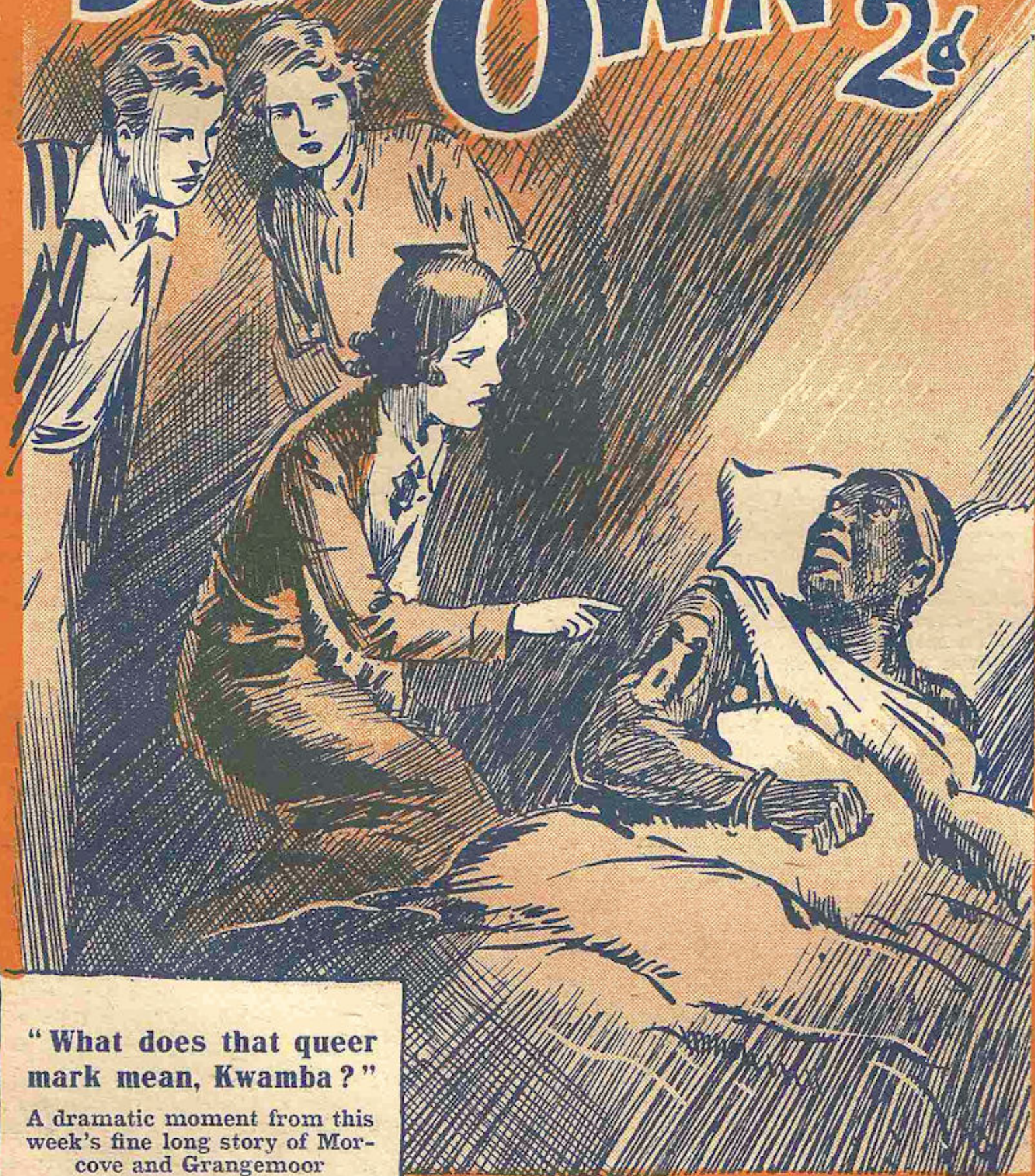


Hoble
"More Thrills for Morcove!" GRAND LONG COMPLETE MORCOVE
HOLIDAY STORY INSIDE

The SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN 2d



"What does that queer
mark mean, Kwamba?"

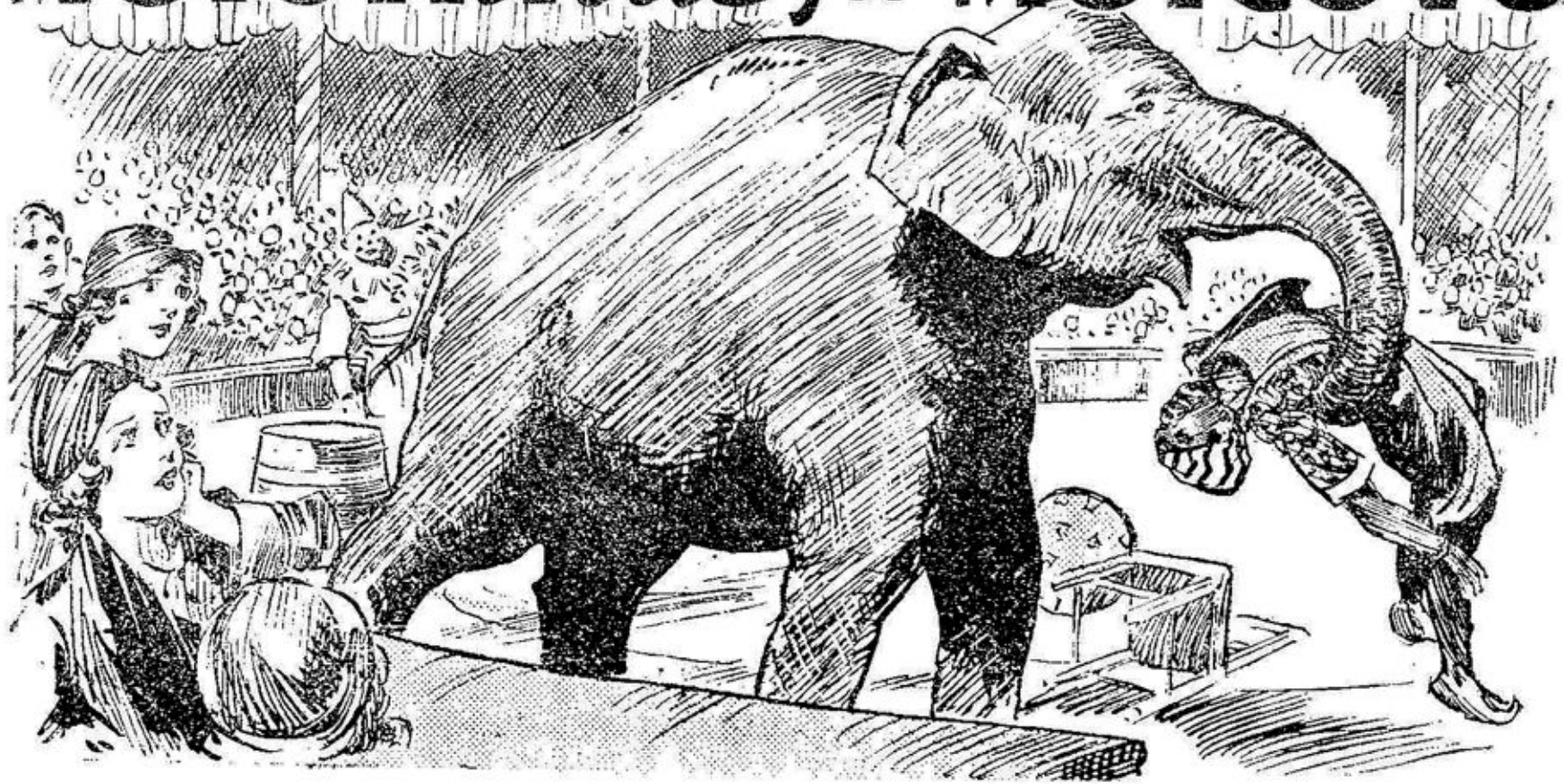
A dramatic moment from this
week's fine long story of Mor-
cove and Grangemoor

No. 795. Vol. 31.
Week ending
May 2nd, 1936.
EVERY TUESDAY.

"PEGGY'S AMAZING PUZZLES!" FIRST OF A GREAT
NEW SERIES!

A Weird Tattoo Mark and a Strange Gold Necklace Lead to—

More Thrills for Morecove



The Camp by the Sea

"WELL, it's a change, anyhow!"

"Oh, and I like it, too!"

"So do I, girls!"

"Yes—gorjus! Bekas, we are having jolly good meals, don't forget—even though we are in camp!"

And that ever-hungry member of the Morecove batch of chums, dusky Naomer, gave a relishing sniff at the morning breeze.

There was a tang of the sea in the air, for Betty Barton and Co. were in camp on the outskirts of popular Sourville-on-Sea, where, for the first week or so of the Easter "hols," they had mostly been staying at the Grand Hotel.

Numerous tents dotted this sunny meadow which lay just behind the beach at the eastern end of the seaside town. There were tents for the Morecove girls, and there were others for various Grangemoor brothers and those brothers' best pals. There was also one tent for the one grown-up whose chief concern was to see that Morecove and Grangemoor enjoyed a jolly good time.

But the cookhouse, being a shanty of timber and corrugated iron, really was entitled to that high-sounding title.

So often was the meadow let to campers during the summer months, its owner had provided what he called a permanent kitchen. That it always blew down during the winter gales and had to be raised again, was supposed to make little difference to camping parties. As a matter of fact, it did make a big difference, such constant re-erection being done with light-hearted disregard for bad weather—in the summer.

"Yes," Bunny Trevor identified the tasty smell coming from the nearby cookhouse, "stew."

"And what's wrong with stew?" Betty Barton asked with a smile.

"Nothing! At least, we'll hope not. But, well—Polly is cook for this morning."

Bunny's addition caused a laugh amongst those few girls who were sharing with her a five-minute rest after routine tasks about the camp. There could be no denying that madcap Polly Linton was slap-dash!

"In fact," said Naomer, rising from a squatting position on the grass, "I zink I had better go across and see? Bekas you never know!"

And she went.

"About this afternoon, girls," Betty began; "as we've done fatigues this morning— Oh, dear,"

Morecove on Holiday! Sunny days by the sea! A circus! Fun, frivolity and laughter! And then, like a falling shadow—mystery! The mystery which began generations ago in the tropical jungle of darkest Africa!

she changed to playful distress, "how I do wish Jack Linton wouldn't croon! There he goes again!"

"Dweadful, yes, wather," yawned ease-loving Paula Creel, suddenly opening her pretty eyes as she lolled in a deck-chair. "As if I haven't earned a bit of peace—a bit of a west, bai Jove!"

Bunny, in the act of going across to the cluster of Grangemoor tents, to put a stop to "music" of which Morecove had had more than enough just lately, stopped dead and eyed elegant Paula amazedly.

"Why, what have you done this morning?"

By Marjorie Stanton

ILLUSTRATED BY L. SHIELDS



Bunny asked, whilst a bleating accordion went on supplying the accompaniment to the unseen vocalist's crooning.

"Done, Bunny deah? Weally, Bunny! I made my own bed, didn't I? That is to say, I wolloed it up!"

Obviously, Bunny felt inclined to ask: "And what else?" pausing for a reply. Jack Linton, however, now so exaggerated his clever imitation of a crooner's best vocal effects, it became urgently necessary for someone to go across and stop him.

And then suddenly the versatile brother of madcap Polly showed himself in the open, playing the accordion most energetically. He was followed out of his tent by Bunny's own brother, Tom, who produced a tin whistle.

But, before Tom could add one of the tin whistle's shrill notes to the melody already being provided, something happened to put a stop to the whole performance.

An alarming outcry from the cookhouse overrode the din which Jack was creating. He not only broke off; he even cast away the accordion, realising—as did everyone else in camp at this moment—that the cookhouse chimney was on fire badly.

"Goodness!" gasped Betty. "Look at it!"

"Howwows, yes, wather, bai Jove!"

Dense clouds of black smoke burst from the top of the stove-pipe which poked through the cookhouse roof, a reeking, belching smother, and yet there was more smoke finding an outlet elsewhere—in the camp kitchen.

Polly Linton came flying out by the kitchen entrance, along with her official cook's mate—Judy Cardew—and Naomer.

"Hooray!" Bunny hailed these three. "Nice fire you've got there for cooking!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sweendle!" yelled Naomer. "Let ees nothing to laugh at! Bekas—our dinner!"

But although Polly and Judy had got outside the kitchen with as great alacrity as their dusky interloper had shown, they now turned back.

Defying the smother of smoke, they rushed to save the midday meal from the top of a stove which seemed to be experiencing minor explosions.

"Dash!" raged Polly, letting go of the cook-pot handles that were far too hot to be held by bare hands. "Ugh—spa-ooch!" as the billowing smoke enveloped her. "And now the lid has fallen in—hang!"

"Shall I?" Judy hastily offered, having had the presence of mind to snatch up a dish-wiper that would take the heat.

"No, Judy—you get hold of the pudding saucepan! Oh, our roly-poly!"

So Judy whipped from the stove-top a heavy pot in which the roly-poly had been boiling, and rushed it into the open air, whilst Polly—snatching up the first cloth that came to hand—went for the stewpot once more.

It was a heavy iron cook-pot, with handles at either end. Staggering under the weight of it, she nearly blundered into would-be "rescuers" who had dashed up. Her yelled "Loo-ook out!" caused some lively skipping backwards by Betty and others, who next moment gave loud cheers.

"Hooray! Saved!"

"Bekas—"

But that first word from Naomer took violent effect upon Polly. Jumping clean over her dumped cook-pot, the official cook for the day mock-grimly "went" for the dusky one, as being the cause of the present disaster.

Meantime, Jack and Tom had started to tackle the chimney fire in what they considered to be the approved manner.

As the whole thing was a great joke to them, they were doing everything with a great joviality. Their loud cries, as they both climbed on to the kitchen roof, to get at the stove-pipe, invited Morcove to admire their heroism.

Lest the girls should imagine that the worst was over, Jack and Tom added many a mock-terrified "Wow!" as they obtained a clattering footing upon the sloping corrugated iron.

Jack was first at the very infirm iron pipe. He whipped off his blazer, bundled it into a ball, and promptly clapped it over the smoking top of the chimney.

"That's the way, boys!" he triumphantly boasted, starting to ram the rolled-up blazer into the stove-pipe. "What?" he next moment belted. "Can't hear!"

He meant that he failed to understand. Clearly enough he heard all the protesting cries which came from below. They were the cries of Betty and several other girls who had rushed into the cookhouse just as Jack, on the roof, stopped up the proper outlet for the smoke.

"Goop!" he was dinned at, now that the girls had rushed out again. "You've made it worse!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"All right; I know what!" Tom shouted. "Here, Jack, this pipe's aight all up the inside. She wants to fall down, so we had better knock her down. That'll let the smoke away O.K."

It did. No sooner had Tom applied a shoe-tip to the burning-hot pipe, causing it to fall clear to the grass behind the cookhouse, than a roof-top crater gave off volcanic effects.

It was such a furious billowing up of sooty smoke that both skittish lads stepped backwards

sharply. They did this, forgetting that they were on sloping corrugated iron, parts of it as thin as paper from rust. There came a "Wow!" from Jack as a foot of his went right through a weak spot.

Then, to save himself from falling, he made a wild grab at Tom, and over they both went, to be observed amidst the smoke, for a brace of seconds, in a heap together. After which they did a kind of vanishing trick.

If those two boys did not actually drop through the roof as cleanly as if they had fallen through a trap-door, at least they performed some very hasty acrobatic feats that were to land them on the kitchen table.

And Morcove, having observed all this, mingled applauding cheers and handclapping with its shrieks of laughter.

The Circus Arrives

"**B**EKAS, do eet again!" Naomer specially encored the Grangemoor pair. "As good as zo circus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, the circus," Bunny gurgled, reminded of certain gaudy placards which were adorning Southville's hoardings. "You two," as her brother and Jack came out of the smoky cook-house, "had better apply for jobs in the show."

"Oh, very funny," said Tom, smoothing his rumpled hair with a sooty hand. "There's a menagerie as well, Bunny!"

"That," she promptly retorted, "gives you a double chance of being taken on."

"Gosh, boys," panted Jack, staring at his fellow "hero," after rubbing smarting eyes, "do I look as bad as that?"

Then, on his way to perform hasty ablutions and get into another blazer, he picked up the accordion and started playing it again. He and Tom—they let it be known that they intended to do no more this side of dinner-time.

If Betty and the other girls in camp could not put things right unaided, then they must enlist the help of all those members of the camping party who were now due back from a "morning off." As for Jack and Tom, they were going to sit about in the sunshine, outside their tent, the one skirling on his tin whistle, the other vamping on the accordion and occasionally bursting into song.

To have everything quite as it should have been within the next quarter of an hour, was certainly beyond the girls' doing. The stove-pipe, they decided, must wait. Besides, why worry about that, when the fire now burned better than ever?

Also, those gaping holes in the tin roof—they would have to be stopped with some fresh material which must be either bought or scrounged. Besides, again, how much airier and cooler the kitchen was with those openings in the roof.

But all that dirt and disorder, consequent upon the fat having been, literally, in the fire just now, the girls did overcome by some high-spirited activities. They were even ready to "dish up" when the morning's absentees came back to camp.

Madge Minden and Tess Trelawney were the first to show up. Tess had been out sketching, and it was like Madge to have kept the girl artist company. They shared a study at Morcove.

Then Mrs. Cardew sauntered upon the scene, back from a morning amongst the shops. She, the young widowed mother of Judy and Dave, had charge of the victualling department.

A minute later Dave himself drifted in, with Jimmy Cherrol. So there was a large party to start "jollying" fat Tubby Bloot, when he rolled into view, hugging promising-looking parcels.

Tubby, like the lady commandant of the camp, had been diving in an out of shops this morning. But, unlike Mrs. Cardew, the portly Grangemoorian had not left his purchases to be sent along later.

There was that in Tubby's genial nature which made him eager to "deliver the goods" himself. Never mind that a fancied pineapple, a box of foreign peaches, a carton of chocolates, and an iced cake, formed in all an awkward load.

Never mind that the day was warm and the distance between town and camp a tidy step. Here came that Grangemoorian who was never so happy as when he had something to offer round.

Breathless, moist about the neck, but smiling his fat smile, Tubby made light of the exertion to which he had been put. He could not have looked more gratified had he turned up with all these purchases just in time to save his fellow-campers from starvation.

As it was, "cookhouse call" could now be improvised upon the accordion by Jack, with a tin-whistle obligato supplied by Tom. And Tubby, for one, remarking that he had merely, so to speak, provided a little dessert to follow, became a hungry sampler of the stew.

They all took stew, and had "roly-poly à la Polly-wolly," as Jack called it. At least, that was what he called it as he received his ration. What he called it after the first mouthful need not be recorded.

But even if stew and pudding alike needed a really accommodating appetite, like Naomer's or Tubby's, to be appreciated, at any rate nobody was the worse for the meal, by and by.

No sooner had the girls rushed through the washing-up than they sped away to the beach. The tide was far out, and already the boys had set up stumps for cricket on the sands.

Morcove won the toss and elected to go in first. So Jack and Tom went on to bowl for the Grangemoor side, leaving only three "men" for fielding. As there could be no innings for the boys unless they got Morcove all out within half an hour—for the tide was coming in again pretty fast—the first overs were examples of deadly bowling.

Naomer and Paula were both dismissed for a duck each, and then Bunny was caught first ball—beautifully—by the very brother who had sent her down such a "nice easy one"!

"What do you expect?" Bunny said to Polly, who had come out to meet her. "When we were washing-up whilst they were practising!"

"Give me the dagger," quoted the madcap with all the grimness of a Lady Macbeth. And she went to the vacant wicket, made pretence of licking both hands, and stood ready.

The sun was behind her. She saw the ball well enough, flashing down the sandy pitch; another of Tom's clever ones. But—smack!

"Oh, well hit, Polly—well hit!" shrieked the other girls. "Run it out—go on-n-n!"

"Bekas—look, he is in ze sea, hooray!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Polly had so swiped the ball that it had dropped into the encroaching waters, and there was Tubby, at the end of a sharp run, wading in to retrieve it.

His splashings about, unable to locate the cricket ball amongst the rippling shallows, produced an immediate claim by Grangemoor:

"Lost ball!"

"No!" Morcove dissented. "It's there! Run it out, Polly! Go on, Polly—Betty! Six—seven—eight—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gorjus!" Naomer capered, as Betty and Polly kept up the fun of running out that hit. "Nine! Hooray!"

"Bai Jove!" chortled Paula. "But hawdly cwicket, what?"

"Wha-a-at?" Bunny flared out. "You keep quiet!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Poor old Tubby!"

And then suddenly they all heard a most significant and diverting sound from the direction of the town.

Bam, bam, bam! Boom-ta, boomta, boomta! A brass band! And not the band on the parade, either. Processional music, this; the sort to which crowds would be keeping in step.

"Oh, the circus!"

"Yes, it's here—it's got to Southville!"

"Come on, then, girls! Let's go and see!"

"Come on, chaps!"

And, just as they were—most of them with shoes and stockings discarded, feet bare to the warm sands—they sped for the highest part of the shingle bank above the beach.

In the general excitement, stumps were left undrawn. So there they stood, in the sands, with the little wavelets rapidly running in to encompass them.

At the top of the bank, the girls and boys all stood gazing eagerly across their own tent-dotted meadow, in the direction of the town.

"There they are—look! Oh, coming out of the town—this way!" voiced several of the gazers. "It's a procession!"

"Run and get a good look at it, shall we?"

"Yes, let's, come on!"

"I say, though," Betty exclaimed, in such a concerned tone that all her chums stood checked. "That lorry—working into the meadow next to ours? That has nothing to do with the circus, has it?"

"Hasn't it?" shouted several. "But it has! Why, see—a 'Samway's Circus' placard pasted on the side of it."

"Oh, heck!" Jack gasped. Then he whistled. "Whew, chaps!"

"Bekas—what ze diggings—"

"That," cried the girls in chorus, "is where the circus is going to be! In the next meadow to ours!"

"Sea Stops Play!"

"O H, dear!"

"Yes, bai Jove! Er—did we baw-gain for this, geals?"

Then they went off into

laughter. Whether or not they welcomed the prospect of being quite so near to the circus ground, one thing was certain. Before another hour was out, the circus would be there—in the next field to their own!

"But how lovely," Bunny suddenly decided. "We shall feel we almost belong!"

"Chance of free passes, chaps," Jack cheered up. "Hooray, stuff to give 'em!"

"On the othah hand," Paula demurred, "certain dwawbacks!"

"What drawbacks?" Polly flounced round upon the elegant one.

"Er—wather noisy by night, pwesumably? Bwoken sleep—"

"Well, of course, there will be the menagerie as well," Polly roguishly started to scare Paula

"Growling lions—"

"Howwows!"

"Snarling tigers—"

"Ow—"

"Giant snakes, too; but," Jack comfortingly added, "they don't make any noise, of course. So long as they don't escape—"

"Escape!" gasped Paula. "Oh, deah—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What you had better do, Paula," gurgled Bunny; "get Pam to have you at Beach Place to sleep!"

Pam Willoughby had dearly wanted to join the girls in their seaside camp; but her parents had



The two Grangemoor boys staggered away from the belching chimney—trying vainly to save themselves. And then, while the girls shook with laughter, Jack's foot disappeared through the roof with a loud crash!

been advised by a Southville doctor that she was not yet fit for such exertions as camps entailed.

She had been brought to Southville to convalesce after a nasty riding accident that had happened during last term. It was really her parents renting Beach Place, along the front, to give Pam the benefit of sea air, that had led to such a big Morcove "rally" in the seaside town.

The Willoughbys were still at Beach Place, where the campers were welcome to look in as often as they pleased. And Pam, although denied the whole-time life of the camp, was seizing every chance to be with her chums under canvas.

"She will be along at tea-time," Betty gaily remarked. "We'll ask her then, Paula!"

"Er—thenks, but—er—"

"Yes, bekas, you have been trouble enough every night, even without lionses and tigerses!" Naomer scornfully shrilled. "Bekas, even if he is only spider on ze blanket, the yells you give!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I hev no wecollection of being afwaid of any spidah," Paula protested with dignity. "Theah was a fwog—and, weally, that is nothing to laugh about, geals!"

But they did laugh, and might have gone on doing so, only the louder bam-bamming of the circus band invited better attention.

By now the circus was well in sight as a long-drawn-out procession, moving slowly along a stretch of open road, just beyond the town's outskirts.

There were gaudily painted vans drawn by piebald circus horses. There were steam tractors hauling trailers laden with dismantled tenting and other equipment.

Gilded travelling cages could be seen, holding wild beasts that comprised the menagerie.

There was at least one elephant, trundling along with flocking children on either side to offer him bits of bun, paper bags—anything he was likely to find acceptable!

Then there were all the tiny, pattering ponies, and there was an old stage-coach with a medley of cowboys and Redskins on the outside seats. Last of all were some more brightly painted living vans, each with a tiny chimney poking through the roof.

"And it doesn't look as if those chimneys ever catch fire!" chuckled Betty.

The band rode in a wagon at the very head of the procession. The bandsmen in their faded uniforms were blaring at brass instruments, whilst the drummer hit his big drum lustily—bam, bam, bam! Boom-ta, boom-ta, BOOM!

So it came on; Samway's Circus—the same old travelling show which turned up once a year at Barncombe, the nearest town to Morcove School.

By the advance notices in Southville, Betty and Co. had been warned days ago that the coming show was one they had seen before. But their expectant delight had been none the less. Nothing about a circus ever stales. Indeed, if it fails to be "just the same as ever," half the charm is gone!

"It's going to turn into that by-road leading to the meadow," one of the boys commented. "So it wouldn't be a procession by the time we got across."

"It's bound to go round the town again—along the front, to-morrow, as an advertisement," Betty said. "So let's get back to cricket."

"Get back?" came Jack's incredulous howl as he turned seawards again. "My hat, chaps, look at our stumps!"

"Oh!"

And there were shrieks of laughter at the sight of six cricket stumps, in their two sets of three, showing only a few inches of wood above the in-running waves!

The Strange Souvenir

BY tea-time all the circus vans had taken up positions in the meadow next to Morcove's.

The rumble of tent poles and other "gear," off-loaded with expert speed, was heard often by the campers as they sat in a jolly batch, lazing through the open-air meal.

A high hedge separated one field from the other, so the girls and boys could not see what was going on over there. But they could guess what brisk work there had to be, and they needed no hint from Mrs. Cardew that it would be best not to go "butting in."

If, as such near neighbours, the juniors could do the circus folk a good turn, they would. It was certain, however, that the routine job of putting up the big marquee, and of generally preparing for performances, meant an extremely busy time, during which strangers were unwelcome. A remnant of the crowd that had followed the circus out of the town had already been forbidden the meadow.

Pam had not turned up at the camp for tea, and now her chums wondered if she had been ordered to rest, being "not so good" to-day. The convalescence had been one of ups-and-downs, after an illness far more serious than Pam herself had been allowed to realise.

So, presently, Betty and a few others set off for Beach Place. They found Pam lying back in a cushioned deck-chair, on one of the lawns. Her own careless-sounding remark that she had felt "too lazy" to stroll out to the camp was, her chums realised, pluck in disguise.

"Nice of you to look me up," she smiled. "And now you are here, you are going to get some tennis?"

"A wealcome wefuge, bai Jove!" Paula beamed, sinking into one of the many available garden chairs. "Naow that we are living, so to speak, Pam, next door to a circus, yes, wather!"

"Oh, yes, I heard all the commotion—the band! And I thought of you all. Dad told me before tea that the show had gone to the meadow next to yours."

"And, plis, Pam, Paula wants to know eef—"

"Nothing of the sowt, Pam deah!"

"Know if—what, Naomer?"

"Eef she can sleep here instead of at ze camp, bekas of ze minnyagerie—you know, everlants, and lions and tigers!"

"Pewfectly widiculous!" Paula cried, on her dignity again. "Monstwous, to suggest that I'm afwaid! No, Pam deah; don't you take any notice whatevah! I don't need to be assured that your people would hev me—"

"Being so ornamental," put in Polly, selecting one of the Beach Place rackets.

"But I pwefer—yes, wather! I pwefer to—to—in fact, to bwave it out, so to speak!"

"Brave what out?" asked Bunny, batting tennis balls out to the grass court, where two of the boys were adjusting the net. "Come on, Polly, and you and I will take on Betty and Madge."

The court was not netted on all sides, and so the players could do with two or three chums to throw in strays. Pam, settling herself afresh in the deck-chair, was going to watch the game with keen delight. She had Paula to talk to.

"I mean to get across to the camp in the morning, anyhow, Paula! Hope I'll be able to go round the circus."

They fell silent, watching the game which had now started.

"Ow!" Paula flinched as a rather wild return by Polly brought the ball falling towards the deck-chairs.

Pam started to rise to stop the errant ball from bouncing away into a shrubbery; but Jimmy Cherrol whizzed up and held it. After throwing it in, he looked round half-distressfully at Pam, who laughed.

"Penny, Jimmy!"

"You ought to take it quietly, Pam."

"I mostly do, I think," was the answer. "Oh, hard luck!" as Madge slipped and then sprawled so violently that the racket flew out of her hand.

In a moment Madge was up from the grass, unharmed, able to laugh as she shook herself to rights. The side-slip had, however, caused something necklace-like that she was wearing to become detached at its fastening. Jimmy, who had rushed to her aid, picked it up from the grass; but she could not put it on again.

"Broken—bother. I'll have to take it to a jeweller in town, for I rather value that, Jimmy. Might ask Pam to mind it for me while I go on with the set. Ready, girls!"

So Jimmy left the court, looking interestedly at the trinket which he was under orders to hand to Pam. He thought it a curious sort of necklace for a schoolgirl to wear. The fine gold chain was of links curiously fashioned, and there was a metal pendant—he supposed that that was gold, too, but it was much yellower than the gold in modern jewellery. This pendant was about as large as a soldier's medal, but very thin, with a design in birds on one side; on the reverse, there were puzzling hieroglyphics.

"Madge said, Pam, would you mind this for her?"

"What! Oh—you remember, don't you, Paula, where Madge got this?" Pam smiled, taking the broken necklace from Jimmy.

"Yes, wather, bai Jove! In Nakara, that time we went out with Naomer to her native city," Paula beamed. "Madge bought it in the Mawket-place as a souvenir."

"And has worn it almost ever since," Pam imparted to Jimmy. "A bit clumsy, but she fancies it as a charm."

Mr. Willoughby came out, taking his stand behind Pam's deck-chair. He was a most handsome man, finely built.

Mr. Willoughby nodded and smiled to Jimmy, who shyly moved off; then he tapped Pam upon her glossy head. She looked round and up at him.

"Hallo, daddy. You saw that rally, just then?"

"Wimbledon! What on earth's that?"

"Oh, this?" She handed up the necklace, whilst briefly explaining. "Nakara, you know!"

"But," he exclaimed, inspecting the trinket closely. "this isn't Nakaran, my dear."

You Will Enjoy These Four April Issues of the Schoolgirls' Own Library



No. 532

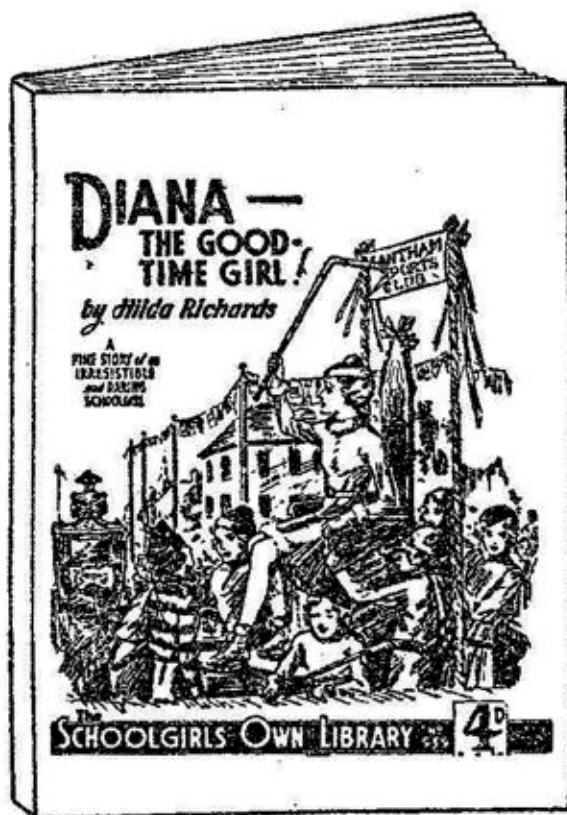


No. 533

Now on Sale—Price 4d. Each



No. 534



No. 535

"Well, Madge bought it at a stall in the market-place."

"Extraordinary! Ancient Egypt, this! How on earth did it turn up in Nakara—to be sold to a schoolgirl, too? I'd like to know how much Madge gave for it!"

"She did tell me at the time—only a few shillings, at the rate of exchange."

"Then she had a bargain," Pam's father laughed. "It's pure gold, and it must be several thousand years old."

"Bai Jove!" gasped Paula. "Weally!"

"Oh, yes! The two hawks facing each other—a favourite Egyptian symbol. And this writing on the back—"

"I'm glad you call it writing, daddy! Perhaps you'd like to translate?"

"That's being cheeky!"

"But you can read lots of those dead languages."

"You have never heard me claim to be an Egyptologist, my dear. But I don't mind having a try."

Mr. Willoughby continued to study the weird "writing" on the reverse of the medallion, whilst Pam and Paula returned their attention to the tennis court. The play was brilliant.

"I make it something like this," Pam's father broke out at last:

"ANKH, WHO RULES, HAS DOMINION
OVER THE GOLDEN GROTTO, TO HIS
ROYAL WIFE GIVES."

"Bai Jove!"

"Meaning, daddy—"

"My dear, as it is I have filled it out to make it plain! A ruler named Ankh made this present to his queen"

"But what's the Golden Grotto?"

"How should I know! Except that it must have been a possession of which the king was specially proud."

"Not a gold mine, daddy?"

"I fancy the Egyptians got their gold only from river beds. 'Golden Grotto' is the nearest equivalent I can get, by translating. But this is a gold ornament. Perhaps it was a gift made of gold—from the Golden Grotto?"

"Somewhere in Egypt, dad?"

"I would say—not."

"Then where?"

"Ah, I wonder! Somewhere in Africa is the best I can say. And now—is that game and set? Then I'll get one of the maids to bring out lemonades."

"Ices as well, daddy."

"Right-ho, my dear."

And Mr. Willoughby, dropping the ancient trinket back into Pam's lap, returned to the house.

Bunny and Polly had won the set.

"My fault," Madge ruefully apologised to her partner, Betty, as they all came to the deck-chairs. "I was no good after slipping over like that. Yet I didn't feel the least bit hurt. Just bad play."

"Or bad luck?" laughed Pam. "As you were not wearing—the charm!"

Bathing—With the Elephant!

HALF-PAST seven next morning was the time for four Morcove girls to give a mock-shivering:

"Burr-rr-rr!"

Betty and Polly, with Bunny and Tess, had taken on a challenge overnight to go surf-bathing before "brekker."

Fresh enough, not to say chilly, they were finding the breeze blowing in from the sea, now that they had come away from their tents. And the sun was not yet high enough to afford much warmth.

Never mind! Away they scampered, wearing bathing wraps over their vivid-coloured bathing costumes and sandals upon their feet.

Even as they nipped to the top of the shingle bank which separated the camping ground from the foreshore, they heard a boyish guffawing. Then they saw—all five Grangemoorians thoroughly enjoying themselves amongst the creaming waves.

Instantly the girls sent up spirited cries to make it known that they were there! Just as promptly, the boys retorted with derisive cheers, implying that the girls had yet to get wet all over before the challenge could be considered fairly disposed of.

Dared on in this way, down the pebbly slope ran Morcove, rejoicing that there would be soft sand to tread under water. The tide was a little more than half-way in.

Meantime, Dave and Jimmy indulged in some genuine swimming, whilst that rollicking pair, Jack and Tom went on giving Tubby a rough time in the surf.

Not that Tubby really minded being tipped over again and again in the shallows. Particularly buoyant was fat Tubby.

So, a few seconds later, all three joyous lads floundered up after a general immersion, to realise that the girls were already splashing about.

"Booh!" Jack scoffed. "That's paddling!"

But Polly and Bunny plunged away, really swimming at last—doing swift strokes that would take them to where Betty and Tess were already shoulders deep.

"It's grand," Betty puffed, breasting through a yeasty wave. "Every morning, after this!"

"Ra-ther!" Tess gaily responded; and then, as sudden surprise took her:

"My hat, though—look, girls! Look!"

Those who were swimming with her trod water, so as to gaze in the direction her outflung hand indicated.

Then they gurgled greater delight than ever.

"Oh, the circus elephant! Ha, ha, ha!"

Brine-blurred eyes could see the big African elephant trundling eagerly down to the water's edge, to take his own "morning dip"!

An attendant was with him—a very giant of a black fellow, or so the juniors took him to be at first glance.

Not the slightest control was this man having to exercise over his grey-hided mammoth. Very likely the elephant had "bathed" many a time before this.

"Hooray! Come on, chaps!" Jack vociferated, thrashing back into the shallows. "I want a ride!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A few moments, and all the girls and boys were wading towards the happy monster. The attendant made no sign that could be taken for objection. On the contrary, he displayed a fine set of ivories by smiling broadly.

Roughly dressed was this man for his morning's odd jobbing about the circus. But to get a closer look at him, as Morcove and Co. now did, was to imagine how fine he could appear when dressed for the ring.

He really was a giant—a good match for his special charge, the elephant. Six-foot-four he must have stood, and he was obviously as strong as he was big.

Perhaps it was the morning sunshine; but his face was not quite negro-black, although his hair was the black "wool" of a negro. Wherever he had originated, the circus life had evidently taught him to speak English.

"Morning, missies! 'Morning, sahs," he affably greeted the juniors. "Shower-bath?"

"No, thanks!" laughed the girls, seeing the "shower" already in operation. "Ha, ha, ha!"

For the elephant, not minding the saltiness of the water in the least, was enjoyably taking up gallons of it in his trunk, to squirt it over his back and crackled sides.

"The dear old fellow!" Betty exclaimed. "He likes his bath, doesn't he?"

"Oh, yass, missy," the black fellow bawled, standing about in the water with his trousers furled to the knees. "Him sit down in it, if I say. Hi! Jubilee! Here, first you say good-morning to your friends!"

With astonishing quickness, Jubilee ceased his ablutions and went down on his knees.

"Shame, we've got nothing to offer him," Bunny cried. "Never mind, Jubilee—another time!"

"Yes, come to dinner one night at the camp, old son," Jack said. "No need to dress."

"Why can't he come back with us, to breakfast, come to that?" chuckled Tom. "And give the others a surprise!"

"Wish I had a camera," said Dave. "There!"

At a word from the black man, Jubilee was sitting down on his great haunches. He drew up more water with his trunk—and the girls stood clear! But the attendant shook his head and laughed.

"No, no, missies; Jubilee not do that unless I. Kwamba, say. You, sahs"—to the boys—"like a ride?"

"What!" They exchanged consulting glances, and were instantly agreed. "Rather!"

"Ho, hoo!" Kwamba addressed the elephant, who promptly got back on to all four feet. "Now, sahs, one at de time, plis!"

This implied an offer to hoist up each of the boys to the elephant's accommodating back. But by the time Kwamba had first hoisted up Jack and then Tom, Dave and Jimmy between them were hoisting up Tubby.

"Wow!" howled Jack. "House full! I say, Tubby, be reasonable! You'll have him sinking, stern first!"

"And now the shower, please, Kwamba," roguish Polly requested, as soon as the boys, in their bathing things, had settled themselves up aloft.



"What is it?" asked Pam curiously. Her father frowned. "My goodness!" he breathed. "Does Madge know? This—this is pure gold!"

"Yes, quick!" Bunny urged in a deep whisper.

"Reading from left to right," Jack joked on, sitting just behind the elephant's ear. "His Highness the Maharajah of Bungaloo! The Punkahwallah in Chief, Tomee Daddybhoy! And his Fattiness the Prize Ass of Grangemoorania!"

"Look pleasant, then," Betty advised.

"Eh? Why?" Jack asked.

For answer, the elephant's trunk suddenly came curling upwards and backwards. There was just time for the faces of Jack, Tom and Tubby to assume expressions of comic dismay, and then—Shee-isssh! Slosh!

Squirted seawater showered upon all three of them. So forcefully did the elephant syringe his riders, Tubby for one rolled off at the tail end.

And Jack and Tom only survived that sudden douche, to come in for another. By a kind of sneeze—as if the salty water had affected his trunk after all—Jubilee very efficiently sprayed the two boys a second time, full in their faces.

Nothing funnier had the girls ever witnessed. Their screams of laughter might have continued for a full minute; but—it really was too chilly for standing about without any wraps.

So they ran off to snatch up their bathrobes from the dry shingle, and sped on again, making for camp.

Nor did they see anything more of the boys until half an hour later, when a banged tea-tray served as the camp's breakfast gong.

Then Grangemoor rolled up for rations, wearing their old school ties and shorts and blazers, but with heads of hair still damp and spiky.

"He's a jolly good chap, that Kwamba," Jack heartily remarked. "Quite a character. Told us fellows we could go across to the circus ground presently and he'd show us round."

"Then if you boys go, we go as well!" Polly promptly asserted. "He must be new to Samway's? He wasn't with the circus last time it came to Barncombe."

"How soon shall you go across?" Madge asked. "Could we wait for Pam to turn up? She'd love to see things. Oh, and I really wanted to go into town—about this." She dangled the broken necklace as she spoke. "To get it mended."

"I shall be going into town directly after brekker," Tubby genially announced. "To get—well, I feel I'd like to get a couple of dozen buns for Jubilee."

"What!" yelled Naomer. "Sweendle! Bekas!"

"Oh, greedy," Polly snorted. "Now this kid begrudges a poor elephant his buns!"

"Not ze bit of eet! But isn't a loaf just as good for an everlant? How can an everlant taste currants?"

"Anyway, Tubby, Madge will never trust you with her lucky charm!" Bunny rippled. "Now if Dave were going with you—that would be different!"

"I shall be going," Dave said, "to get a book"

"Good man; stout fellow!" Jack cried. "He'll take it for you, Madge."

"Would you, Dave?" Madge smiled. "Thanks!"

Next moment Madge might have been following all those chums who were swooping for the open-air breakfast-table, at which Mrs. Cardew was ready to preside. But Dave, as he took an interested look at the trinket, gave a slight start.

As it always took a good deal to make him betray excitement, Madge kept her eyes upon him in surprise.

"Well, what?" she asked, after a second or two.

"Oh—nothing, Madge."

Which response did not prevent her from feeling that there must be—something!

The Panic in the Circus

THESE were reserved seats for Betty and Co. and the boys, when they turned up for the first evening performance of Samway's Circus.

Kwamba's friendly offer to show them round during the morning, letting them see that side of circus life about which the public usually saw little, had put the juniors on good terms with their "neighbours."

"Gorjus!" was Naomer's ecstatic comment, as they all got to a most favoured position amongst the plank seats which horse-shoed the ring. "Front row, hip, pip!"

They had not come in late, yet already vast numbers from the town were here. Southville, evidently, was going to mean big money for the travelling show. The huge marquee had been crowded at the afternoon performance—which Morcove and Co. had elected to miss, so as to enjoy all the fun of the sunny seashore.

Like the rest of this evening's patrons, the girls and boys were all chatter and laughter as soon as they were seated. Chocolates were passed along. Tubby, with Naomer on his left, had by no means exhausted his pocket-money, by buying these buns for Jubilee.

He had come in, his jacket pockets bulging with various promising packages, and as he always required more seating accommodation than most individuals of his age, the obvious thing to do was to unload those side pockets at once.

So, in addition to sweets that were already in circulation, Tubby asked his dusky favourite to "mind" an unopened carton of "best assorted." Bunny, on his right, had to take a cluster of bananas upon her lap.

"Tubby!" she remonstrated. "Where on earth do you get all these things?"

"Oh, at the shops," he blandly responded, and drew a half-pound slab of milk-chocolate from a breast pocket. "This," he remarked, unpapering it, "has raisins. I'll break it, and then you might ask the others if they'll have some."

"Hallo! Oh, there's the band!"

Samway's Celebrated Circus was one of the most flourishing shows on the road. Even so, the chums could imagine how hard the life was.

These bandsmen—they looked Viennese enough, taking their seats in the wagon which served as an orchestra-pit, beside the entrance to the ring. But there were hours on end when they had to work like labouring men.

And it was just the same with all the clever performers who now proceeded, turn by turn, to "do their stuff." In the beautiful Circus Queen, doing such wonderful things on horseback, Betty and Co. identified a motherly person whom they had seen cooking the dinner this morning in a well-kept living van.

The Girl on the Flying Trapeze—she had been seen then wearing a coarse apron, going about with a pail of water and a scrubbing brush. Joey the Clown helped with the bill-posting. All the cowboys and Redskins were in constant attention upon the horses and ponies and the saddlery. "Tiny Mite," the baby of the ring, was really a girl of sixteen who helped with the book-keeping.

As for Kwamba, for every half-hour that he was in the ring, presenting such a fine appearance as a Jungle King, he spent hours tending his valuable charges.

For him the chums looked out with special eagerness, and when he came on for the first time, bringing in jovial Jubilee, they led the audience in its great applause.

"Doesn't he look fine!" Polly cried to those sitting next to her, whilst the clapping still went on.

"Most stwiking, yes, wather! A weal dignity, bai Jove!"

The band stopped. Now Jubilee began the first of his fascinating tricks.

In a moment the juniors were in fits of laughter. The boys guffawed and the girls pealed their merriment, whilst old and young alike, everywhere in the audience, laughed their loudest.

It was all the old, ever-amusing nonsense, involving Jubilee's ringing for his dinner and being waited upon by Joey. The treatment of the clown, throughout a meal in which an empty bottle played such a big part, was uproarious fun.

Yet many of the chums, whilst laughing until their sides ached, were giving only half their attention to the elephant and the clown.

Kwamba, that black man of such fine stature, in his leopard-skin dress, fascinated them. It added to his natural dignity that he took no part in the comic performance—was only there as Jubilee's vigilant keeper.

Betty and Co. noticed that Jubilee had as much respect for him as he, the elephant, had disrespect

for the clown—who, finally, was yanked by the slack of his absurd trousers high into the air by a snaking trunk!

How the audience roared its laughter then. As for Naomer, she just then let an opened box of chocolates fall unnoticed out of her lap—which showed how much she was enjoying the fun!

Joey the Clown escaped from the elephant's back, upon which he had been set, by sliding down, using Jubilee's tail for a rope. This was a liberty which the elephant was trained to resent, and there was some chasing of Joey round the ring.

It became such a laughably "desperate" flight and pursuit, suddenly Joey tried to hide himself under a small but stout stool on which Jubilee sat at dinner.

Although the stool was not big enough to cover more than Joey's chest, as he lay flat upon his

waved wildly and he made uncertain movements as if minded to rush about. A hushed audience heard Kwamba address the great beast soothingly—and Jubilee took no notice.

Then that feared stampede started, and all the people in the seats stood up, agasp with alarm, their eyes enlarged with a growing horror.

Some women screamed. The ringmaster came into the arena at a run, to raise an imploring hand. At any moment there might be a dreadful panic—the elephant himself over the frail barrier, among the terrified people—

For the excited beast had not stopped his wild rush, and the ring, after all, was such a small enclosure. Kwamba was darting this way, that way, to keep near the monster, crying words that took no effect.

"Order, order!" several of the Grangemoor boys entreated, as the screaming of women and



Suddenly the elephant's trunk came snaking back. Then, without the slightest warning—Swoooosh! The boys were sprayed with a violent jet of water, while Tubby, off his balance, hurtled backwards into the sea!

back, Jubilee failed to see him. So, trundling to another part of the ring, the elephant took up the dinner-bell again and rang it.

Then he stood on his hind legs, and the audience guessed that he was going to sit down—with no stool, this time, to receive him. Joey, up from the trampled grass, was rushing to place the stool where it had stood before.

Next moment the elephant sat down—and then rolled over. Part of the fun? Suddenly the hearts of the juniors missed a beat.

They had noticed, if others had not, that Kwamba had made a hastening gesture to Joey—had muttered a word or two in a "Quick, quick!" tone. Should the stool have been there?

Somehow, the unnerved appearance of Jubilee, as he got to his feet again, increased Morcove's belief that there had been a slip. Everything had to be done to the moment, and just then—no, Jubilee had not expected to have to go over like that!

He was flustered now, if not angry. His trunk

children grew worse. "Keep your seats, there!"

As for Betty and Co., they had already done their best by sitting down again, after only half-rising. Nothing would be worse than a sudden mad stampede by the whole audience.

Such a critical state of things may have lasted for only a few seconds—and yet what an agonising period of time it seemed to all!

Then, suddenly, Jubilee, in his wild tramping about, came upon the stool. He picked it up with his trunk and slung it away—hurled it furiously, as it seemed to those who still watched. And that flung stool fetched Kwamba a crack on the head, hitting also an arm that he had flung up to stave off the blow.

Down he went, every sense knocked out of him.

Instantly both the clown and the ringmaster darted to get to the injured man. But before they could reach him he was being picked up by Jubilee.

For a half-second the elephant had stood turned towards his injured keeper, and Morcove would

always believe that Jubilee was, as it were, suddenly horrified at his own mad act.

Now it was with visible gentleness that the mighty creature picked up Kwamba and held him clear of the ground.

Before the eyes of all the elephant trundled away to the ring's exit, still carrying in his curled trunk that limp, lifeless-looking figure.

Tattooed Secrets!

"GOSH, chaps," Jack said, "what do you think of that!"

It was a thing that had left the whole audience as much amazed as relieved.

Calmly, almost knowingly, Jubilee made his exit, the clown following him out, whilst the ringmaster stayed to make reassuring signs to the people in the seats.

The band struck up. All danger of panic was at an end. A few of those who had screamed began to laugh—a little ashamedly. But when, a few seconds later, the ringmaster checked the band, there was complete silence.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he bawled, "it will be all right now. I do not think Kwamba is badly hurt, but in a little while I will let you know. We shall continue!"

"Bravo! Bravo!"

But our juniors were saying amongst themselves:

"Poor Kwamba——"

It was not that others in the audience were lacking in sympathy. To them, however, the injured man was nothing more than a stranger who had been in charge of the elephant. Talks with Kwamba this morning had left the boys and girls on quite a friendly footing with him. They

knew him to be a "good chap," as Jack had been the first to call him; hard-working, steady, and kind to all the animals in his care.

After an acrobatic turn, the ringmaster came back to make a little speech. He was glad to be able to say that Kwamba was not seriously hurt.

"The doctor has attended him, and says it will be all right." But the accident must affect the last part of the programme. The performing lions would have to be withdrawn from to-night's show, as they could not appear without Kwamba.

Good-naturedly, the audience let only a few murmurs of disappointment be heard before greeting a fresh burst of band music with clapping and cheering.

It was to be the grand Wild West drama now, with a Redskin attack upon the stage-coach and a timely rescue by red-shirted cowboys. This was the stuff for Grangemoor, anyhow! Yet at the very height of excitement in the ring, Betty and Madge heard Jack mutter as he sat between them:

"Oh, heck, I can't stick this! I'm going out."

They knew why. Like him, they were troubled with an uneasy belief that Kwamba must be in a worse state than the ringmaster had cared to admit. Not callousness, but because of a plucky determination to "carry on," could account for the management making light of the accident.

Betty plucked Jack by the sleeve as he rose to creep away.

"I'd like to go out with you, Jack."

"And I," murmured Madge.

Then Dave got up. But there were to be no more than the four of them to withdraw at this stage. An inclination on the part of all the other chums to leave at once was checked by expressive gestures from Betty and Jack. Next moment the four were stooping towards the nearest exit.

"No, by gosh, not good enough to sit it out, when we really don't know how he is—that Kwamba chap!" Jack exclaimed as soon as they were outside.

"That stool must have given him a nasty crack," Dave frowned. "Heavy thing, you know."

"Besides, the way he dropped!" Betty sadly recollected. "Such a strong man, too. We can find out more, anyhow, even if we can't get to see him."

Night had closed over land and sea. In the darkness they had to go very warily, for fear of tripping over iron stakes securing tent-ropes. After the glare of the arc-lighted ring, it seemed very dark at first in the open.

They kept away from a canvas-screened alley that was the performers' entrance and exit to the arena, although many of the circus folk were there. It seemed best to seek information from others who were more at liberty.

So, in a minute or two, they crossed an open part of the nightbound meadow and came to some lined-up living vans.

Nobody could be seen, and not a voice was to be heard. Most of the vans were in darkness. The first they came to that was showing lamplit windows, they tried; Dave mounting the few ladder-like steps to knock at the back door.

An old shawled woman opened it to him, and her mumbled answers to his kindly questions supplied useful information. He came back to his chums to report:

"Kwamba's in a tent just here—that's the one, where the hedges come to a corner. That old crone said we'd find someone with him."

"Not a hospital case, then—thank goodness!" Madge fervently commented.

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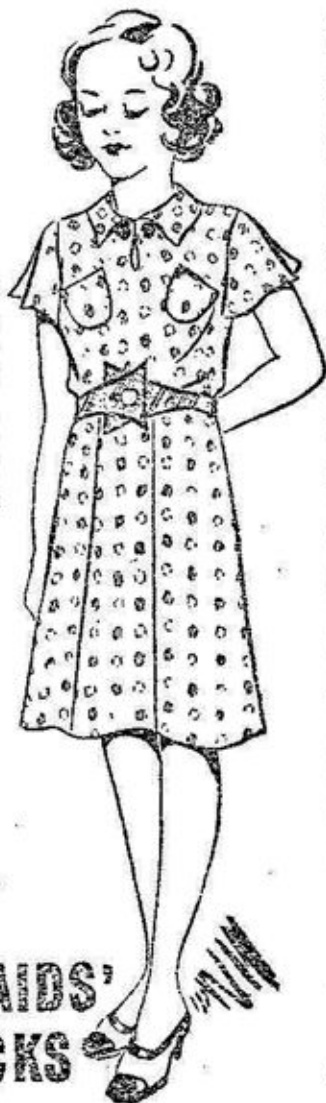
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"I don't know," Dave said very quietly. "Rather fancy the doctor was for sending him off in an ambulance. He's going to look back presently."

Whilst these few words passed, the four juniors had hurried towards the so-called tent. It was really only a rigged-up shelter of scraps of canvas and tarpaulin, and it needed all the protection afforded by the hedges to escape being blown down in the next high wind.

There was a light inside—a hurricane-lantern, stood upon the ground. Leaving the girls to wait, Dave and Jack went in advance of them to the flapped entrance.

One of the boys voiced an inquiring word or so which brought another old woman into evidence. She kept the two boys in talk for a minute; then they went in.

Dave came out presently to the waiting pair to say that they might go into the tent.

"We told him you were here, and we could tell that he would like to see you."

"What are his injuries?" Betty asked in an eager whisper as she and Madge went the few steps with Dave to the tent entrance.

"He's got a terrible bruise on the side of his head. But it's his left arm that is badly hurt. Broken just above the wrist."

"Oh, poor fellow!"

Then they were inside the tent, where Kwamba lay upon the ground, only a mattress of horse-cloths and sacking between him and the grass. Dave was kneeling near him, whilst the old woman stood close by. She gave the two girls a kind of curtsy, and her gipsy-like face wrinkled itself in a grateful smile.

"'Tis kind of you young folks," she husked.

"Yass, youse kind to come seeing 'bout how I am," Kwamba himself spoke feebly, with a big grin. "Fust time ebber things go all wrong like dis. But don't you go blaming my Jubilee—"

"Oh, no, Kwamba—nor you, either," Betty hastily assured him. "We saw how it was—nobody's fault really. How about that arm?"

"Oh, de arm; him soon be all right—gotta be," the cheerful victim declared. "Kwamba ain't a-gwine to go to no hospital, neither. I gotta be on hand to get around, or dem beasties o' mine'll be gwine sick, missing me. You folks ken smile, but I know dey well! It's funny 'bout de arm," he feebly chuckled. "De doctor, him stick a needle in de arm, and 'stead of making de pain wusser, it make all de pain go!"

Dave whispered the girls that the doctor must have given a morphia injection to allay the pain.

"But you're not comfortable, Kwamba," Madge exclaimed. "Surely you would be better off in —"

Turning into a certain street, I met a group of lads in school caps, and smiled as I recognised the badge of my old school. Just for a moment I saw myself and a group of the boys who were there with me, and who are now scattered all over the world, I suppose.

But there, how sentimental I'm getting! You'll be laughing at me in a minute, so perhaps I'd better say what I've been trying to say ever since I started this Chat, which is—no matter how your surroundings appeal to you at the moment, take good stock of them, for, in years to come, you'll find them most amazingly interesting.

Now to acknowledge some of the many letters which I have received lately. My very best thanks to the following:

Vera Wetherall (Tilehurst, Reading); Margaret Resterton (Small Heath); Margaret Saunders (Shoeburyness); June (Kent); Joan MacKenzie (Shanghai, China); Jill Martin (Merrylands, N.S.W., Australia); "A Regular Reader" (Lympton, Devon); Elspeth Grant (Dunbar, Scotland); "Admirer of Pam and Jimmy" (Bromley, Kent); Phyl (Lancing, Sussex); Audrey Milne (Dunbar); Joan Simmons (Trowse, nr. Norwich).

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There will be the usual fine collection of reading matter in next Tuesday's issue of SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN, headed by the grand long Morcove story, entitled "PERIL IN THE CAMP," by Marjorie Stanton, another COMPLETE story of "Peggy's Amazing Puzzles," and all our other fine features. Make sure of your copy by ordering in advance from your newsagent.

Your sincere friend,

YOUR EDITOR.

THE SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN. No. 795. Vol. 31

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LAST week, you will remember, I printed an amusing extract from Cuthbert's diary. As I was reading through this in the finished copy of the paper, I began to wonder how many of my readers kept diaries.

Years ago almost everyone did, and you will probably have read in the newspapers that our beloved King, Edward VIII., has recently presented the diaries he kept during the Great War to the Imperial War Museum, which has now been moved to a suitable building in South London.

It is queer how re-reading details of events in which we took part years ago, and seeing again places we knew, never fails to fascinate as we get older. Personally I think it is quite a good idea to keep not only a diary, but also a scrap-book with newspaper cuttings and other details of events which interest us.

Only last week I revisited a town I knew well many years ago. In the main it was exactly the same, but in parts how very different! Luckily I had a book containing views of many of the parts which had been altered, and so was able to compare the two.

And the places which remained untouched by the hand of time—what a strange mixture of memories they held for me; some grave, some gay, but all deeply interesting.

I saw vaguely familiar faces in the streets and suddenly recognised them, noting with astonishment how lightly the years had altered some and how deeply they had aged others.

"Oh, no, missy, I jess don't want to go to de hospital. I'll jess lie here, and if I want a bed I can soon hab him."

"He sleeps in usual amongst the cages," the gipsy-like woman put in softly. "Aye, he's a queer 'un, is Kwamba!"

As if to draw attention to all that had been done for his injured arm, the stoical fellow now showed it in its thickly wadded and firmly bound state. To do this, he used his right arm to turn back the blanket-top, and then—

Madge gave just such a violent start of surprise as Dave had given, earlier in the day, when he was looking at the broken necklace.

Now she understood why he had been so startled. Most strangely—mysteriously, it seemed to her—Kwamba's muscular right arm was tattooed with exactly the same device which the necklace bore!

There on the black man's thick forearm was the tattoo of two hawks facing each other; the self-same symbol which adorned the gold medallion of the necklace.

She could not speak for the moment; had lost her breath in amazement.

All that Mr. Willoughby had said about the necklace had been repeated to her. So, now, her brain had to grapple with a most bewildering set of facts.

She herself had bought the necklace in the bazaar at Nakara. Yet that necklace was not Nakaran but ancient Egyptian. And Kwamba—he was a pure negro, born in some tropic part of Africa, yet the large tattooing on his right arm was THAT design!

She turned to Dave at a moment when Betty and Jack were saying kind words to Kwamba. A faint smile was on Dave's lips. It seemed to say: "I thought you'd be surprised!"

"Well, we mustn't outwear our welcome," Betty tactfully remarked. "So we'll say good-night, Kwamba—"

"Oh, good-night, youse kind young folks—"
"Er—Kwamba," Madge could not help breaking in impulsively, "what's that tattooing on your right arm!"

She pointed to the design.

"Oh, dat!" was the mild response. "Dat's old—"

"You mean, it was done when you were a kiddy?"

"Yes, missy; but more'n dat, I mean him what we all hab done to us, as chillerns, where I come from. Ebber so far back—allus, since de world begin—my tribe—"

"What tribe would that be?" asked Dave quietly.

"Why, de Kwamba tribe, o' course, yessir! Oh, dis yere fellow"—meaning himself—"is Kwamba sure 'nuff! De fust Kwamba man to come to dis country, yessir! And dis yere mark—"

He showed his bared right forearm again.

"Him de mark ob de tribe, folks. Same as de mark on de heap big cliff at Kwamba—"

"Cliff?" Dave jerked. "But doesn't your tribe belong to a part where it is all forest?"

"Oh, yessir, heap big forest, but we hab de heap big rocks as well, sure 'nuff! You go there, folks, and you shall see, just de same picture as dis, on de cliff."

"Gee," Jack chuckled; "I wish we could all go there, some time! Something like a holiday, that would be!"

"Kwamba, is there a cave in that great cliff at Kwamba?" Dave asked. "You know what I mean by a cave? A tunnel—a dark hole—"

All four juniors were staring down at the up-turned face of Kwamba as he lay supine upon his bed of sacking. So far he had spoken like one delighting in recalling his boyhood's days. But now—and the change was dramatically swift, he looked troubled.

For an instant his dark eyes betrayed the sudden uneasiness of his mind. Then he closed them, sighing as if he wanted to sleep.

Betty and Madge exchanged glances with Jack and Dave, who nodded: Yes, they must all go away now.

So, without another word to disturb poor, injured Kwamba, but with grateful smiles at parting from his gipsy-like nurse, they tiptoed out of the ragged tent.

When they had taken a few steps together across the dark grassland, one of them checked, looking up to the night sky. It was Dave who did this, causing the others to do the same.

It was a cloudless night, and thousands of stars were flashing brilliantly.

"Almost like you see them—in the tropics," Madge murmured. "In Africa."

"A cliff might have a cave in it," Dave mused aloud. "And, after all, the cave could have been known, ages ago, by some other name?"

"Why, what are you thinking?" Madge questioned excitably.

"Just wondering." Dave said, so quietly that he might have been speaking only to himself. "Wondering if that cave at Kwamba can be—the Golden Grotto!"

"Hark!" Betty said.

It was the sudden deep roar of a wild beast in one of the travelling cages.

A lion!

And, by that unmistakable roar of the King of Beasts in the darkness, the juniors' thoughts were turned more than ever to Africa—to tropical forests and steamy swamps, and the secret haunts of strange tribes.

Far-off land of mystery and marvel, where even to-day great discoveries might be made; but only by those brave enough to face the jungle's deadly dangers!

[END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.]

“PERIL IN THE CAMP!”

That is the title of the enthralling long complete story of Morcove's holiday which appears next Tuesday. It is, of course, written by popular—

MARJORIE STANTON

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