

"ONE CLUE TO GUIDE THEM"
Dramatic Long Complete Morcove Tale Within

The SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN 2^d



Betty & Co. Spring-Clean the Cottage!

An incident from this week's complete Morcove School story.

A THRILLING COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY IN WHICH BETTY BARTON
AND CO. OF MORCOVE PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT PART

ONE CLUE TO GUIDE THEM



Although the priceless papers relating to the Temple of the Moon are still safe, Pam Willoughby and her chums of Morcove feel that at any moment an attempt may be made to steal them. How their grave fear is realised, in a most dramatic fashion, is related in this vivid story of the famous chums of Study 12.

By MARJORIE STANTON

After the Match

"RESERVED," said a printed ticket on a big tea-table in the Barncombe Creamery.

Otherwise the town's most popular tea-room was full up.

Half Morcove School seemed to be here this Wednesday afternoon. The Morcove hat was everywhere, except at that reserved table, with its tilted chairs.

Whether they had been out for a cycle run or in town for shopping or had ended up here after a "hike" over the moorland or had been playing tennis or other games, here the girls were, now that it was tea-time.

There were chummy batches, but there was much friendly fluttering of hands in recognition between one batch and another, much speaking across and so making the whole scene a lively, sparkling one.

And now came Betty Barton, captain of the Fourth Form, with a whole host of intimates, to tilt back those chairs at the reserved table and rather thankfully sit down.

But if Betty & Co. were tired after a strenuous "away" match against Barncombe House School, they were also jubilant. They had won.

Accordingly, they could now celebrate at this table which had been specially reserved by the captain, in expectation of a win.

"Tea for—let me see; fourteen, please."

Thus Betty, very blandly to the comely waitress. "And don't forget," shrilled that dusky imp, Naomer Nakara, "cream-buns, plis, and mind zey are fresh. Shift up ze bit, Paula, bekas I must have room."

"To expand," said Polly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Would any geal like to change places with me?" asked Paula, suddenly realising that she had got the imp next to her. "I weally would like a little peace— Owp! Theah you go, Naomer! I say, I should like a little— Ooch, gah! Staph it, will you!"

"Naomer!" said the captain. "If you don't behave!"

"What ze diggings, it is, all Paula!"

"On the contwawy— Owp! Naow look what she's done!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All down my coat," wailed Paula, getting up to drain a good half-pint of milk from the lap of her frock. "Weally, this is insuffeable!"

"I ought to have brought my ruler," sighed

Polly, who kept a foot's length of hard ebony in Study 12 for the special purpose of keeping Naomer in order. "Oh, for a cup of tea, girls, when it comes!"

"Same here!" agreed others yearningly. "Insufferabubble," said Naomer, "the way they keep you waiting. Next thing we shall be told that all ze pastries are gone. Bekas"—glancing around—"some of these other girls are awfully greedy."

"People in glasshouses, Naomer."
"I am not in a glasshouse; I am in a teashop, and I expect my tea. Hooray!" as she saw the waitress coming. "Now to get going."

"Wude!" said Paula, tilting her chin. "Woop!"

"Zen you mind what you say. Gorjus!" sparkled Naomer, as the laden tray arrived. "Ooo, zat frothy bun fer me, queek!"

"Well, this is awfully nice of you, Betty!" cried Helen Craig.

"Not at all, girls. We won."
"We won, yes!" exclaimed Polly. "And I don't suppose the bruise on my left ankle will take more than a month to go."

Meanwhile, she very thirstily watched the captain start to pour out.

Round went the welcome cups—"delish!"

"Bai Jove, most wefweshing, most wealcome, yes, wather!" sighed Paula Creel. "Pawdon, Polly deah!"

"I said cheerio!"

"Oh, cheer—Owp! Naow look what she's done, geals!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I very sorry," pleaded Naomer, who in reaching for a cake-plate had jogged Paula's cup badly.

"Sowwy, bai Jove! I hev a stwong belief, Naomer, you did that on purpose."

"Well, I didn't. Bekas I have got too much to zink about besides thinking about you."

And Naomer showed the trend of her thoughts by concentrating on the eatables.

"Ripping day it has been!" exclaimed Tess Trelawney presently. "And the weather looks like lasting now."

"It'll be a fine evening, anyhow," said Pam Willoughby. "We can get back soon to some tennis."

"Bai Jove!" gasped Paula. "Some of you geals nevah tire! Hockey in the afternoon, and biking, and yet you can go on again!"

"Like Tennyson's brook, for ever," nodded staid Madge Minden.

"Or like Naomer at the cakes," Polly suggested grimly. "Go on, Naomer; that's right, take another."

"I am going to."

"The geal is positively—Owp!" Paula's disdainful comment was checked by an elbow lunge from the greedy one.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We shall soon have to be thinking of Easter," came Betty's blithe remark, a little later. "Try to arrange something exciting."

"The last few days have been tame enough, that's a fact," complained Polly, who thrived on sensation. "Just the ordinary routine ever since the night Pam saved Professor Donkin's papers from those Eastman people."

"For which Pam should have had her name on the honours board, I think," declared the captain heartily. "Never mind, Pam."

The consoling remark inspired a round of

laughter. All these chums of Pam Willoughby knew that she was the last girl in the world to want any fuss to be made over a brave deed performed by herself. At this moment Pam smiled her serene smile.

"Don't bring up what's ancient history by now, Betty," she pleaded carelessly. "Why, it was a whole week ago."

"And nothing heard of the Eastmans ever since," Polly rejoined. "Well, I said that they'd make themselves scarce after that night. After being as good as caught in the act, was it likely that they would stay around? I ask you!"

"Shame, though," murmured Helen, "for if the police had been able to catch the pair, then we might have found out why the Eastmans were so desperately keen to lay hands on those papers."

"Then there was that Hindu Johnny," Polly carried on the talk quite aggrievedly. "He hasn't been heard of again, worse luck. We thought he was after the papers, too."

"So he may have been," smiled Pam. "In fact, I feel as sure as ever that he was."

"Then why has he chucked it in?" the madcap demanded in a hurt tone. "A fizzle-out, I call it. We tackled the Eastmans—"

"I like the 'we,'" said Naomer. "Bekas—"

"The 'we' is quite right," Pam put in calmly. "Polly had a big part in tackling the Eastmans."

"Oh, I didn't!" Polly now dissented strenuously. "I—"

"Yes, well, we won't argue it," smiled Pam. "As for the Hindu, I no more want to see or hear anything of him again, than I want to hear of the Eastmans. The papers were saved that night; they're still safe, and that's the great thing."

Finding that a thoughtful pause was starting, she added quietly:

"As for why the Eastmans, and the Hindu, were after the papers perhaps I shall be able to tell you all some day. When Professor Donkin comes home from abroad and Miss Somerfield takes the papers out of her safe to hand them over to him, then will be the time."

"Or will the old professor be as mystified as we have been?" wondered Judy Cardew.

"I should say not," Pam answered. "Knowing all about the Eastern temple to which the papers relate he would surely be able to guess why there was that attempt to steal them."

"And the professor is the sort to tell you, Pam?" she was asked by one of her chums.

"He's a dear, I know that. When he was staying in Swanlake, where he was at work upon the papers, you remember, I saw a good deal of him."

"Anyhow, he ought to tell you when he does get back, if only out of gratitude for saving the papers," Polly declared. "Only he won't be back for—how long, Pam?"

"Goodness knows!"

Upon which Polly gave a grimace.

"So that's that, um! I do hate being kept in the dark. If there's a mystery I like it to be solved. But all we can do now is to—Have another cup!" she suddenly decided. "Just half a one, Betty, please."

Girls at other tables having come in earlier were now getting up to go. Some of them came over to have a word with Betty & Co., wanting to hear all about the match.

In any case, however, the talk would have been likely to become of a general nature. There was a good deal of truth in Pam's jesting remark that the affair of Professor Donkin's papers had become "ancient history." Morcove was like

that. A week without any fresh development and the school was bound to have other things to think about.

When at last the juniors rose to leave, some were for staying on for a bit in the town, to do some belated shopping. But Betty had most of her boon companions with her during the "bike back" to Morcove.

This was another thing typical of the school; the way certain girls went about, so to speak, in coveys. The Study 12 number seldom varied; nine girls there were, as a rule, always together.

It was when they were half-way back to the school that a strange thing happened.

It began with their suddenly sighting the head-mistress' cocker spaniel, out hunting over the moor all on his own. As that young rascal was under orders to stay in bounds, the chums hopped down from their machines to go after him and make him follow back to the school.

The rough moorland was offering good hunting just at present, however. If one frisky bunny got away there was another to bob up, and altogether the girls had a mirthful, breathless five minutes, trying to get hold of the errant doggie. He would not come to their calling, and time after time they lost him in the dense cover.

Then just as Naomer sighted him again and was shouting "Hi, you raskike!" there came a far from jocular cry from one of the others,

"Polly it was who suddenly panted:

"Girls, did you see—did you see?"

"See what, Polly?"

She would not answer until they had run close enough for a whisper to suffice.

"The Hindu, girls! I'm sure I glimpsed him just then. The same Hindu who has haunted Swanlake!"

Danger Still

"WHERE, where?" clamoured one or two, whilst Betty exclaimed sceptically:

"Now, Polly darling!"

"But I did, I tell you!" she insisted strenuously. "Just a dark head bobbing up amongst some gorse bushes over there; but it wore a turban. It was as if the man were making off, fearing that we'd blunder upon him."

"Over there?" echoed Pam. "Then let's take a look!"

"Yes, queek, queek!"

In vain, however, they scouted over a large area of the gorse wilderness.

Nothing rewarded their cautious search, and at last Polly had to defend a charge of having imagined it all.

"Well, girls, I didn't imagine it, so there!"

"We were talking about the Hindu, you know, Polly, and that may have—"

"Oh, rot! I'm not like that!" the madcap argued.

"Besides, why shouldn't it have been the Hindu after all? He hasn't been scared away as the Eastmans have!"

The others stood reduced to silence then. It would have been flippancy out of place to go on twitting Polly with the suggestion that she had suffered from a mere trick of the mind.

It was only too true what she had said; the Hindu could be still haunting the neighbourhood.

Nor was this to be forgotten; the papers were still at Morcove School, as might very easily be known to him.

As suddenly as all this, therefore, Betty and the rest were forced to realise that the danger still lurked. The Eastmans had been disposed of, but the Hindu—he still remained.

"Pretty awful!" muttered Betty, when they were riding on again presently, with the cocker spaniel quite content to follow, now that he had tired of the bunny-hunt. "Shocking shame it will be, girls, if the papers have only been saved from the Eastmans, to be stolen by that Hindu."

"Yes, well, he'll have a job," said Pam calmly. "They are under lock and key in Miss Somerfield's safe. Still, I must mention it to Miss Somerfield when we get indoors."

She added gravely:

"I know this much about the Temple of the Moon papers. If ever they do fall into the wrong hands, then the crowning work of Professor Donkin's lifetime will be ruined."

"And we are not going to have that," Polly declared grimly. "So that's the thing to do, Pam; let Miss Somerfield know."



"Pam," said Miss Somerfield, rather excitably. "Aren't you surprised about this?" Pam smiled. "I am very glad, at any rate! How d'you do, Professor Donkin?"

Chatting on as they did the rest of the run to the school they decided that the recent scare need not affect current arrangements to any extent. Pam would have to find Miss Somerfield, but the others could change at once for tennis. And even Pam would soon be out again.

As to that, however, they were reckoning in ignorance of something that had happened at the school. They were putting their machines away when Polly remarked:

"Look, Pam, here comes Muriel Floddon, as if she wanted you."

There was good reason for guessing that Pam was the one with whom this young girl in cap and apron, now hastening across the grass, wished to speak. For Muriel Floddon was that maid in training whose cottage home was on the Swanlake estate, fifteen miles or so from Morcove. And Pam—"the little lady of Swanlake," as the school had dubbed her—was taking a great interest in Muriel.

Sure enough the trim little figure came straight for tall Pam, who accordingly brisked up her step to meet this *protégé*.

"You want me, Muriel?"

"If you please, miss, the headmistress—"

"Oh, the headmistress!" with a rather falling face, as if this were not so good. Pam had presumed that it would be something personal to herself and Muriel, in connection, say, with some of that self-tuition which Muriel was going in for.

"Now?" inquired Pam, considering herself to be under orders to report to Miss Somerfield. "What about, Muriel, do you know?"

"Why, I think it must be because of someone who has turned up at the school. He's with Miss Somerfield at this moment, miss, and I was sent to find you."

"He?" interposed Polly roguishly. "Now what is this, Pam! Who is 'he'? It can't be your father, because he is abroad with your mother. Girls, do we allow Pam to have gentleman visitors?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, but this one is ever so old!" Muriel shyly laughed. "With shaggy eyebrows."

"Well, I wouldn't—I'm hanged if I'd have a fellow with shaggy eyebrows. All right, Pam, you may go."

"Thank you so much," the little lady of Swanlake bowed. "But, Muriel, who is it then? What's his name?"

"And the answer came:

"Professor Donkin."

What Next?

PROFESSOR DONKIN!

No wonder Polly emitted a staggered: "I say!" whilst Paula was one big: "Bai Jove!" No wonder Pam and all her chums looked utterly astounded.

Professor Donkin—and they had supposed him to be as far away as Egypt!

"What ze diggings?" shrilled Naomer. "Bekas—Ooo, gorjus, hooray! Now we can get to know why they were after zose papers of his!"

"Yes, Pam!"

"Bai Jove—"

"But—but—"

"He's here—he's here at the school!" Polly rejoiced wildly. "Just fancy!"

"Come to get the papers from Miss Somerfield,

of course?" Betty quickly reasoned. "And he wants to see you, Pam, naturally. He's been told all about the attempt."

"Yes, well," was the characteristic response from Pam. "But it's funny, when we were talking about him only just now."

It was like her to have recovered swiftly from the staggering surprise. On reaching the school-house with her chums she parted from them with one of her calm smiles, a smile that attendant Muriel came in for a few moments later.

"By the way, Muriel, I looked at that French exercise you did. A few corrections; I'll show you later. But you're getting on. Soon you'll be as fluent as Zelic Duval herself, and she's a native of France, as you know."

"Oh!" laughed Muriel. "Now you're flattering me, miss. Not that I mind a bit."

"If you were Zelic now, Muriel—"

"I'd much rather be myself, miss."

"And I'd much rather have you on hand than Zelic," Swanlake's schoolgirl daughter chatted on. A minute later Pam was tapping at the headmistress' door.

"Come in."

So Pam opened the door and entered, hardly noticing Miss Somerfield, so extraordinarily attractive was the other occupant of the room.

Here he was right enough, dear old Professor Donkin, with his grizzled hand and a lean, clean-shaven face, browned by the Egyptian sun, and his clothes a little baggier and shabbier than ever.

The clever, deep-set eyes, overhung by bushy brows, had the old quizzical look for Pam as she calmly advanced.

"Yes, Pam," said Miss Somerfield rather excitedly. "And aren't you surprised about this?"

"I am very glad, at any rate. How d'you do, Professor Donkin."

"Excellently well, my dear, thank you!" he cried, starting to polish pince-nez. Then he let the glasses dangle, realising that he should be shaking hands with Pam.

In a nervous manner he offered his hand—bonier than ever, Pam may have thought. Still, a friendlier grip there never was.

"Let me see." And to do so he struck the glasses on the bridge of his bony nose. "Hah, yes, more like your dear mother every day, my dear! I—er— Let me see; yes, I know, of course. About some papers of mine—"

"Professor Donkin, you must sit down," entreated Morcove's headmistress, for he was in a very nervy state. "And, Pam, if you have not had tea yet I will ring for another cup."

"Oh, I've had mine, thanks, Miss Somerfield."

"Professor Donkin turned up here only a few minutes since," said Miss Somerfield, whilst he sat looking very grateful at not being called upon to explain matters himself. "It appears, Pam, that the Egyptian Government were stopped for lack of funds over the work the professor was engaged upon. So he has come home before the time was up. He went straight to Swanlake from the boat and found, of course, that your parents were away from home. Servants at Swanlake referred him to me, and so he came on in the car at once."

"If either of you can suggest what's to be done with me now?" the professor seemed to be saying with his eyes.

"Yes, well," smiled Pam promptly. "I am sure, Miss Somerfield, if dad and mother knew

they would wish Professor Donkin to stay at Swanlake."

The grizzled head was given a shake from side to side.

"Swanlake! But I mustn't think of doing a thing like that—no, no!"

"Yet I think Pam is right, professor. Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby—"

"Excellent people—my lifelong friends," he cried, rubbing his knees with those gnarled hands of his. "But in their absence I could not dream of doing it, no. Besides, my previous stay at Swanlake brought trouble? Understand that—er—papers of mine—"

He made one of his pauses, glancing first at Pam and then at the headmistress.

"I have told Professor Donkin about the Eastmans, Pam," said Miss Somerfield softly. "I was going on to tell him about the Hindu when you came in."

"Hindu?" And the bushy brows flew up. "But what about the Hindu then, and which Hindu, pray, for there are, as of course you know, some millions?"

"Not round here, I hope," smiled Pam. "The one we had at Swanlake was quite enough to scare those of us who saw him."

"He was seen several times in circumstances that suggested that he was hanging about in secret, intending a felony," the headmistress gravely supplemented. "Pam here formed the belief that this Hindu was after your papers, Professor Donkin, as the Eastmans were. He and they could not have been in league; never imagine such a thing. Indeed, Mr. Eastman one night was attacked by the Hindu in the Swanlake grounds."

"And when Mr. Eastman came round," Pam carried on the narrative, "he murmured, 'an Indian came. It was Hunda Khan.'"

The professor got up.

"Hunda Khan? But bless my soul, Hunda Khan was a great friend of your father's young lady, out in India. I knew him well, excellently well myself."

"There now!" gasped Miss Somerfield. "And doesn't that tally with what we thought, Pam, when this Hunda Khan person called at the school at the time the Eastmans were at Swanlake? He seemed such a nice gentleman."

She turned to the professor.

"It was like this, or so we were given to understand. Mr. Hunda Khan, being in England, had come down to look up Mr. Willoughby at Swanlake. Not having the luck to find Mr. Willoughby at home, the Indian gentleman came on to Morcove, to pay his respects to his friend's school-girl daughter. It all sounded most plausible, and I am sure, professor, we thought Mr. Hunda Khan quite nice. Didn't we, Pam?"

"And yet," Pam exclaimed perplexedly, "it seems that it was that same Hunda Khan who was skulking about the place at home, wanting to break in. It was he who went for Mr. Eastman in the middle of the night and knocked him on the head. What's more, the man is still in the neighbourhood, for a chum of mine is sure she saw him just now."

"Saw Hunda Khan, you say," stammered the professor, knitting his bushy brows. "No, no—oh, dear, no! It could never have been Hunda Khan. It could only have been his ghost."

"Ghost, professor?"

"No, no, I am not speaking seriously when I say that," he cried. "But I am serious when I

tell you that Hunda Khan has been dead—er, let me see—these last six months!"

The Naughtiness of Naomer

CHANGING into tennis things had not meant, so far, any tennis for Betty and the others.

It was not that all the courts were engaged. Suspense it was that interfered with the chums' intentions.

Madge had even abandoned her idea of an hour's piano practice, now that Professor Donkin had turned up so marvellously, and Pam had been summoned to his presence.

"I do wish," fumed Polly, "we could get a glimpse of him."

"His car is still at the porch," remarked Betty. "We shall see him when—"

"When! That's no use," the impatient madcap exclaimed. "I want to see him now."

"Afraid you can't," chuckled the captain.

"Don't know so much!" retorted Polly, brightening. "Come with me, girls, and we'll see what can be done."

The rather cryptic request was understood when Polly led the others towards the high brick wall that separated Miss Somerfield's more or less private garden from grounds of which girls had the run.

"I am not usually inquisitive as all this," said Polly, eyeing the top of the wall. "But if one of you could give me a bunk up—"

"Ooo, yes! Queek! Me, too!" capered Naomer. "Bekas you can see right into Miss Somerfield's room from ze top of the wall, I know. Paula, bend down."

"Er—weally, Naomer."

"Bend down, queek, so I can stand on your back, pls."

"Weally, I must protest! I— Ow!"

"Zen get on with it, queek," said Naomer, having taken the long-suffering one by the ear. "And don't topple over, bekas I shall only come down on top of you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sh!" gestured the madcap. "Not so much row. I shan't want any-help, after all, I fancy. Easy, just here."

She had spotted some footholds in the old wall where bricks had come away. Agile youngster that she was, in a few moments she had scrambled high enough to be able to see over the wall.

But Polly in that position had the monopoly of footholds, and so poor Paula was for it, after all. There was some doubling up with silent laughter by Betty and others as Paula herself had to double down to make a back for Naomer.

"What ze diggings, keep still—"

"Oweh!"

"And stop your noise. Making such a fuss about nothing," said the imp, as she performed acrobatic tricks upon Paula's back. Ooo, gorjus! I can see fine!"

A groan from Paula.

"Shame!" laughed Judy Cardew. "Come down, Naomer!"

"No, bekas zis is eggciting. Ooo, zey have taken in tea for ze professor, and Pam is having a cup. Sweendle!"

"Girls, come and look!" Polly spoke down to them. "I'll work along; I think I can. You can see the prof—"

"Ze funniest objck in all ze world!" Naomer's excited whisper came. "Bekas he can't have had ze hair-cut for years. Whoa, Paula, hold still, can't you!"

"Insuffew— Owpl! Why I should be the one!" Paula groaned. "When you know I'm not stwong."

"Naomer, hang on to the wall," the captain laughingly commanded, "and let Paula—"

"No, bekas zis is better."

Naomer, however, had to hang on to the wall ere another moment had sped, for the simple reason that Paula collapsed.

The human scaffolding gave way, and her royal impishness was left a-dangling, kicking out wildly.

Two or three of those standing by simply shrieked with laughter and then clapped hands across their mouths. Polly was saying:

"Sh! 'Sh!"

"Dweadful, dweadful!" groaned Paula, floundering up from the earth. "Naow look at me; look at my fwock, my hair!"

"You should see the professor's hair," Polly whispered down from her vantage place. "He doesn't have it cut; he has it bobbed."

"Oh, I must see this wonderful Professor Donkin!" the captain declared, and next moment she was clambering up for a look over the wall. Shifting along as soon as she had a good hold Betty thus made for another sightseer.

In the end seven girls were hanging on by as many pairs of hands, whilst seven girlish heads adorned the top of the wall. Paula, as the eighth girl, preferred to stay below.

"See him?" Polly whispered.

"I can see him," chuckled Betty and others.

"And Pam—sweendle!" Naomer breathed again. "Ah, bah, I am disgusted with Pam getting another tea! He is a good one, I suspeekt!"

"Whilst we poor beggars—phew!" panted Polly, after nearly dropping down. "Can't we sit on the wall and be done with it?"

"Miss Somerfield might see us."

"Good job, bekas zen Miss Somerfield might ask us into tea. But no such luck."

Naomer, indeed, proved unlucky enough to fall from her perch next moment, on the inner side of the wall.

Crash, she landed, all anyhow, flattening out a mass of herbaceous stuff that had been in a promising state of growth.

"That's done it; hop down!" Polly advised, setting the example by a lightning-like dropping to ground. Only Paula happened to be in the way.

"Womp! Gow, theah you go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Meantime, Naomer, having made such a tremendous crashing noise in one of Miss Somerfield's best flower-borders, had the wit to start looking about for an imaginary lost ball.

"What girl is that?" came the voice of the headmistress suddenly from the french windows serving her room. "You, Naomer!"

"Yes, plis, Meess Somerfield. Bekas—"

"What are you doing, Naomer? Come off that bed!"

"I very sorry, but I lost—I lost my balance," shrilled Naomer, deciding to stick to the truth and not plead a lost ball.

"I must not be disturbed. Run away!"

"I beg your pardon, but did you say come in and—"

"I said, go away!"

Even this, however, did not turn Naomer back, now that she was advancing most innocently to the french windows.

"Zank you, Meess Somerfield, I shall be much obliged for another cup—"

"A what!"

"Eet very good of you to invite me in to—"

"Girl, I said—"

"Hallo, Pam!" shrilled Naomer, looking past the headmistress into the sanctum. "Ooo, ees zat Professor Donkey? Bekas how joo do, professor; plissed to meet you."

"Bless my soul!" said the professor, fumbling to get his glasses to his nose so that he might get a proper look at Morcove's dusky scholar. "Er—ha, hum! Excellently well, I thank you, miss—er—"

"Her Majesty Queen Naomer of Nakara," Miss Somerfield was now compelled to introduce the imp. "We have her here to be educated on British lines."

"Nakara! Nakara! Bless my soul!" cried Professor Donkin. "I know that country well. I was across it—let me see, two years ago."

"Hooray, zen, bekas we can talk about my country whilst we have tea," was Naomer's rejoicing comment; and she sat down—near the cake-stand. "But first of all, Professor Donkey, what about ze jolly old Temple of ze Moon? Bekas—"

"Naomer dear," said Miss Somerfield, adopting the usual forbearance towards a scholar whose impishness was incurable, "have this cake—"

"Ooo, zank you!"

"And run away. No, Pam, don't you go for a moment. I shall want you."

So tall Pam, instead of being able to escape from the room and give full vent to her bottled-up laughter, had to stay on hand, still repressing it. As for Naomer, she marched away to the door in joyful possession of at least one good slice of cake, anyhow.

"And good-bye for ze present, Professor Donkey. All ze best!" her royal impishness wished him, as she made her skittish exit. "We must have a talk about my country some other time—when you come to tea in Study 12."

"A VERY unique scholar, Miss Somerfield."

"A very naughty, tiresome one, professor," laughed the headmistress. "But now that we are at peace again—Pam dear, something I want you to do."

Miss Somerfield turned towards the safe as she said this. It was closed, and the bunch of keys was not hanging from the lock. Of late the headmistress had been more particular about the safe and her keys.

She drew the bunch from her dress pocket, and selecting the right key, slipped into the lock. Then she turned a large handle.

With a soft whoof, the massive steel door came wide open.

"Your papers, Professor Donkin," murmured Morcove's headmistress, reaching a hand into the safe. "As you have been told, it is thanks to Pam here that they were not stolen after all by those Eastman people. Most cunningly they had made keys to open this safe of mine; but Pam got to know just in time and turned up from Swan-lake in the middle of the night, frustrating an attempt that was even then being made."

"And how to thank this young lady sufficiently—"

"Oh, that's all right, Professor Donkin," smiled Pam serenely. "I only did what father and mother, I'm sure, would have wished me to do."

Miss Somerfield took out the bundle of papers.

She handed them—not to the professor, but to Pam.

"It is very fitting, Pam dear, that you should be the one to hand these papers to their rightful owner. You saved them. Twice, in fact, you have saved them."

"Yes, well, there they are, Professor, anyhow." Pam smiled serenely, passing the bundle of papers to him. "Just as they were, I hope, when I fetched them away from Swanlake for safety's sake."

The professor bowed in a very old-fashioned courtly way. He did not speak until his bespectacled eyes had looked through the bundle very anxiously and carefully.

Then his lean cheeks creased themselves into a smile of tremendous gratification.

"All intact! Thank you, then, thank you, my dear, over and over again. Eh—h'm—er— And now I really must be going."

So it did not appear as if one were going to be told anything about the papers after all.

"You need not hurry away on my account," Professor Donkin.

"Miss Somerfield, it is more than good of you. But I must be off, to get back to Swanlake, collecting a few more papers that I left in that desk. Oh, nothing important—not like these! Still, I had better get them, and then—"

"Won't you be staying at Swanlake for this one night, anyhow?" Pam felt entitled to interpose. "I am sure dad and mother would wish it."

"Oh, I am sure they would myself—such excellent people! And perhaps I may so far trespass upon their hospitality as to stay the one night. But no longer—no, no!" cried the professor. "I shall find some quiet little place where I can do my work."

Pam gave a withdrawing bow.

"Good-bye then, sir. And do be careful with those papers—in case!"

"My dear, good-bye, and thank you, thank you. If I had been robbed of these papers—er—h'm, yes! So you must believe how grateful I am. Good-bye, young lady."

He attended her to the door, opened it for her, bowed her out. Nice old buffer.

But he hadn't told her all about the Temple!



With much stifled laughter Polly and Naomer scrambled up the garden wall—Naomer impishly using a very protesting Paula as a foot-rest!

And here at the upper end of the passage serving Miss Somerfield's room were Betty and all the rest, wildly expectant of thrilling revelations.

"Well, Pam, well?"

"Yes, bekas—queek, Pam! What about—"

"Yes, Pam, what did he say?"

"Oh, nothing much!"

"What?"

"Glad we saved the papers, that's all."

"But—"

"Bekas, what ze diggings!"

"Surely he explained, Pam?"

"No."

"Sweendle! I call that a rotten do Bekas— A n c auzzer thing, Pam, why didn't you ask him to eggplain!"

"Well, I couldn't," shrugged Pam ruefully.

"Of course you couldn't!" laughed Betty. "And so that's that!"

"Eet all comes of my not staying to tea with him," Naomer stated disgustedly. "Bekas zere would have been heaps of time for him to tell me everything whilst I was eating. Anuzzer thing; he took ze fancy to me. I know he did, and he is not

a bad old sort, although they do call him Professor Donkey."

"Sh!"

And a batch of girls led irate Naomer quickly to a safer distance.

Another Surprise

A LITTLE before afternoon school next day Muriel Floddon was gently hailed by a voice as dear to her as any could be.

"Have you got a minute, Murie?"

"Yes, miss—oh, yes!"

"Upstairs then," was Pam's all-sufficient remark, as the little maid came running to her. "Whilst I have an odd five minutes."

A good many girls were just then coming down from the studies, many of them Pam's Form-mates. But none made any attempt to turn the little lady of Swanlake from her purpose.

The nature of that purpose was known, and there was an enhanced admiration for Pam on that account. Only even her best chums were saying nothing to Pam herself about it. They did not dare.

Then in the study itself there was Helen Craig, collecting books for class.

"It's all right, I'm off now," smiled Helen, and was gone in a flash.

"How nice all your schoolmates are, miss."

"Yes, well, no reason why they shouldn't be," Pam answered the ardent murmur. "Sit down, Murie, and I'll have this chair close alongside, and so we can go through that work of yours together. Arith first, Murie?"

"Just as you please, miss."

"You mustn't mind the sight of a good deal of red ink, Murie," as Pam accordingly opened an exercise-book which Swanlake's novice in cap and apron had already half used. "Sums are awful things. I'd give anything to dodge arith."

"Still, miss, unless you learn—"

"That's just it, Murie. And I am sure you will soon be—"

But here Muriel could not help interrupting with a dismayed: "Goodness!"

The folio at which the book was open held her "workings out" in black ink and Pam's corrections in red. It seemed to Murie that the red predominated now.

"Am I as bad as all that, miss?"

"Nothing, Murie—nothing to get scared about. You are not the first girl to have made eleven times eleven a hundred and eleven. And nine from five, Murie, borrowing one—so easy to make it four. I've done so myself," said Pam serenely.

"Often."
"I do hope my French isn't as bad as this, miss."

"We shall come to that, Murie, in a minute."

But they didn't. They were still going over the corrected "arith," when a voice sounded in the corridor that made them both start violently. "Zelie Duval?" exclaimed Pam incredulously. "Surely not—again!"

There came a tap at the door, and then Swanlake's French maid rushed in, gesturing wildly.

"Mademoiselle!"

"Zelie—you again!"

"Mais oui! Oh, la-la! Oh, mademoiselle, how I am happy! But"—the French girl changed to sudden disdain—"I do not tell you whilst she is there."

Muriel was getting up.

"Don't go, Murie," said Pam quietly. "What a nuisance this is, Zelie, your bursting in—"

"But, mademoiselle. It is that wonderful things have happened. It is that I am to be near you again, oui!"

"How do you mean? You haven't come back to be in the school, Zelie?"

"Mais non! Now I am content to leave it to your woodchopper's daughter to be in the service of the school. Ha, ha! Yes, Me, I am proud to be in the service of— But I shall not tell you, mademoiselle, in her presence—no!"

"Then it must wait, that's all," Pam said flatly. "I'll see you later, Zelie."

"Mademoiselle, you are cruel."

"I am not cruel, Zelie; but you are very rude to Murie. And I won't have it."

"Très bien. Pardon then, mademoiselle, once more. It is only that I am so excited. Oh, la-la, how I am excited! For, comprehend me, petite. It is that I go to help keep house for your professor."

"Wha-a-at!"

"The milor' professor, oui! Last night he is at Swanlake," Zelie panted on, still out of breath after her dashing upstairs. "This morning he say

how he must find where to live and do his work. So!" She made motions as if ringing up on a telephone. "And the agents in Barncombe, they say how it is that there is a bungalow out here at Morcove—"

"Cliffedge?" jerked out Pam. "That bungalow on the edge of the cliffs, only a mile from the school?"

"Mais oui. Enfin, mademoiselle, it is all arranged. And I am there to do everything for the milor' professor."

"Yes, well."

"Ah, but how he is droll, that man. Cela-ne-fait-rien—doesn't matter!" Zelie laughed on in her highly-strung way. "Ho is ver' kind, ver' famous, oui!"

"But how did you manage to—"

"Mademoiselle, it is that I am recommended for the post by the Swanlake housekeeper."

"Oh, was that it!" smiled Pam.

She had a private fancy that the Swanlake staff had been only too glad to seize the chance of, as it were, making Zelie over to the professor.

"It's a jolly little bungalow," Pam remarked. "I've been there lots of times. It has been unlet for some little while—"

"It is in a state—oh, terrible!" was Zelie's bit of hyperbole. "The work I have to do!"

"Then the best thing, Zelie, will be to get on with it. Perhaps I may look across, as it's the professor who is there, and he is such a dear."

"Ah, mademoiselle, if you will but come. He arrives not until seven this evening. Alors—"

"I'll think about it, Zelie. By the way, did he have a good night at Swanlake? No excitement, no Hindus skulking about, and all that?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Mais non!" laughed the French maid. "No more of that business. That is finish, oui!"

"I hope it is finished with," Pam nodded and smiled. "This, at any rate, Murie, is the finish of our work together for a bit. There goes the bell for school, bother it!"

Pam was not forgetting Zelie's "down" on Muriel Floddon. Impossible to forget it, when the French girl's eyes held a glittering hostility towards the woodman's daughter.

"You had better come with me, Murie. And I suppose, Zelie, you will be off back to the bungalow at once?"

"But, mademoiselle—"

"Oh, I can't stop for anything more."

An inviting gesture from Pam caused Muriel to pass out with her quickly, and although Zelie followed she did not get a chance to put in another word.

The last Pam saw of the two girls in cap and apron, one was hurrying away to the Morcove domestic regions, whilst Zelie was stalking out by the front door. And very glad was Pam to see Zelie going away.

The Forms were trooping in for afternoon class. There was the usual last-minute chattering and some playing about; but Pam had most of her chums crowding about her in serious mood.

They had seen Zelie and wanted to know what her reappearance upon the Morcove stage meant.

Pam gave the news, but by the time it was told not a moment was left for comment. They were all in their desks, and the Form-mistress was commanding silence.

A special longing to be out of class again was common to all the juniors that afternoon. It was so tantalising to have strong sunshine pouring in at the class-room windows. But Pam, apart from

the outdoor nature of the weather, was eager to get across to the bungalow.

She had soon made up her mind to go across directly school was over. In her mind remained an amusing image of Professor Donkin, that nervous, highly-strung, rather flighty man.

Would he be comfortable at the bungalow. Pam wondered? Zelie was a most excellent lady'smaid; but as to being one to get down on her knees and scrub or keep the kitchen range as it should be kept—perhaps not.

With loud cheers the Fourth Form came out of class in due course, knowing the afternoon to be as fine as ever.

There was a stampee for the open air; a twirling of hastily-seized tennis-racquets and hockey-sticks and even a cricket-bat or so, and at the cycle-sheds machines were dragged out with scant regard for plated parts.

"I think I shall walk across to the bungalow before tea," Pam announced to her chums. "Shan't be staying, so I shall be back in good time."

"May we come with you, Pam?" cried several. "Do you want to come?"

"Did they want to let her go alone!"

"Besides, I zink we ought to see how ze jolly old professor is off for food," shrilled Naomer. "Bekas he looked to me as if he could do with some feeding up. Half ze jiffy!"

"Oh, we are not waiting for you!" cried Polly. "Zen I shall catch you up."

Which Naomer did ten minutes later, overtaking the batch about half-way between the school and the bungalow.

Some bulging paper bags, hugged under the dusky one's arms, attracted scornful notice at once from the madcap.

"What have you got there?"

"From our corner cupboard, girls. Bekas, zis will be something for him to be going on with if zere is nothing in ze pantry."

"Throwing a sprat to catch a whale, is that it?" Polly grimaced. "Hoping that the professor will invite you to dinner one evening."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see why he shouldn't," retorted Naomer. "Bekas we did him ze good turn by saving his papers."

"I like the 'we'."

"Yes, bai Jove; that is pwetty wick," chortled Paula. "If you ask me—"

"Go on zen, I do ask you!" the dusky one cried, planting herself inimically in front of Paula. "So say eet, queek!"

"Er—I was not going to say anything dewogatory, Naomer."

"Yes, you were."

"On the contwawy, I— Owp! Leave off! Gah! Healp!"

"Bekas—"

"Wow! Naow look what she has done to me, gah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A weck, a wuin!" wailed the languid one, righting her hat. "Naow I must go back. I am not pwesentable—ah deah, dweadful life!"

"Why, who do you think is there to see you at the bungalow, Paula?" laughed Pam consolingly. "Only Zelie, and she is the very one to smarten you up again."

But someone else besides Zelie was in evidence when the chums got to Cliffedge.

The front door was wide open to sun and breeze, and so sounds could come forth that made

Pam, for one, feel a bit self-ashamed during the last few steps to the porch. Sounds of scrubbing. Apparently then it had been doing Zelie an injustice to imagine that she would shirk any real hard work.

Next moment, however, Pam and the others saw who it was, coarse-apron'd and on her knees to the hall linoleum, giving it such a healthy scrubbing.

Muriel Floddon!

She was going at the work with such energy, the scrub, scrub of her hard brush kept her deaf to the footfalls at the porch.

"Muriel!" cried Pam.

"Yes, bekas what ze diggings!"

Then Morcove's new recruit to the domestic staff looked round and, red-faced from exertion, stood up.

Many Hands—

"YOU here, Muriel? You doing this?" gasped Pam.

"Yes, miss."

"But why? What does it mean?"

"I was told off for the job of helping Zelie in any way I could," Muriel explained in a quiet, contented tone. "She went to our housekeeper at the school to ask if someone could be spared, and was told she could have me. So I came along an hour ago."

"D'neew!" said Polly.

"Yes, that's all very well," muttered Pam; "but I am sure that sort of work for you was never intended. Just a moment, girls."

They understood, and they remained bunched together in the porch whilst Pam stepped daintily over the newly-scrubbed linoleum and so passed through to the kitchen.

"Zelie!"

But she was not there.

"Oh, you won't find her, miss," Muriel came after Pam to remark. "She has cycled into Barnecombe to do some shopping, and she said she wouldn't be back until well after six. I'm to keep the fire in; not go until she gets back."

"That be hanged for a tale!" Pam said, with rare heat. "Really, I'm tired of Zelie and her annoying ways."

"Yes, bekas—sweendle!" chimed in Naomer, by now coming through to the kitchen. "Not good enough to leave you to do all ze dirty work, Muriel."

Bang, clash, whang, clatter sounded from the hall at this moment!

"And now," sighed Polly, "Paula has fallen over the pail."

Paula had done just that, coming last, and there was a rush back to find the ever-luxurious one skipping about on the waterlogged floor in sopping shoes.

"Gow! Ow, my gwacious—groogh!"

"Serve you right!" yelled Naomer. "Bekas fancy not seeing the pail. Fancy falling over him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll have to clear it up, Paula, every drop!" Polly declared grimly.

"But look at me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, go home!" Betty laughingly advised the owner of that dismal voice. "You're no use here, Paula."

"But—I am!" Naomer shouted proudly. "Bekas here, Muriel, something for your tea, and I shall help you to get it, queek! And eet only shows,

girls, you never ought to be without some food. Bekas, you never know."

"We had better all clear out," Polly proposed. "We are only making more work for others. Unless"—brightly—"we stay and really get down to it, girls. How about that. Shall we?"

"Yes, let's!" was the chorus that made Muriel burst out laughing.

"Oh, you mustn't!" she bleated.

But Morcove had already agreed to the proposal "unan." There should be a joyous setting to work by all, excepting Paula, who really must hurry back to school to find some dry stockings.

The bungalow, although comfortably furnished, was in sore need of housewifely attention. The previous tenants had not left it scrupulously clean, and the standing unoccupied for a month or two had not improved matters.

Had Zelig put in a busy afternoon with Muriel, working as hard as the latter girl had worked, it would have made all the difference. But there had been only the one pair of hands.

Now it was to be a case of showing that many hands make light work.

"Come on, girls!" the madcap cried gaily. "We'll all get busy."

"You take a rest, Murie," said Pam.

"But, miss—"

"Orders, Murie, are orders!"

"Hear, hear!" laughed others.

After that Muriel, whether she wanted to or not, could only stand for a little while, bemused, fascinated by what was going on.

She saw these jolly juniors first of all preparing themselves for really hard work. Sleeves were furled to the elbow. One or two skirts were pinned up. In other cases coarse aprons were found.

Pam as well. Of course, Pam herself knew of no reason why she should not do her fair share; but to Muriel the "little lady of Swanlake" was a being apart. Yet this same little lady, after donning a coarse apron, was now re-filling that capsized bucket at the scullery pump.

As for Polly, it was like her to have found behind a kitchen door an overall of outside dimensions. Polly in that overall, when at last it had been fastened behind, was a scream.

"Bekas eet is miles too big for you, Polly. You look as eef you were wearing a bell tent." "Looks aren't everything, Naomer."

And the madcap, reveling in her farcical appearance, began to rummage for black-lead brushes and stove polish. All the stoves were in a dull and rusty state.

From kitchen drawers and scullery boxes the busy bees found things to meet their urgent requirements. Some hands wielded dusters and tins of floor polish. Others had found metal-polish and were bringing back tarnished brass-work to a mirror-like state.

So the good work was started, and the only difficulty was for the merry girls to keep out of one another's way.

More than once there was a "Mind my pail!" from Pam, down on her knees and scrubbing hard.

But soon the slight confusion lessened. The chums were not so much on top of one another, so to speak. Madge and Helen had found plenty to do in the sitting-room; Judy was "doing out" the coat lobby, rendering that place twice as roomy as it had been. Betty was giving windows the good cleaning that they so badly needed.

All was not going like clockwork, needless to say. There were slight catastrophes, as when Naomer, lugging in a scuttle of coals for the kitchen, spilled the lot all over the scullery floor.

"You would!" snorted Polly, busy putting the finishing touches to the kitchen grate. "Sack her!"

"Eet all bekas we didn't have tea first!" was the dusky one's excuse. "But don't you trouble, Muriel, bekas I can sweep up ze—"

"Oh, miss, do let me do something!"

"All right, zen, and I will get tea for everybody."

"Booh, slacker!" was the madcap's comment on that. Then smiling round at Pam, who was going by with a pail of dirty water to be emptied away.

"How goes it, Pam?"

"Another pail and I'm through, I fancy."

The bungalow was noisy with the varied sounds of so much industry. The pump rattled and surged; the piano strummed as Madge ran all up and down the keys with a duster; the window-panes squeaked under Betty's "chamois"; Polly's black-lead brushes whisked loudly.

As an accompaniment to all this and the slamming about of chairs during a dusting process, Naomer rattled out the crockery on the kitchen table. She jingled spoons into saucers, shrilling: "Spell-o! Bekas tea, everybody!"

But her chums refused to knock off at present. Not until they were thoroughly through with all that could be done was there a tidy putting away of household implements.

Then with the fresh air blowing in to dry and air the bungalow after its lightning spring-clean, the busy bees got a rinse for themselves at the scullery sink.

Off came all the aprons and overalls. Sleeves were unrolled again, hair put to rights. And now if anybody had suddenly burst upon the scene not one of these good-hearted girls could have been suspected of what they had done.

Pam, serene as ever again, found Muriel's eyes upon her.

"I don't know what Miss Somerfield would say, miss."

"And I'm sure none of us care, Murie."

"Does the place look a bit better for it?" asked Betty. "I think it does."

"Shocking state it was in," rejoined Helen. "Enough work to have kept Murie, single-handed, busy for a week."

"So now for a jolly good tea!" cried Naomer. "Don't be afraid to eat as much as you like, everybody, bekas eet is all Study 12 stuff."

"We ought to be off, I think," said Pam. "But it doesn't matter, really. The professor won't be along yet, anyhow. I wish I had my bike with me."

"Miss, there's mine round at the shed."

"Oh, there is?" was Pam's pleased cry. "Then I'm, for borrowing it for a wee while, Murie."

Nor did the Swanlake girl do more than drink down one cup of tea hastily before she was up from the kitchen tea table to be off.

"I shall find you others at the school later on?" she inferred. "I must go into Barncombe now. Ta-ta for the present, all."

"And when you find Zelig, give her ze sack!" cried Naomer.

"Yes, well, I'd like to!" Pam nodded and smiled as she passed out.

Those Papers Again

PAM'S borrowed "bike" was not the beauty that she was accustomed to ride; but it got her to Barncombe quickly enough.

A ride up and down the quaint old High Street did not result in any discovery of Zélie Duval. Had that girl been going in and out of shops making purchases for the bungalow Pam would certainly have come upon her during this bit of scouting.

Where then was the young woman?

Pam could have hazarded a guess. Acting upon a certain possibility that had been in her mind when she set out for the town she now took her stand outside the cinema.

There was no continuous performance, and any moment now the afternoon audience would be coming out.

For a few boring minutes Pam was kept waiting. Then some final clapping was followed by the vamping of an organ, sounding louder as all exit doors were thrown wide.

With a rush, old and young came flocking forth, looking dazzled by the lovely sunshine that had failed to keep them away from the darkened hall. Jabbering children and broadly-smiling men and women came half stumbling out to the pavement, and amongst them suddenly Pam picked out Zélie Duval.

Pam sauntered to meet her.

"Enjoyed yourself, Zélie?"

"Mademoiselle!" was the astonished gasp. "Oh, la-la, how I was amuse. There was one film, so droll."

"Yes, well, now what about a—"

"Tea, mademoiselle—with you? Oh!"

"I was going to suggest a spot of work, Zélie—back there at the bungalow. But there, the work's all done now. Still—"

"But, mademoiselle. You are not angry with me!"

"I'm afraid I am very angry this time, Zélie—really disgusted. You don't play the game."

"Comment?"

"Oh, you must know!" Pam said scornfully. "At any rate, I know. That poor Muriel—"

"Ah, the poor Muriel!"

"Zélie, I don't want any of your impudence. You had no right to impose upon that girl so disgracefully. It was never intended that you should borrow her for the afternoon, to leave her to do all the work, whilst you went off to the pictures."

"Mais non! That, mademoiselle, is not the truth. Ah, she has been making the mischief again, has she!"

"Rubbish! When I have found you coming away from this cinema."

"Oui, mademoiselle, but it is that I only go in to sit down for five, ten minutes. I am fatigued. I go to so many shops for things to buy for the professor."

"Where are the things then?"

"They will be delivered, mademoiselle."

"Oh, delivered! So all you had to do was simply to leave the orders. You can't have been as tired, Zélie, as I and my chums found Muriel at the bungalow. Working like a charwoman. And I believe you have been hours in the cinema, so there."

"Petite, no!"

"Shall I go to the pay-box and inquire? Ah!"

Pam smiled bitterly as she saw how Zélie paled and cringed. "Then don't fib to me any more about that. I am going back to the bungalow. You had better come with me."

"Très bien, mademoiselle."

The meek answer did not appease Pam's wrath.



Zélie came flying into the study. "Oh, mademoiselle, how I am happy!" she cried. "But"—as she noticed Muriel Floddon in the room—"I do not tell you why whilst SHE is here!"

She wished she could have finished with Zélie now, and for ever. But it would have been a big mistake to leave the French girl to go back to the bungalow by herself. Muriel would be there alone.

That, at any rate, was the expectation. But as soon as the bungalow came in sight after the ride back from Barncombe, Pam realised that Professor Donkin had turned up before his time.

A car that had brought him and his belongings to Cliffedge was now driving away. The professor himself was taking some of the dumped luggage indoors, whilst Muriel grappled with the rest.

Pam put on speed, still preserving a stony silence towards Zélie. More than once during the cycle ride the French maid had tried to "thaw" Pam with a servile remark, but all in vain. Pam did not feel like relenting.

Abandoning her machine at the bungalow gate-way Pam ran up the path, reaching the porch just as Professor Donkin strolled forth "trailing clouds of glory."

It must have been a favourite briar pipe that he had charged with his favourite brand of tobacco. He looked supremely content.

"Hah, young lady!" he greeted her effusively. "Well, what do you think of this, my dear?"—with a directing sweep of his pipistem to indicate the bungalow, its bit of land and its marvellous views.

"I should think you'll love it here," smiled Pam. "May I pop in when I'm passing?"

"And welcome, my dear. You know I've stolen your mother's maid from Swanlake? Ha, there she is, I see! Another girl appears to be here as well; excellent girl. I don't know anything about that, Pam."

"I'm taking her back with me to the school now, professor. She was—well, just lent to give a hand, that's all. I do hope you go on all right," Pam said, feeling very fond of him in his forlorn state. "You've a button coming off; if I could find a needle and thread I'd tighten it for you."

"Button! Button! Ah, yes, button," he said, as if suddenly discovering that coats had such things. "But I shall be all right, my dear. Before you go, just look here."

He took her by the arm and walked her on to a sunny veranda and so through some wide-flung french windows into a kind of study.

"There, Pam, I think a man ought to be able to do good work here. Desk, ink—bless my soul, fresh blotting-paper!"

Pam did not tell him that one of her chums had given him fresh ink and blotting-paper. She glanced at one bag that he had brought to this room.

"Your papers, sir?"

"Papers, yes, my dear."

"The—The Temple of the Moon papers as well?"

He nodded, rubbing bony hands together in a zestful way.

"Yes, well, I had better leave you to it," Pam smiled. "Good-bye for the present, Professor Donkin. I must get back now, taking Muriel with me."

"Muriel? Is that her name? Ha! Er—yes, let me see; if you would give her that, my dear, for her trouble. Thank you. Good-bye, young lady. Bless you, my dear. You are very like your mother—if you will remember me to her and your dear father when writing."

"I will, sir. Good-bye."

Pam had such strange feelings as she left him. She tried to analyse them. Was it simply fondness for the dear old buffer in his untidy, lonely state that was making her think so much about him? Or could it be, she vaguely wondered, that some presentiment was whispering to her: Danger now—for him!

He himself seemed quite unperturbed about the Temple of the Moon papers, quite unconcerned for their future safety. And yet—

And yet they had been in such imminent peril of being stolen whilst he was still abroad.

The Eastmans, only to be feared no longer because their plans had been utterly exposed, frustrated, rendering the pair of them fugitives from the district.

And in addition to the Eastmans, that Hindu, whoever he was, haunting Swanlake like a phantom.

"Now, Murie, we can get away."

"Yes, miss."

"Oh, and Murie, the professor asked me to give you this," Pam said, offering a ten-shilling note. "In return for all you've been doing."

"Oh, la-la!" laughed Zelig; but a more ill-natured, envious laugh it would have been difficult to imagine. "That is droll."

Pam serenely ignored this, at the same time admiring Muriel's restraint under fresh provocation. There was silence, except for Zelig's hissing intake of breath, whilst Muriel quickly donned outdoor things.

Then Pam and Muriel passed out together into the early evening sunshine.

"You might wheel the bike and so walk with me, Murie," suggested Swanlake's high-born daughter. "They won't be wanting you for anything at the school, after the work you've put in here."

"But you and the other girls didn't let me do anything, miss. And fancy the professor giving me a ten-shilling tip. Is he very rich then?"

Pam smiled.

"I don't think so," she answered. "Only rich in good-nature, as you are, Murie!"

Naomer Feels She Must

NEXT to Pam it was Naomer who saw most of the professor during the first few days after his going into residence at the bungalow.

Only once or twice did Pam slip across from the school on purpose to see how he was going along. With Betty and others Pam had various glimpses of the professor whilst cycling by Cliffedge.

He would be pacing thoughtfully about the garden when the covey of chums made its flight along the road, and would come out of his abstracted state to wave very genially. But Pam never suggested their all getting down from their machines to go in, and after the first day or so she decided not to make any more fleeting visits by herself.

He was working hard, at the Temple of the Moon papers, she believed, and that master mind of his was best left undisturbed.

Nor did Pam need to concern herself as to whether he was being properly looked after. Thanks to Morcove's lightning "spring-clean" at the bungalow Zelig could make the professor very comfortable and yet not have much to do.

Naomer, however—Naomer had misgivings that made her a constant caller at Cliffedge. They were special misgivings in regard to food. She was sure that the professor was not getting enough to eat.

"Bekas, what ze diggings, eet is not as eef Zelig were a cook!" argued the dusky one, on her breathless arrival back at Study 12 with an empty basket. "She may be all right for trimming your eyebrows; but when it comes to cooking—"

"Oh, Zelig can cook all right," Pam tried to reassure the imp. "I will say that for her."

"Zen probabbubly whatever she cooks she eats eet all herself. Bekas he looks as skinny as ever, any old how."

"Duffer, don't you understand?" snorted Polly. "He is all brains. Not like you, all for stuffing."

"Not ze bit of eet. Bekas he likes a snack as much as any of us, I know." Naomer retorted triumphantly. "Bekas I have proved it. He was in ze garden when I got zere just now, and so I said: 'Hallo, professor, how about a spot

of jam sangwidge? Bekas I had some with me. And we ate ze lot between us, which shows."

"Bai Jove!" chortled Paula, from the depths of the best armchair. "I should have liked to see the professor's ration as compared with yours, Naomer! Yes, wather!"

"He wouldn't like to refuse, so he ate a single mouthful, of course, and Naomer scoffed the rest," said Polly.

"Did she! Bekas she didn't, so see! And eef you say I did, Paula—"

"Owp! I didn't! Ow!"

"You meant it, any old how. And so—"

"Yah-owp, ow! Healp! Betty deah, healp! Speak to Naomer."

"Naomer, my advice, don't call any more at the bungalow until—"

"What, and leave him to starve! Not ze bit of eet. Bekas I know what Zelie gives him, eef she gives him anything to eat at all. I know that French cookery—ommerlettes and all that, gone in no time. Besides, one of zese days perhaps he will tell me about ze Temple of ze Moon, and that will be one up for me."

"Oho!" cried Polly witheringly. "Do you hear this? Have you been trying to pump the professor?"

"Not ze bit of eet! I have only asked him now and zen what zere is in the jolly old Temple of ze Moon. But he doesn't tell you," sighed Naomer.

"He must think you shockingly inquisitive," said Polly.

"No, only very kind to him in his loneliness," was Pam's contrary opinion, and she stroked Naomer's dark glossy head lovingly. "Still, dear, he likes to be alone, no doubt, and to give his mind completely to his research work."

"All right zen, I won't trouble any more about him."

Cycling past next day, however, Naomer had another glimpse of the lean and lanky professor, and a little later her chums encountered her coming away from the Barncombe Creamery with a half-crown game-pie.

In vain Betty and others tried to keep Naomer with them. Even a tempting invitation to go into the café with them proved unavailing.

"Bekas, I have had all I want."

"You can't have done!" gasped Polly.

"I am in ze hurry, any old how."

They let her go, feeling more amused than anything else. It was their increased amusement to see her drop the game-pie in its paper bag whilst mounting to ride away, and to see her recover the half-crown's worth in a very battered state.

Then she was off, finally wobbling out of sight in the direction of Morcove.

Perhaps the professor was at work in his little study when Naomer got to the bungalow. At any rate, he was not in view.

For such a "gorjus" treat as a game-pie, however, Naomer felt sure that the great savant would welcome disturbance from his labours. She rang Zelie appeared.

"Comment?"

"Ees ze professor in, plis? Bekas—"

"The milor professor is busy. Allez-vous!"

"No, bekas my compliments to ze professor—"

"He does not wish to see you, doot. Allez!"

"Not so much of it, Zelie, bekas you are not his keeper. What ze diggings; I have a present for him, and—"

"You can leave it with me, so!"

And Zelie snatched at the paper bag containing the game-pie, to hold it behind a shoulder for a hard throw.

"There is your silly fool present. Take it, doot!"

And the game-pie whizzed past Naomer's head and landed, like a bursting shell, yards behind her on the gravel.

"And do not you or any of your silly fool friends come here any more!" Zelie hissed, stepping back to close the door. "Imbecile, we do not want you here. You can tell the others so."

Naomer took that message, along with the remains of the game-pie, to the school. There was nothing of the pie for Betty and the rest to see when they came in by-and-bye; but Naomer treated them to every word of Zelie's.

"Bai Jove, disgwaceful!" Paula was moved to exclaim. "Nevah mind, Naomer deah; the wuth is, that Fwench geal doesn't appreciate the fact that you are a twifle—er—"

"Twifle what, Paula? You say, queek!"

"It's all wight, Naomer; keep calm. Don't jump down my throoat. On weflection, pewhaps I had better welwain fwom expwessing my opinion."

"Perhaps you had!" laughed Betty, for Naomer was looking very ready to swoop.

"So you are going to call me mad now, are you, Paula?"

"Er—no, Naomer; far fwom it. Only—er—slightly accentwive. That is to say— Owch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroo, gah! Geals, staph her!"

"You meant well, dear," Pam was presently soothing the dusky one, in allusion to the game-pie, not to the hammering of Paula. "As for Zelie, she will be wanting to see some of us long before we want to see any more of her, I'm sure."

And in that hour of thrilling drama which was now coming fast, after the interlude of pure comedy, Pam's prediction would come true.

Found on the Moor

MONDAY evening at Morcove, and so lovely out of doors.

Girls were everywhere in the open air, as blithe as the thrushes singing so lustily in the elms that blotted sunlit grass with their lengthening shadows.

There may have been the usual Mondayish feeling during the day; but now—

"Game and set!" cried Polly, not a bit inclined to take a rest after the brisk contest it had been.

"Another, girls?"

"Right-ho!"

"I don't mind."

"That ball, please, Naomer."

"Wiz ze greatest of ze pleasure."

And Naomer, having retrieved the outlying ball, sent it sky-high with her racquet.

Four of the chums of Study 12 had this hard court, and four more had the one next to it. Reward of half an hour's patient waiting for a "look in" after prep.

From the games field came the occasional crack of a cricket-ball. It might not be even Easter yet, but the weather was like this—wonderful weather. Like summer. Hear the enthusiastic cries of girls who were busy garden- ing; how they were declaring that you could see things growing.

A white ball popped up into the air and received a forceful drive from Polly's racquet. Net. Up popped another ball out of her left hand—

bash! Over the net, driven back. Slither, whisk—the lightly-shod feet. Whack again; here was a rally.

"Go on! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bekas—got him!"

"You shouldn't talk, Naomer."

"Ah, bah! Ooo, queek! Got him again."

"Paula—now, Paula!"

"Owp!"

"Bravo, ze duffer!"

"Pouf!" panted Paula; but she was beaming with pride.

"Polly—Polly!" her partner was next moment imploring.

But the tennis-ball romped past the madcap unheeded. Polly's attention had been taken clean off the game by a startling cry from a schoolmate as she came running to the courts.

"Girls, I say, look! Just look at what I've found!"

It was Judy Cardew, the one member of the Study 12 "chummy" who had not gone in for tennis this evening. She had a bit of an elbow at present and was resting it.

"Do look!"

They were coming off both courts at a run, eager to view her find, so excited she was about it.

An outheld hand, kept closed whilst the players were rushing up to see, was opened as they crowded around. Then the astounded cries that went up.

"Goodness, Judy!"

"Bekas— Ooo, what ze diggings!"

"Bai Jove! Geals, geals!"

"A monster diamond, fancy!"

"Must be!"

"Can't be!"

"Yes, it is," Polly insisted wildly. "At least, perhaps not, that colour. But— Phew!"

"A rare jewel, anyway."

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove!"

"What a find! Where, Judy, where did you find it?" several of them clamoured.

"I took Miss Somerfield's cocker for a scamper on the moor, only a little way, outside our bounds. He bolted after a rabbit, and, of course, I had to go and get him back," Judy panted her explanation. "Then when I was putting him on the lead again I saw this."

"Lying on the ground, Judy?"

"All amongst some bushes, yes. Nothing else there—nothing. I looked, to make sure."

"But, bai Jove, haow wemarkable; haow extraordinary!"

"Bekas—"

"Judy, just a moment," came Pam's interrupting cry, whilst she took a closer look at the flashing gem on the funder's upturned palm. "I believe I have seen it before, girls. Yes, I'm positive, by the size and the colour; in the turban worn by that Hindu."

"What-a-at!"

"Pam's right," Polly fairly shouted. "Remember Pam and I were together that night at Swanlake when he looked in at the window. Pam's right; there was then a jewel like this in his turban—a big, red jewel. But I didn't see it when I glimpsed him on the moor."

"Perhaps he had taken it off the turban so that it would not be something to attract attention by flashing in the sun. Anyway," said Pam, "this used to be in the turban. And so—"

"Let Miss Somerfield know?" suggested Betty. "Oh, but Miss Somerfield is out for the evening."

"Let the professor know," was Polly's alternative. "Girls, isn't that the thing to do? He's over at the bungalow, and so—"

"Ooo, queek, queek, everybody, come on—queek! Bekas you never know!"

"Sometimes," nodded Polly, "you don't."

"Yes, well, Pam, I'm going across—if you others will come."

"We'll come—straight away."

"Yes, queek—queek!"

There never would have been this sense of urgency if the find had been one relating to the Eastmans. In that case it could have been treated as a mere relic of happenings of a week or two ago, with no bearing upon the present time. The Eastmans had vanished, and with the police on the look out for them, were not likely to come back, even in the most secret way.

But the Hindu, he had never been disposed of. Only a shadowy, sinister figure in the background up till now, he yet remained.

"Hunda Khan!" he had been named by Lawrence Eastman himself. "Not Hunda Khan!" the professor had stated. "Hunda Khan is dead."

By whatever name the mystery man went, however, whatever his true identity might be, he did remain.

And now Pam at any rate felt that here was the substance of that shadow which had been upon her mind and heart lately. The shadow of a fear that the professor himself was menaced.

Bicycles were dragged out and hastily mounted. Away rode the chums of Study 12, in full flight from Morcove School to the bungalow.

Full pelt down the drive, a chiming of all the cycle-bells at the gateway, then the open road was before the riders, and how they thrust at their pedals, how they raced along.

"He may be still about."

That dismaying thought, voiced by Betty, was common to all. Therein lay the reason for this great haste. Since the find related to the Hindu, who had not, so to speak, been scared away by developments in the past, it might easily mean that he was still haunting the district.

Heads low over the handlebars, at top speed the girls raced along, soon fetching the bungalow into view.

It was away to the right of the road in front of them, its red tiles redder than ever in the rays of the sinking sun.

The picturesque dwelling had nothing but the air of a pleasant holiday haunt on this lovely spring-time evening. There was nothing of gloom, nothing to suggest any evil menace; and yet the vague dread still held Betty & Co. in its grip. *The Hindu was about!*

"Can't see the professor, girls!"

"No, Pam!" some of the others called out.

"He generally takes a turn or two in the open at this time, just before his supper," Pam further remarked, pedalling on with her chums. "Hallo, there's Zelig!" she exclaimed in the next breath; and then:

"What's the matter with Zelig, girls?"

"Yes, bekas she wants us."

Pam's prediction coming true after all. Zelig, who had said she would not want any of the girls any more, and now she was flying down the garden path, making frantic signs.

Out by the garden gateway she rushed and came whirling to meet the Morcovians. Another



"The Professor!" panted the French girl, gesturing towards the bungalow as Pam and the others came up. "The Professor—quickly, come quickly!"

moment and they had braked up and were down from the cycle saddles.

"The professor!" cried the French girl frantically gesturing towards the bungalow. "The professor—vite, vite; quickly, quickly!"

"Why, what?" gasped Morocco blankly.

But Zelle for the moment could only give a moaning cry, whilst her extended arm still pointed to the little dwelling from which she seemed to have fled in terror.

Don't Go In!

"ZELIE, pull yourself together."

"Oh, mademoiselle, oh, but how I am terrified!"

"We are all here, Zelle; we are going in—"

"Mademoiselle, no—not you!" Zelle suddenly implored. "Not you, petite—ah, no, no!"

"Don't be silly!" cried Pam.

Like the other scholars she rushed her machine to the roadside and let it fall to rest with a minor crash.

"Come on, girls, and let's see for ourselves."

"Yes, bekas, we can't get her to eggspain. Talk about imbercile!" was Naomer's saved-up retort to the French girl. "Booh!"

They crowded through the narrow gateway and went swarming up the garden path. The porch door was wide open. Still there was nothing to be seen that was out of keeping with this genial evening hour. But if Zelle's looks and cries had meant anything at all they had meant tragedy itself.

So at the porch every girl stepped slower, softer, as one might when entering a place to which disaster had come.

Quietly, warily, they crowded into the pretty little lounge hall. Their hard breathing and the tick, tock of a clock were the only sounds to mar a silence that was ominous.

"Professor Donkin!" voiced Pam at last; and then louder: "Professor Donkin!"

There was no response.

"I say!" whispered Polly. "Something's up. We must take a look round."

Pam pointed, with returning calmness, towards a certain door.

"That's his favourite room, girls. He spends nearly all his time in there."

"Oui!"

They turned sharply as that tense word proclaimed Zelle's return to the house.

"V'la, in there, oui!" she whispered, pointing a shaking hand towards the professor's den.

"But I warn you—"

"Yes, well, we're prepared," Pam said composedly.

She went towards the door which was not quite closed. Close behind her were the other scholars, their hearts pounding from vague dread as Pam pushed the door wide round.

And then they saw.

The old professor was bound to the chair in which he sat to do his writing, bound hand and foot alike, and gagged.

Such a scene as this was bound to place a horrible spell upon the schoolgirls for a moment. Aghast, they stared in upon the victim for that one moment.

Then Pam ran forward from the doorway, and her chums joined her in the room. There was a paper-knife upon the desk. She snatched it up, to use it at once upon the tight throats.

Even as she did this she vaguely noticed that papers on the desk were in confusion, and that some drawers had been pulled open and not pushed back.

"Bother! This knife won't cut the ropes!" she was exclaiming next instant. "Someone—"

"Here, try this!"

Polly had rushed out to the kitchen and was back again.

Slash, slash! She fell to work upon cords that were cruelly tight and double-knotted. They came away in short lengths, and the lean old figure that was bound so mercilessly began to topple limply.

"Hold him!" panted Betty. "Oh, girls, how awful he looks!"

"Dreadful!" wailed Paula. "At his age, bai Jove, such brutal woughness—"

"It has been too much for him, yes," murmured Madge.

Polly slashed at the last thongs. Then those who were holding the victim felt the weight of him more than ever, the dead weight of a form that was limp and lifeless-looking.

They gently lowered him to the carpet, meaning to get him to a couch as soon as possible.

"He's breathing, and that's about all."

That was Pam, after kneeling to bend over the supine figure.

She stood up again.

"Some water? Oh, thanks, Betty!"

The captain had run to the kitchen and returned with a full tumbler.

They tried to get some of the revivifying water past the professor's clenched teeth, but there was scant success. His eyes remained closed; the lean, clever face was cold and grey.

"A doctor, girls," Pam next suggested, and there were murmurs of assent.

"Some of us will bike off to Barncombe; others go back to the school and let them know," said Betty, turning away.

"I'll stay," Pam remarked softly. "With Zelic."

"Right-ho! We'll be as quick as we can."

Those who were to be off tip-toed from the room. There came back the faint scurry of their running down to the bicycles. Then there was that awful stillness within doors again, and the figure stretched upon the floor, as Pam watched it so pityingly, remained as mute and still as ever.

TICK, TOCK! The clock out in the hall. Tick, tock!

Zelic, who had been whimpering, suddenly took a tiny handkerchief away from her wan face.

"Mademoiselle."

"Well?"

"He may never speak again. V'ia, it is that he scarcely breathes."

"It was the shock to such an old man—a cruel thing!" Pam murmured. "You found him like this only a few moments before you came running out for help?"

"Oui! He say to me at six o'clock, how I can go into the town for a little time off. So I go, and I come back in time to prepare his supper. Ah, I have been devoted to milor' the professor, petite. But I do not hear him. He do not make a sound after I come in. And, mademoiselle, it is that suddenly I am afraid. I tap at his door. Silence. Then I come in, and he is like that 'n the chair."

"And no sign—"

"Of his assailant, mademoiselle, not one. Only it is that the glass doors are open, as you see. Mademoiselle, if he should die without telling us, what then are we to think?"

"Oh, we shall know what it meant," Pam answered, turning tragically to the desk. "The papers—the papers have been stolen after all."

"Papers, mademoiselle?"

"Yes. The Temple of the Moon papers; we saved them from the Eastmans; but they are no longer here. They're gone!" she said, more to herself than to the girl who was standing by.

"Stolen, after all!"

"Stolen?" echoed Zelic hoarsely. "But by whom then, petite?"

"The Hindu."

"That so terrible man! He has been here?" shuddered the French maid, looking this way and that. "There is, then, a clue?"

"There is one clue to guide us, yes," Pam nodded. "We girls were on our way here to tell the professor that a jewel had been found, a jewel, it is certain, that was worn in that Hindu's turban. He has been lying low in the district."

A lengthy pause, with the clock ticking on in the silence and the stricken victim still lying as if indeed he would never speak again.

"One clue to guide us," Pam repeated in a deep whisper. "But whether it will ever help us to catch the man or to get back those stolen papers remains to be seen."

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

THE PAPERS MUST BE FOUND!

If the work of a lifetime is not to be wasted, those precious Temple of the Moon documents must be recovered. Can Betty & Co. achieve this task? Can they outwit the cunning Hindu?

Don't fail to read

Morcove's Quest in the Caves



By MARJORIE STANTON

which is complete in next Tuesday's issue, and which deals with Morcove's dramatic attempt to find the vital papers.