears a little while ago."

"Although candour compels me to remark," said Polly demurely, "I did smack his face first! So perhaps I deserved it. Poor fellow, I hope you boys didn't hurt him!"

"Oh, no," came from the Honourable Bob Halliday, with a charming smile. "But he's wet."

"He must be—very."

"Bai Jove, he looks it!"

And indeed there could not have been a more sodden-looking, bedraggled figure than Rennard made, as he now hastened along the road, dripping water at every step. All the first hasty talk between the fresh arrivals from Morcove and the others had to be interrupted, to allow of great laughter, such a crestfallen object did the prefect present.

As soon, however, as he had shambled out of sight, Betty felt the need of mutual explanations.

"Pam and I have been sent over with this note, girls. So I must find Mrs. Fenwick at once. Why didn't you all come back yesterday? The fog cleared."

"Ah, yesterday!" said Polly. "It was the greatest luck. No trains, being Sunday, and no car. The only one we could have had got smashed up on Saturday night in the fog."

She explained briefly about Mr. Fenwick's accident and how he was now detained in hospital.

"And although there are our bikes," Polly rigorously conceded, "you couldn't expect us to ride fifteen miles on Sunday. We must rest on Sunday."

"Was it really a day of rest over here?"

"Oh, quite," was the madcap's demure answer. "Wasn't it, boys?"

"Armistice," nodded Jack. "Never knew such an appalling quiet Sunday. We chaps were simply longing for Monday morning, to resume!"

"Resume school, of course?"

"Of course—not," he answered Betty.

"Nunno! No more school for us under the existing regime—I think that's the word, isn't it, Dave? But he's talking to his sister! The Fenwick Filibusters have resolved; rather than submit, we'll—"

"I see," said Betty. She felt bound to interrupt, time pressing. "And I'm sure we wish you the best of luck, all of you! But about this note—"

"There's no hurry!" pleaded Polly.

"No, bekas, we shan't go back before dinner, any old how! What ze diggings, we must have dinner first!"

"True, O queen," said Jack. "I suppose we are to be given some dinner, too? Come on, boys, let's get back to Fenwick's. 'Was there a man dismayed?'" he quoted, buttoning his jacket so as to be able to stride away the more determined-looking. "Not one!"

There was certainly no hesitation about following him, and Betty could see how her school-mate's eyes were shining with admiration as they watched the young lads race off.

After calling over the hedge to the waiting chauffeur to tell him to go on to the main gateway and then find Fenwick's house, Betty started to walk with Polly and the other girls in that

direction, and again there was lively conversation.

"Fancy Miss Somerfield sending a car for us, when we have our bikes!" cried Polly. "And sending you two girls, as well!"

"It's all in the note, I suppose," was the Form captain's evasive answer. She did not wish to disconcert the week-end absentees by giving her own inferences.

"Good job, anyhow," rejoiced Naomer. "Bekas, we can go back in ze car, and leave ze bikes to be fetched some other time, which will mean anuzzer visit!"

Would it! thought Betty. Her belief was that Miss Somerfield had said in the letter, the bicycles would have to be sent home by carrier or any other means. Never mind about the bicycles; the girls themselves must return at once! In time for afternoon class!

As for why Miss Somerfield had sent her, Betty, and Pam, in the car, that, too, was pretty obvious to Morcove's Fourth-Form captain. It was being relied upon that she would be the right one to put a stop to any idea of still hanging out the visit, being in enough personal disgrace as it was.

Even as Betty had this thought, she found Polly remarking:

"We'll find Mrs. Fenwick at the schoolhouse and see what she has to say!"

But the front entrance to Fenwick's, when the girls came in sight of it, looked impassable.

A notice had been posted up on the board, just inside the main doorway, and that notice had thrown Fenwick's into great excitement. Those who, in spite of struggles, could not get near enough to read, were having the notice shouted out to them—which would have served the purpose quite well, only, there was so much booing and hooting!

"Come on, girls!" panted Polly, dashing on faster than ever.

By her own feelings, Morcove's Fourth Form captain could gauge the extent of the madcap's renewed interest in the revolt against the Tyrant of Grangemoor. Nor was Judy, level-headed girl though she was, inclined to hang back. Naomer, needless to say, was like a young lunatic all at once, and even Paula Creel—that languid one!—was showing great enthusiasm for the Cause.

"How am I to get them home to Morcove!" wondered Betty, but no glum look attended the thought. For good or ill, she would not have had these chums of hers anything but as keen as this on the side of the boys.

So, in a few moments they reached the fringe of the excited mob. The boys were so wrought up now, they hardly took notice of the girls, who saw angry faces on all sides and heard the most determined cries.

"Shame, shame! Boo!"

"We'll not stand for it!"

"Not we!"

"This ends it, boys!"

"Hear, hear-r-r-r! Bar-out then, come on—bar-out!"

Betty wondered if she was the only girl who, hearing that cry of all cries being raised, felt her heart throbbing. Had it really come to this at last, over here at Grangemoor? A bar-out—the very limit to which schoolboys could go in revolt against authority!

It seemed as if it must be so, for the cry was taken up by most of the goaded scholars.

"Bar-out! Bar-out!"

"Hurrah, that's it, boys! Come on, then!"

"Where's Linton?" some of them now clamoured, and then as they found Polly's

brother, working clear of the crush, they showed by their shouts how they looked to him as leader.

"What about it, Linton?"

"Bar-out!" he shouted back. "Come on, boys—over to the water-tower! Hurrah, come on, all!"

Then Polly rushed to try and get a word with her brother, but he shook her off. He was in a state of hilarious peckishness.

"Can't stop, Polly. Bye, all you girls! Come on, boys!"

Away they surged, only ceasing their confusing cries and wild cheers to start singing their song:

"Jolly god pals are Fenwick's lot,  
Hurrah, hooray!  
Caring for nobody, not one jot—  
Hip, pip—hooray!"

"My gwacious," Paula palpitated. "Er—Betty, deah?"

"Bit lively, aren't they!" Betty responded, with a queer smile. "Polly—Polly, come back!" For Polly was suddenly dashing after her brother and all of them. "Naomer!"

"No, bekas—"

"Stop, both of you—stop!"

That was Betty again, after a sharp sprint that had enabled her to catch up with both chums and drag them to a standstill.

Polly flung round, her eyes wild with excitement.

"I'm going—"

"Polly, you can't!"

"I will—I must, Betty. Don't try to—"

"Polly, please—"

"Oh!" she cried out impatiently, and almost tore herself free from her chum's hand.

Next moment she was as good as gone beyond recall, and Judy and Naomer were with her. Of the four girls who had been at Grangemoor over the week-end, only Paula remained with Betty and Pam. The pretty face of Paula Creel seemed to proclaim that she was too confused to be able to do anything.

And confusion—dire confusion it was now. All those roused schoolboys were shouting and cheering as they surged towards what must have been some agreed rallying point in the last extremity. The water tower!

Betty and the two schoolmates who were still with her could see the tower—a tall, brick edifice, standing by itself, supporting that enormous tank to which water was pumped for the school's private water supply. At this moment, it assumed in the girls' eyes a fortress-like appearance.

They could understand how the boys had come to hit upon that tower as a stronghold to which they could retire, if the worst came to the worst. By its very nature the building would lend itself admirably to what the boys now intended to do—shut themselves in, and show a barred door to Dr. Trouncer!

"Here's Mrs. Fenwick, I think," Betty heard Pam remarking serenely, and she turned round to see the lady in question hurrying towards them. "But I must rush after Polly and the others," said Morcove's Fourth Form captain. "Here, Pam dear—you give her the letter; you explain!"

And no sooner had the note passed from one hand to the other than Betty was off after her vanished chums!

SOMETHING WAS happening before the eyes of Polly, Judy and Naomer, to form a sight which they would never forget.

They had not quite overtaken the small army of

Fenwickians as it made its dash to the water tower. So, as they came rushing after those excited boys, it was to see them already storming into the tower by its one doorway at the base.

That doorway was a narrow one, only intended to meet the requirements of the man who had occasionally to give an eye to the tank and some machinery. It now seemed as if boys were scrimmaging for the honour of being amongst the first to enter the intended fortress. It was a joyous, good-humoured struggle, with as much laughter and cheering as ever.

But what added to the excitement of the scene was the sudden appearance of Dr. Trouncer himself, his gown flying, with Sergeant Japp and a few seniors, who had been hastily collected, to deal with the rebels.

The new Head was like a madman now, and in a moment such a mix-up had set in, round about the doorway of the tower, the three girls knew that they were being quite unnoticed. They had halted, for even headstrong Polly felt it wise to keep out of the conflict that it was, Dr. Trouncer and his lot trying to get into the tower to fetch out those boys who were already there!

Suddenly all the sounds of wild scuffling were overwhelmed by a thudding bang! Then came a muffled cheer from boys inside the tower.

They had got the door shut and had made it fast.

The great bar-out at Fenwick's had begun! Those who had been first inside the tower would stay inside now; those who had had the ill-luck to be headed off or dragged back must stay outside—and if as prisoners of the Head—well, that was the fortune of war!

With fast-beating hearts the three girls realised that this was the case. It was but a few moments since they had come rushing to see what would happen, and already it had happened. The fulfilment of the rebels' resolve; no surrender to such a tyrant as Grangemoor had found in its new Head!

"Judy—Naomer! Quick, come with me!"

Some daring idea or other must have flashed into Polly's brain. With a nudge to both her chums, as she panted that entreaty, now she was off again, running her fastest.

Afte: her went Judy and Naomer, not less readily because Polly, whatever her intention might be, was not running back. She led them round to the far side of the water tower, where all was open ground.

"The bikes!" she began to pant an explanation of this sudden manoeuvre, a few moments later. "I know where they are, and we must get them—ride to the nearest village—buy up food!"

Then Judy and Naomer understood. Judy, aware that her brother Dave was certainly amongst those who had shut themselves up in the tower—for she had seen him, going whether all those boys were personal friends of hers or not—would never wish them to lack supplies.

"Bekas, ze more food zey have, ze longer they can hold out!" she said breathlessly. "Ooo, queek—"

"Yes, come on!"

As if they were not, all three of them, running their fastest even then!

Never once did they glance back. The need for haste; the sense of its being possible for them to do something really helpful—it kept them racing on across another wide, deserted area of the school grounds. If they had looked behind, they might have seen Betty. For Betty was there, as

far back as the tower, standing to halloo them, since she had no earthly chance of overtaking such speeding runaways.

"Polly! Judy! Naomer! Come back—come back!"

So Betty was appealing—megaphoning with her hands, and all in vain.

Her voice, at its loudest, was lost in the hubbub going on at the tower, where Jack and a few others had put heads out of window, to give more ringing cheers!

"It's THIS way, girls—come on!"

They had got their bikes from the place where the machines had been lodged over the week-end. Now the trio were clear of the gates, Polly Linton in front, chiming her bell as she slewed to the left.

The village of Grangemoor, nearly a mile from the school, was a mere straggling street—of thatched cottages mostly. Motorists flashing through did not see much to tempt them to pull up, although those who had ever got down, at a venture, for tea at the village bakery, were always likely to pay a return visit.

For, whatever else Grangemoor village lacked, it boasted a bakery that served the very nicest home-made cakes and pastries.

Three girls got down from their bicycles outside this modest-looking establishment, and one glance into the bow windows was enough.

"Gosh!" said Polly.

"Yes, bekas—gorjus!"

The shop bell jangled as Polly lifted the brass latch of the door and passed inside, followed by her chums. The appetising smell of new bread and pastries just up from the bakehouse caused Naomer to give a relishing sniff.

"Shop!" called out Polly.

"Yes, what ze diggings! Bekas, eef zey don't look out, I shall start serving myself. I could do with a snack, bekas—you never know!"

And, in furtherance of the theory that the next meal might be a long way off, Naomer took a jam-tart with finger and thumb and took a big bite.

Then, just as the dusky one was rolling a very hot mouthful with her tongue, the baker's wife panted up two steps into the shop, old oak boards creaking under her.

"Morning, young ladies! And what can I do for you?"

"Well—er—ours is rather a big order, I'm afraid," blushed Polly.

"Oh, don't be afraid, miss! We can serve you with as much as you want, and pleased to do so. Business is bothersome a-present; tiresome, it is. I says to my husband last night, soon us won't know whether to bake or not, when there's no depending upon the scholars any longer, seemingly!"

"Ah?" smiled Polly, "You—you find it like that, do you?"

"Us finds it very trying, missy—ay!"

"Bekas, ze boys are not being allowed to come here, you mean?"

"Seemingly so, missy—seemingly! 'Tis a strange business, too, seemingly, as is going on up at the school. You young ladies—"

"Two of us have brothers at Grangemoor."

"Oh, then, mebbe you know more than I'd ever care to tell strangers! For it do seem a main pity, so it do, that things be so upsidowny at the school. And what would you like, young ladies?" the baker's wife came back to the point.

"Well!" said Polly; and they all three took



stock of the counters. "It isn't so much pastries and things that we—er—thought of buying—as—er—"

"All ze same, some of these tarts to begin with, plis, bekas zey are jolly good, bekas I have tried one," interposed Naomer gaily. "And now I am going to try one of zese others. Just to show," she added, "that there is no ill-feeling!"

"I'm sure, missy, we don't want none o' that," laughed a fat dame. "And good riddance, I say, to them as can only come along to stir up strife."

Polly and Judy nudged each other. They knew that that had been used in allusion to Dr. Trouncer.

"We want to take as many loaves as our bikes can manage," Polly simply had to announce, let the good dame's surprise be what it might. "And cake—plain, substantial cake."

"Ze sort to fill you up, bekas——"

"For your brothers at the school, missies?"

"Well—for them and—and some of the other boys," smiled Polly, at the same time avoiding Judy's eyes. "We leave you to make up as big parcels as you think our bikes can take!"

"And, plis, not to give you any bozzer, bekas zere is no time to waste," Naomer remarked cheerfully, "can we go on having anyzink we fancy, with a refresher to help? Ooo!" said Naomer, pouncing on a case of mineral waters. "My favourite, ze good old raspberry-fizz!"

A bottle-opener was passed across, and the dusky one got busy.

The sight of Naomer filling three tumblers with liquid refreshment of the right raspberry colour and flavour, caused Polly to remark in an undertone to Judy:

"The boys won't be short of water, anyhow! How many thousand gallons in that water-tower, Judy?"

"A good few, Polly! I wonder what's happening now, back at the school?"

"Rough luck on a lot of the boys—those who didn't get in in time," grimaced Polly. "Did you see how Dr. Trouncer was lashing out at them? And he had that awful Sergeant Japp with him—some of the seniors, too. I don't know how they could, Judy!"

Polly could not help smiling then.

"Those seniors? They didn't look happy, anyhow."

"But Jack and the rest—talk about looking happy!" was her brighter remark. "I'll never forget them," she chuckled.

Tillink, tillink! went the shop-bell at this instant as another customer came in. Polly and Judy glanced at the doorway, simply to see if it might be anyone connected with the school, and then—they got a shock.

For they had seen her before—this girl who was now entering, as if for rest and refreshment after a country ramble. They remembered her being in the teashop in Barncombe last Wednesday, and finding her listening to their talk about the trouble at Grangemoor School.

Now this girl treated the Morcovians as if they were total strangers to her; yet they could

tell that she had been taken aback—was feeling confused. And why?

The baker's wife decided to attend to this fresh customer at once, as otherwise it would have meant a good wait for her, the Morcovian order being on such wholesale lines. Nor could impatient Polly resent this, especially as the girl only wanted to buy a few cakes to take away, possibly for an alfresco meal.

She paid for these with a ten-shilling note, and after she had received change and made her exit a curious thing happened. Polly and her chums saw the baker's wife looking at the ten-shilling note in a surprised, puzzled manner.

"Odd! so 'tis!"

The chums looked questioning.

"Why, young ladies, this here note, I'm sure it's the one that I gave to the new headmaster, up at Grangemoor School, only a few days ago. He was in here, buying terbaccy." For the shop dealt in tobacco and sweets. "And now here 'tis back agen!"

"That's funny!" said Polly; and she turned to Judy, whose brows were raised in similar surprise.

"A note as I wasn't sorry to be rid of, 'tis so half-torn and stuck with stamp-paper," commented the dame. "But it's come back, like a bad ha'penny, as the saying is! Ah, well"—and she placed it in the till—"can't be helped, and now I must see to all you young ladies' wants."

Five minutes after this they were ready to ride back to Grangemoor School, their handlebars weighted with really large parcels. A single loaf is pretty bulky, and when it comes to a matter of several loaves, as well as cakes and buns, a bicycle is not the ideal means of transit!



The mysterious girl from Barncombe entered the little shop. She pretended not to notice the three chums, but they were sure that she felt confused at finding them there.

"Curious about that girl and the note!" exclaimed Judy as they all three pedalled away. "Surely, Polly, she can't be anything to do with Dr. Trouncer?"

"Just what I was wondering! He's not married, we know, so she can't be his daughter. Besides—just as if he'd be at the school and she in digs in Barncombe, if they were related!"

"I didn't like the look of her, did you?"

"Not a little bit, Judy! But we can't bother about her now," said the madcap blithely. "What loads we've brought away from that shop—ha, ha, ha! And the next job, to get all the stuff to the boys!"

"If we can!"

"No if about it!" laughed Polly. "We are jolly well going to do it—or I am, anyhow—if it means not going back to Morcove until ever so late."

"And eef Mees Somersfield have ze fit, she must have ze fit," panted Naomer, her feet thrusting away at the pedals. "Bekas, most important, for all those boys to have plenties to eat!"

#### Food for the Filibusters!

"CHAPS—whoa, stop your row for a bit—"

"Hurrah! For-r-r:

"Jolly good pals are Fenwick's lot,  
Hurrah, hooray—"

"Yes, but switch it to earth for a moment, boys!" was Jack Linton's shouted entreaty; and so at last he got a hearing.

"Some of us have been saying about grub!"

"Never mind about grub, boys!" bawled a few, whilst others suggested:

"Wait until to-night, anyhow! For-r-r:

"Jolly good pals are Fenwick's lot,  
Sez you, sez you!"

"Order! Or-der!"

"Chaps, just a mo! It looks as if we'll jolly well have to send down to the village for all we can buy-up at the bakehouse," Jack resumed. "For do we want to have to raid Fenwick's House for grubs?"

"No!"

"Yes!"

"Why not? Aren't we entitled to be fed?"

"Chuck it, you chaps!" laughed Jack. "Look here, I'm off down to the village to buy up the jolly old Bun Shop. Who's got the dibs? Throw it into the ring, boys; all for a good cause! Old Shudders, we'll show him! What? The rebel chief turned to yell back at a chum who had yelled in his ear.

"You can't get down to the village, Jack!"

"Can't? Why not?"

"Door down below—locked!"

"What!" yelled Jack and a dozen others.

"On the outside!"

"Gosh! Oh, heck!" grimaced Jack. "So that's why the old gooch could leave us, is it? Of course, the key would be on the outside, come to think of it."

"Pity we didn't think of it before!" laughed a rebel hollowly. "Now, what?"

"I know!" And Jack was all smiles again.

"Find a rope and lower me down! Chaps, there must be a rope—bound to be one."

"Flagstaff," said Dave, speaking for once.

"Hurrah, come on, boys!"

To go past the great tank at the top of the

tower one had to mount some steep stairs, serving a skylight. This latter opened on to the parapeted roof, where the flagstaff was reared.

Jack and a few others, as nimble as monkeys, were soon hauling down ropes by which, on certain days, the flag was flown. Gaily they were about to descend with their valuable find when Jack for one gave an excited:

"Gosh! Look down there, boys!"

"Where—where?"

"There!" And he pointed. "My sister, and there's your sister as well, Dave—and Naomer! Gee, boys, what are they up to now?"

"Looks as if—"

"And so they have!" Jack fairly yelled. "Boys, hip, hurrah, no need to go into the village! Morcove's to the rescue, with grub!"

Hearing this sensational news, those rebels who were in the body of the tower rushed to the various windows that lit the stairway. And then



With a mighty heave Jack & Co. sent Prefect Rennard knew it would Rennard "the Fox"!

they saw, and they cheered and hurrah'd accordingly, whilst Jack came scrambling down with the ropes, in breathless haste to put them to good use.

Polly and her two chums could be seen riding right up to the base of the isolated tower on their bicycles, from the handlebars of which dangled parcels of tell-tale shape!

"Let me get to that window, chaps!" was Jack's jovial cry a few moments later, and way was made for him.

Over the sill he tossed the rope, keeping hold of one end. It came out of its coils as it fell, dangling from the window to the ground, with several yards to spare. More cheers from the Fenwick Filibusters in their stronghold! And it was with an answering cheer that all three girls set about unslinging their purchases, to tie the rope about them and have them hauled up.

"Done it!" Polly joyfully cried, as she got the

first lot of eatables securely tied. "Haul away! I said we would, and we have!"

"Yes, bekas—"

"Hurrah, up she goes!" And Polly did a joy dance as wild as Naomer's even.

"Heave-ho, my hearties!" roared Jack, with his head and shoulders over the window-sill. "Up she comes—hooray! Good old Morcove!"

The first consignment came bumping in over the sill and was hurriedly clawed free of its bindings. Down they flung the rope again, and again another load was attached.

"Gorjus!" Naomer yelled up to the various boyish faces. "Bekas, zere are some tarts in that load, wiz ze compliments of Study 12!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Thanks, you girls!" was shouted down to them, with terrific heartiness. "You're the ones!"

"And again!" bellowed Jack.



and hurtling toward the pond! Not if the boys like a girl while they were near!

And again, as the drop dropped down, it was put to useful purpose.

Up went the third and last load, to arrive as safely as the other consignments, and then it seemed to the girls that they had done all that could be done, and must now—however reluctantly—retire!

"Bye, Jack!" his sister called up to him. "Best of luck!"

"And no surrender, don't forget!" was Naomer's parting injunction. "Bekas—"

But she had to break off, for the boys were shouting down to her and her two chums.

"What?" Polly called up, hand at ear.

"How much do we owe you!" dinned the filibusters.

Polly drew herself up. So did Naomer and Judy. Whereupon the Fenwick Filibusters gave three cheers for Morcove, and at every window looking that way there were boys waving caps.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Polly, as she and her two chums turned to go, taking their machines with them. "It's a shame to have to beat it!"

"Yes, bekas—look!"

They all three looked back.

"There's Dave," was Judy's fond murmur; "next to Jack—"

"I see them," nodded Polly. "But I mustn't look, or you'll never get me away! 'Bye, all!' she yelled, for the last time.

"And don't start wiz ze tarts!" shrilled Naomer. "Bekas eef you do—indigestion!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed back the Fenwick Filibusters, in a way that made it certain, they would make light of "indigestion," and far worse discomforts than that, for the sake of Freedom and the Rights of Scholars against the tyranny of Dr. Trouncer.

#### No Longer the Captain!

"HERE comes the car!"

"Yes, here they are—at last!"

"What a time Betty and Pam have been, fetching the others back!"

"They'll all have something to tell us, girls!"

"Hope so!"

Morcove, out of school for the afternoon, was providing quite a crowd of chattering scholars, down at the main gateway.

The hooter gave a warning, and round to the gateway slowed the crowded motor, causing the waiting girls to stand well back.

In a flash the car was gone past, affording amused juniors the merest glimpse of several smiling faces. There ensued a race up the drive in pursuit of the motor, and as it was now going slowly quite a lot of the girls were able to surge round as soon as it stopped, opposite the porch.

"At last!" was the first cry that greeted Betty and her fellow passengers, as they jumped out. "What a time you've been, too! You'll be in for it—ha, ha, ha!"

"Are we?" retorted Polly blithely. "Oh, well!"

"Bekas!" And Naomer promptly gave a most excitable account of the week-end happenings at Grangemoor.

Naomer had come back, bursting to tell the world of Morcove! Instantly she was surrounded by girls who were all eagerness to hear all about the great rebellion. But Betty was for going indoors at once, and Polly and the others went with her.

There was a note for Betty to hand the headmistress from Mrs. Fenwick. Pam did not think it necessary to go along with the captain to Miss Somerfield's room; but Polly and Judy were with Betty when she tapped at the door marked "Private."

"Come in," was the response, in that gentle and amiable tone which Morcove always associated with its kindly headmistress. Good reasons had Betty, however, for anticipating that there would be a distinct change of tone in a moment or two.

And so it proved.

"Oh, it's you girls—back at last!"

Sternness had come into Miss Somerfield's voice and looks directly the three girls entered.

"A quarter-to-four," she commented.

"Yes," said Betty; "and, please—this note from Mrs. Fenwick."

"Wait then, all of you."

So they waited, lined up, whilst the headmistress opened the note and read it, standing by the window.

"There is a good deal in this that I am quite

prepared to appreciate," she remarked at last, in a slightly mollified tone. "As to why Mrs. Fenwick did not send you home yesterday, Polly—and you, Judy. And I realise that the accident to Mr. Fenwick has been adding a great deal to Mrs. Fenwick's trial. She must be having a most anxious time altogether."

A pause. Polly, for one, was all smiles now. But that was not a thought which Betty could share.

"You are back, Polly and Judy—Naomer, too, and Paula, of course?"

"We left Naomer talking to the girls——"  
"Quite," nodded Miss Somerfield. She could make allowances for the dusky one and Paula always. "I suppose it would be too much to expect that this school could be kept in ignorance of what is taking place at Grangemoor. A pity, though. It is a most unhappy business."

"Miss Somerfield," burst out Polly, "you can't imagine! The new headmaster is——"

"I would rather, Polly Linton, acquire information from other sources," came the slightly bleak rebuff. "You and Judy are back, as I was remarking, and so the best thing will be for you to go away now to your respective studies and try not to talk too much about it all. Go along."

Without a word—for not a word more, evidently, was desired—Polly and Judy turned away to the door. Betty remained, thinking to herself, as she heard the door-latch shut behind her two chums; "Now for it!"

Miss Somerfield glanced at the note again, looked at Morcove's Fourth Form captain, then walked about the room for nigh a minute.

"Yes," she resumed at last, with slow impressiveness, "it is as I expected, Betty. Impossible for me to be angry with any of the four girls who were at Grangemoor over the week-end. Mrs. Fenwick's note confirms what she said to me over the phone. A combination of unfortunate occurrences, and herself almost distraught! She relies on my knowledge of girls, my experience with them, to make allowances for much that was bound to happen, when two of those girls have each a brother at Grangemoor. I do make full allowance for all that. But, Betty—but——"

Another pause. It was not for Betty to say a word, she knew.

"You remember what I said last Saturday? It is one thing to feel bound to excuse inevitable happenings resulting from those girls' going over to Grangemoor. It is quite another thing to excuse the girl—their own Form captain—who obtained leave for them to go!"

"Yes, I see that!" Betty exclaimed, a little huskily. "That's quite fair, of course."

"You do see that? Otherwise, Betty, I could very soon prove to you that, from the point of view of this school and its good name, that is what matters greatly. A Form captain obtained leave for those girls to go over to Grangemoor, well knowing that it was in that disturbed state. It is all in that, Betty; you knew!"

Betty nodded.  
Again a rather terrible silence.

"Polly Linton has done this, and she has done that—of course she has! She has a brother at that school. The same with Judy Cardew. No, it would be inhuman of me to punish them for what sisterly devotion has dictated. But I do say that you, Betty, in what you did in the first have done your best to keep Polly and Judy away from Grangemoor at such a time, and instead, you did your best to get them to that school."

Morcove's Fourth Form captain swallowed hard. That was instead of speaking—instead of saying the one thing that could be urged in self-defence; that she had felt so sorry for Polly and Judy, apart from their brothers at such a time!

"I cannot overlook it, Betty. I'm sorry, but I dare not. So much depends upon Form captains putting the good name of the school before all else—before personal friendships even. I must say, you have been the one to do that in the past; but it seems that you have become lax, and I know what will be said all round the school, unless I take notice of your defection."

"Then, please, let me——"

"I think you had better, yes!" came the nodded rejoinder. "You had better take your punishment, Betty, to make it quite clear that Morcove, at any rate, is still run on those lines which were laid down long ago. I will see your Form-mistress at once about appointing a suitable girl to take your place as captain for, say, the next fortnight. All being well, Betty, the captaincy will then be returned to you. Now you may go."

TWO GIRLS, waiting about for her, outside the private room—Polly and Judy!

But, thank goodness, they did not seem to suspect, even now, that there was any serious upset. Polly was bubbling over with merriment, and Judy happy enough, in her own, subdued way.

"You've been a long while!" Polly softly chuckled. "Why? She seemed awfully decent about it all—as we knew she would be, of course!"

"Oh, yes; Miss Somerfield's always fair," smiled Betty. "So let's get upstairs——"

"But was she getting you to tell her all about the riots?" clamoured Polly. "She wouldn't let me say a word!"

Betty laughed.

"Mostly, girls, it was to the effect that—well, Morcove must go on as usual, whatever other schools do."

Up to Study 12 they hastened after that. Naomer was there—laying tea! Only a few minutes later, just when they were on the point of sitting down, with Judy and a few others for extra company, Etta Hargrove came to the door, looking rather troubled.

"Hallo, Etta!" the tea-table hailed her blithely. "Had tea?"

"Yes, bekas, come in and sit down and hear all about ze great rebellion, all ze latest!"

Smiling, Etta shook her head, then looked seriously at Betty.

"Er—Betty—will it be convenient later on?"

"Any time after tea, Etta!"

"Right-ho! I—I'm sorry, you know, but—you know how it is?"

"Oh, rather; that's all right!"

Etta's departure, after this, left Betty's chums rather agape.

"What's all right then?" asked Polly blankly.

"And what's she sorry about? And why did she look so—so funny?"

"Oh, you'll know soon enough, girls!"

"I prefer to know—now," announced Polly, getting up. "Excuse me, girls—and don't let Naomer eat all the cake!"

She flashed away, and was absent for perhaps a couple of minutes, the tea-table continuing in talk—mostly about Grangemoor.

Then, suddenly, Polly came whirling back into the study. Her usually bonny face was altogether changed.

"The captaincy!" came her cry. "They have taken it away from Betty! Oh, oh, they have——"

"Taken the captaincy from you, Betty? Why—why?"

"Because we let Betty get us leave to go to Grangemoor last Saturday, when she knew how things were over there!"

"Dash!" fumed Polly. "Oh, bother and blow it! If only I had known! Judy, if we had known!"

"Yes," said Judy Cardew tensely.

"It doesn't matter," smiled Betty.

"Doesn't matter?" And up jumped Polly, to stamp at every other word. "But it does matter, terribly! We can't have you paying for our sakes like this! Oh, I'm going down to Miss Somerfield—I am! I'll—I'll plead with her—protest——"

"Polly, don't be so silly; it's no use——"

"Yes, it is. I'll get her to understand! Oh, something must be done about it!"

And she ran out of the room once more.

"Don't you go, Judy," pleaded Betty, for that chum had made a movement as if to follow Polly. "She'll do no good, I tell you. Miss Somerfield is quite fair; I deserved any blame."

"No!" exploded Naomer. "Bekas——"

"Ah, Naomer," smiled Betty, "you don't understand, dear. There's great wisdom behind Miss Somerfield's action."

"Not ze bit of eet, and I am disgusted! What ze diggings, I zink we had better have a rebellion, too!"

"You mustn't talk like that," said Judy earnestly. "It's as Betty says, I'm afraid; Miss Somerfield has taken a certain view of it all—that we didn't see. Polly and I, I mean. Oh, Betty, I am sorry though!"

"Judy, neither you nor Polly, or any of you, must let it upset you. After all, I don't mind. I mean, I do mind, of course," candour compelled Betty to amend; "but it was worth it. Put it that way, girls; it was worth it."

"Bai Jove, Betty deah, it was extremewly good of you——"

"Rubbish. Supposing I had been one to have a brother at Grangemoor? But, of course, in the eyes of Miss Somerfield, I ought not to have done it. When a captain puts forward a request for other girls to have leave, it's taken for granted that the captain is—well, satisfied that everything

is all right. And I knew that there was all that rumpus, and so—— Oh, say no more! It's over and done with now."

"I'll wait," said Judy agitatedly, "just to see what Polly has to say when she comes back. Just to see if she has done any good after all."

Silence reigned then in Study 12, where usually all was jollity. To and fro in the corridor scampered girls who had not a care in the world.

Suddenly they heard Polly rushing down the corridor. Other girls, standing about in talk wanted her to join them, but she cried a breathless: "Can't stop!"

Then she was in the study again, heeling the door shut behind her, whilst she stared at Betty wildly.

"No use."

"I told you so, Polly."

"Oh!" she raged out. "There is nothing to be done—nothing! You're to—to go through with it, Betty!"

"Yes, bekas——"

"Sh'rrp!" stamped Polly. "Ugh, if you say one word, Naomer!"

A great pause, and then Betty stepped to the table. She lifted the tea cloth so as to be able to pull open a drawer and take out a whole sheaf of papers and a few notebooks. They all related to the captaincy.

"I am going along to see Etta—to hand over to her. Soon be back!"

At the door she paused.

"Cheer up, Polly, there's a dear!"

Then Betty was gone.

"Cheer up, she says!" exclaimed Polly. "Cheer up! Ugh, I could—I don't know what! To think that we were there, Judy, glorying in being there, too! Oh, why—why didn't Betty manage to let us know, so that we would have come back sooner—even on Saturday, somehow?"

"We all know why," said Judy emotionally.

"Yes, wather!"

"Bekas——"

"Because Betty is Betty," resumed Judy softly. "Like the rest of us, she can't help being what she is."

"How I wish I could be different!" sighed Polly.

"No, bekas——"

"You're all right," smiled Pam serenely.

"I'm not so sure!" said Polly, with another sigh and a shake of the head. "Well, it's taught me a lesson. Never again after this will I let my head run away with me!"

"Until next time," smiled Madge.

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

## "The Closing of Study 12!"

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