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BETTY LEE, FRESHMAN

By

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BETTY LEE, FRESHMAN

CHAPTER I—BETTY LEE’S MOST MOVING ADVENTURE

Betty Lee, aged almost fourteen, was dressing for travel. She both dreaded and anticipated the day and smiled at her reflection in the mirror as it looked at her with eyes as bright as stars, cheeks pink from excitement and lips a little apart. That was a pretty and becoming suit, “ducky,” her chum had called it. Now for the new hat, to be put on over short, sunny, wavy locks that didn’t have to have anything done to them to make them so. That again was what Janet Light said, pretending to be envious.

Betty’s hands trembled a little as she adjusted the hat. She could not help hurrying, though her aunt, Mrs. Royce, had told her to take her time now. “Don’t get all fussed and excited before you start,” Aunt Jo had said.

The twins, Dick and Doris, aged twelve, were already downstairs eating breakfast. Betty had helped Dick with his tie and rounded up several articles for Doris before she could finish her own toilet, but it was a comfort to be alone for a little.

From the bathroom came the sounds of splashing and the merry laugh of Amy Louise, the little four-year-old. With the promise of “going to see Mamma,” Amy Lou would let anybody do anything this morning, though she had been insisting upon Betty’s dressing her as a rule, in this trying interim.

The cause of all this early morning excitement was that Betty Lee’s family was moving from the home and town in which they had lived ever since Betty could remember. A new home was being established in the city where an unexpected business opportunity had developed for her father.

Mrs. Lee had hurried to join her husband as soon as the goods were ready to be moved by truck. She must give the final word about such locations as Mr. Lee was able to find. With breath-taking swiftness, it seemed to Betty, her old home had been stripped

of its furniture and seemed like a different place. Temporary headquarters were made with Aunt Jo Royce, Mr. Lee's sister, and at her home the children were staying in the absence of their mother.

But word had come by telegram. Mrs. Royce could not accompany them to the city. It was Betty's responsibility to manage the most important transfer of all, that of the Lee children; and it loomed rather large to her, as she managed to swallow the soft-boiled egg, all fixed for her by Lucy Baxter, who lived with her aunt. But she wished that Lucy would not say again what she had said more than once already, with a mournful air.

"It's just as well that your house ain't sold yet, I say. Cities don't always pan out, as I've told your ma. You remember when Mel Haswell went to Noo York, how quick he come back, don't you?"

"Yes, Lucy," Betty replied pleasantly, though she wished again that Lucy would not always appeal to somebody for the truth of her remarks. You had to say something. That was expected of you. As if her father were anything like Mel Haswell!

But Lucy's cup of cocoa was just right and the toast was golden. Betty felt ashamed of her annoyance and told Lucy that she was a dear to get them such a good breakfast at that unearthly hour. "I 'spect we'll be back in Buxton many times, Lucy. You may get tired of us." Hurriedly she finished her breakfast, saying that she had "promised to stop for the girls;" and with rapid steps she ran upstairs again, to gather up her coat, umbrella and pocketbook, and to see if the last articles were packed.

"Run along, Betty," said Aunt Jo, as Betty ran in to see if she were needed. "We'll bring the luggage. Amy Lou was such a good girl and is almost ready. See, sister, I'm putting on the dress she likes best!"

This was for the benefit of Amy Louise, who might insist on accompanying Betty unless diverted.

“Ought I?” asked Betty, hesitating. She did not want her aunt to have it too hard at the last. But Amy Lou was having the dress put over her head and it was a good time to vanish. Vanish Betty did at a nod from her aunt. Stopping to say goodbye to Lucy, and seeing that Dick and Doris were out for a farewell to Aunt Jo’s private menagerie of a few chickens and two handsome dogs, Betty ran out of the front door to the street.

People at Buxton rose early. Milk bottles were being taken in and screen doors were opening or closing; but Betty met no one, as she sped toward Janet’s home, except a boy driving an old grocery wagon. Somebody might want something for breakfast. Bill was on his way to open up and start things at the store.

The faithful old horse was pulled up suddenly. “Hello, Betty, going to leave this morning?”

Betty halted, though still moving slowly. “Yes; the rest of us are going on the morning train, Bill.” She smiled up at the big lad, who was a junior in high school. Betty did not know him very well, though to be sure all the high school and grade pupils knew each other and each other’s families more or less.

“Sorry you’re going, Betty. I s’pose you’re in a hurry, though. So long, Betty. Don’t forget the old town.” Bill started the horse with a flap of the reins as he spoke.

“Never,” returned Betty, nodding a farewell and hurrying on. Was she really going to leave—forever? She looked down the quiet street ahead of her. Trees beautiful and green allowed their branches to meet over the unpaved road. Homes with large yards displayed trees, shrubbery and flowers, though so late for many of them. It was all so familiar that she had forgotten how it did look!

Betty almost felt like taking a turn around the block for a last look at their own home; but she thought of the curtainless windows, the desolate yard and the empty swing under the elm trees. No, thank you! Betty sniffed and fumbled in her pocketbook for a handkerchief. Was she going to cry now? Not a bit of it! She had

to keep up before the girls. Bounding a corner, there she was at Janet's. Janet had cried last night. It wasn't real. She was in a dream!

And Betty had had her dreams, like all girls of her age. The little town of Buxton was not a rich one. It was not even in a good farming center, nor was it a county seat. Two good school buildings and some churches were its chief ornaments, architecturally. Among the people, as always, there were the good element and the bad or shiftless element. Yet some very fine people had found a home there and among them were the friends of Betty Lee's family. It was quiet. It was fairly safe. Betty, protected by the oversight of a sensible yet idealistic mother, was a happy girl, interested in everything and ambitious in school, whose activities were always prominent and whose teachers held the respect of the community. Betty would probably marry one of the boys some day, as she had seen older girls do, and settle down. Perhaps she could go away to school for a year or two. If she couldn't, there were always books and music and friends, nice things to do and dear people to love. Vague thoughts like this about the future were in her mind when she thought about it at all. Her father and mother were her standards of excellence; and therein lay much safety, since those two were wise and self-controlled.

And now, so unexpectedly, there was this bewildering change to city life. It was exciting to think about it and yet Betty could not foresee the changes it was going to make in her whole adventure of living. For in the new and in many ways very superior school to which she was going, new friends, with work, play, perplexity, even mystery, perhaps, and a wider choice of opportunity waited for this wholesome, attractive Betty Lee. To say the least, life was not going to be dull, and this Betty felt.

"No, there's something about Betty Lee." Janet Light was saying to Sue Miller. "I don't believe that she 'will be lost in the multitude,' as she says. Her teachers will notice her at least. I'd pick Betty out in a thousand!"

“Oh, that’s natural. You’re her chum. But isn’t she sort of scared to go to such a big school?”

“No, I don’t think Betty’s scared. Of course—you know Betty. She wouldn’t want to show it if she were. I think that she’s really crazy about going; but you can imagine how she’d feel, dread it a little. I only wish I could go—that is, if I could take everybody along!”

“Yes. It’s wonderful even to travel to a city; but to live there!”

“Oh, I don’t know,” remarked Janet, taking a new tack. “You couldn’t get into the country so much.”

“You could if you had a car.”

“If is a big word, Sue. Betty said her father had to have something different from the old machine now, but he’ll be in business most of the time.”

The two girls were sitting on the Light porch, waiting for Betty and talking as fast as girls can when there is some interesting subject. To Janet the departure of her dearest chum was more or less upsetting. Sue was not so intimate and Betty had never had any suspicion of the admiration with which Sue regarded her. She was really surprised that Sue wanted to see her off, with Janet.

“It’s pretty cool this morning,” Sue inserted, throwing her light coat around her shoulders. “I nearly melted yesterday when I came on the train from Grandma’s. But it wasn’t much of a ride.” Sue was thinking that her little trip was nothing in comparison with Betty’s coming day of travel.

“It was that big rain and the wind yesterday that changed things. I was over with Betty till late because it rained so hard all evening. That’s why I could hardly wake up this morning. It’s a good thing you were to stop for me, for Mother didn’t call me. She forgot.”

“I just happened to telephone you before I started, thought maybe you’d rather go down to Mrs. Royce’s.”

“Lucky you did. But no, I thought there would be so much confusion with everybody hurrying perhaps, and Betty said she would be sure to stop. It’s right on the way to the station anyhow.” With this, Janet ran in for the second time, to see if it were getting anywhere near train time. “No, there’s loads of time,” she reported.

“The rain was why I didn’t get to see Betty at all,” Sue explained. “I had a headache and lay down after I came home; and at supper—at supper, mind you, Mother happened to tell me about how the Lees were moving to the city! It had all gone on while I was at Grandma’s and nobody ever told me a word! Of course, I wasn’t writing to anybody, not even Mother but once. She and Grandma exchange letters every week, though.”

“It was in the paper and I suppose everybody thought you knew. Betty was in too much of a whirl. Her mother’s only written cards, and just a telegram came, saying which train they were to take. Betty does not even know the address of where she’s going!”

“How could the goods go down, then? Somebody had to know.”

“I think the truckman was to telephone the boarding house or office or some place after he reached the city, to find out where to take the goods.”

“I should think that Mrs. Lee would have wanted Betty to help get settled.”

“She was going to hire some one to put it through, in a hurry. Besides, Mrs. Royce couldn’t manage Amy Louise without Betty. As it was, she made a dreadful fuss.”

“I suppose so. But Betty spoils her, too.”

“Not so much. When Betty says, ‘Amy Louise Lee’, in that way of hers. Amy Lou pays attention.”

“How old is Betty anyway?”

“She’ll be fourteen in December. Don’t you remember her birthday party last year?”

“That’s so. Oh, here’s Betty! ’Lo there, Betty Lee!”

Sue ran down to meet Betty, who walked briskly around the corner and to the open gate; for Janet’s home, like Betty’s, actually had a fence! With a little squeeze and kiss, Sue led Betty to the porch, where Janet, smiling, waited. “I would have felt awful, Betty,” cried Sue, “not to have had a glimpse of you! I never knew a word about it.”

“It was a shame, Sue; but you can just imagine how it’s been. I haven’t known whether I was on my head or my feet.”

“Of course. What a pretty suit you have, all blue, your color, Betty, and hat to match and everything—even gloves, Janet!”

Betty laughed at that. “I’ll probably not have them on much, with Amy Lou to take care of. I’m glad you like my things. Auntie drove me clear to Columbus to shop. You see I’ve had to get ready for school, too, for it begins almost as soon as I get there. Won’t it be terrible to learn what street cars to take and everything, unless Father can drive me to school?”

“Aren’t you awfully excited, Betty?”

“I suppose I am. But all I can think of right now is getting through this trip with Amy Lou. She never was on a train before, if she is four years old; so I don’t know what she will do. But I’m hoping that she will be shy, the way she is when strangers are around, and she may sleep since we’ve been up so early. I think we’d better walk along, girls. I’ll go in and say goodbye to the folks, Janet.”

Betty was in the house a few minutes only. Then they strolled toward the little railroad station, only a short distance of a few blocks. Several people came along, to see Betty and stop, shaking hands and saying goodbye. Ahead of them walked Aunt Jo with the littlest Lee, while Doris was accompanied by three girls of about her own age, and a freckled-faced boy scampered on in advance, with Dick. “I wondered what had become of Billy,” said Janet, recognizing her brother.

Soon they stood in partly separated groups on the small platform. Amy Lou started back after the cat, but was rescued in time by her aunt's restraining hand. To permit Betty and the other children last words with their friend, capable Aunt Jo walked up and down now with the child, showing her what little there was to see and making up a story about the rails. Distracted as Betty was, she kept in mind a picture of these last details.

"Oh, dear, Betty," said Sue, as train time drew near at hand, "you are not going to forget us, are you?"

"Forget you—I should say not! Forget the girls I've been with since the first grade in school!" Betty held out a warm hand to each, as they stood closely now. She and Janet exchanged a smiling look. They had been all over that phase the night before.

"But it can never be the same," mourned Sue.

"Maybe it will be better!" brightly suggested Betty. "You'll both come down to visit me in vacations and I'll take you all around—that is, if I ever learn to get around everywhere myself."

"That would be wonderful—if it could happen. Maybe I wouldn't be allowed to go, though."

"Oh, yes! We get older every year, you know."

Sue looked doubtful. Money was scarce in Sue's home. It did not roll in at the village store which her father kept.

"Brace up, Susie," laughingly said Janet. "We must send Betty off with nothing but good wishes. Let's not begin to mourn now. That's what Mother told me last night, and I pass it on to you."

"All right, Janet. You're right. Good luck and a grand time, Betty. Mercy! There's the train tooting now and I haven't said goodbye to the rest!"

Betty made a dash for Amy Louise, to hold her hand firmly. Last goodbyes were said. Dick and Doris gathered up the bags while the train rounded the curve at a little distance. The freckled lad soberly

regarded Dick as he said, "Well, so long, Dick. So long, Doris;" and Doris was being embraced by the excited little girls, who followed the travelers and tried not to get in the way of various small trucks.

"Help Betty all you can, Dick," advised Mrs. Royce, handing an extra piece of baggage up to Dick, who was last to board the train. "Remember that I shall want a card mailed at once to make sure of your safety. If anything goes wrong, send a telegram."

Dick, grinning, feeling not a little important with his manly duties, nodded and disappeared after his sisters. The group on the platform, watching the windows, were presently rewarded by seeing smiling faces. Dick was trying to put up a window, but without success; or possibly the others were too impatient to wait for him to find out how to do it.

Amy Louise, her light hair and childish face framed in a hat that was now pushed back in the effort to see, smiled and threw kisses. She had no regrets. She was on her way to her mother. Betty's face looked brightly out above Amy Louise, and there were Doris and Dick, the blessed twins! Aunt Jo tried not to show the anxiety she felt. But Betty would see it through!

There went the clanging bell. Now the train started. Now they were gone; and the small group on the platform turned away with that odd, lost feeling that comes when something is over.

The freckle-faced lad scampered away alone. Mrs. Royce, after exchanging pleasant words with the girls, hurried homeward with her thoughts. The rest scattered. School was opening for them, too. There would be plenty of activities to take up their time and interest. Janet and Sue would report to the other girls how they saw Betty Lee off that early morning. And they all would laugh over one quoted speech of Betty's when she said, "I imagine, girls, that this is my most moving adventure!"

CHAPTER II—BETTY MEETS RESPONSIBILITY AND A TRIAL OF PATIENCE

Whatever puns, good or bad, Betty might make on this unaccustomed adventure of hers, she was more accustomed to the little responsibilities that fall to the eldest child in a normal family than only children could be; and these in a measure had prepared her for this trip. As soon as they were settled in their seats, it all seemed natural enough. Proper conduct in public was a matter of natural pride with this family, with the possible exception of Amy Louise, who had not reached the age of entire self control! Dick was hoping that she would not do anything to embarrass them, for she sometimes howled when she could not do what she wanted to do.

Betty, across the aisle from Dick and Doris, gave Dick an understanding look and a smile when he gave Doris the seat next to the window. Dick appeared not to notice this, but he felt that he was a pretty good protector of the girls when necessary. Betty need not think that she was the only one who could do things. And Betty was thinking that Dick was going to be a great help. The worst would be changing cars at the first city.

Clutching the tickets, Betty had them ready when the conductor came along. He lived in their town and knew her father. It had been a blow to the little town when a railroad line took off all but one passenger train each way, with a few freight trains.

“Oh, yes,” cheerily said the conductor, “you’re going away for good now. Your father told me to look after you when you came along.” The tickets were being punched and given back to Betty.

“Don’t lose your tickets and you’ll be all right. No you don’t change stations. Anything you want to know you can ask about at the window marked ‘information.’ But outside you’ll find the train notices, and a light come on when the train is in. When you get off, you’d better get a red-cap to take your bags up for you.”

Betty had a hazy notion of what was meant, though she had visited the city where they were to change cars, it was very different, however, to follow some one else without noticing how it was managed. She determined to keep her eyes open on future trips. Well, there was no use in worrying, but she wasn't going to trust the bags to any porter. They could carry what they had. Also, they would stay together, as Aunt Jo had advised, with no expeditions here and there while they waited for their second train. In this case ignorance was not bliss, for what would have been perfectly simple to an experienced traveler was a matter for serious consideration to Betty.

Fortunately, Amy Lou was angelic. Fascinated by the kaleidoscope of scenery, she watched it happily; and when they left the train she willingly clung to Betty's hand, saying, "I don't want to get lost, do I?" She nearly went to sleep in the station during their long wait, but Dick came to the rescue with some entertainment, just as Betty was having visions of having to carry a heavy Amy Lou to the train.

At last they were established on the right train for the city for which, they were bound and Betty breathed a sigh of relief. Nothing but a wreck could keep them from home now, she told Dick.

"Home!" repeated Dick, pursing his lips.

"Well," argued Doris, "Betty's right. It'll be home, even if we've never seen it."

"Wherever Mother and Father are, it's home, isn't it?" and Betty's dimples showed as she spoke.

"You win," grinned Dick, suggesting that Aunt Jo's lunch be served.

They all did their best, but the last hours were trying after little naps were over and time was dragging for them all, unaccustomed as they were to long train rides. When they were feeling that they

could not stand it any longer and Amy Lou was beginning to be fractious, they drew into the suburbs of the “city of our dreams,” as Doris sarcastically remarked. But interest revived and Dick told the youngest sister to watch for the place where they would find their mother. It was a happy suggestion, particularly for Betty, who was thinking that patience would cease to be a virtue pretty soon, if she had to keep the child in check much longer.

At last the crowds were in the aisles. The train stopped with its accustomed jerk. The tiresome day was almost over.

Which way should they go? The direction of the crowd settled that question for them, but where would they find Father? They avoided little baggage trucks that ran about and looked like hand-cars off the track. Here were iron gates where Dick, at Betty’s suggestion, inquired the way to the waiting room, where they found “Information” again. By this time Betty was worried. Where could her father be?

For the sake of the rest, she made herself keep calm and cheerful and Dick suggested that it was not easy to get around in a city. Probably they would be there pretty soon.

“I hope they know the train we’re coming on,” said Doris. “I told you, Betty, that we ought to telegraph.”

“They told us the day and the train, Doris,” firmly said Betty. But Betty looked apprehensively at some of the people in the room. There was a much better room upstairs, but Betty did not know that and there was no one to tell her.

Finally Amy Lou began to cry. That was the last straw. Betty hunted for what addresses she had and made her way again to “Information.” She wondered if she had enough money to pay for a taxi. And did you pay for everyone, or was it some other way? Dick was scouting around outside now. He could find out things. Boys always could.

Then all at once darkness changed to light, figuratively speaking. Before she had made an inquiry, she heard a squeal from Amy Lou and turned to see if Doris were having trouble with her. But it had been a happy squeal, not a cross one. There was Father, with his baby in his arms and Doris holding to one hand! A very thankful girl ran back to her family.

“I’m so sorry, Betty,” said Mr. Lee, “that you have had this wait and worry. I had expected to meet you right at the train and take you to our own car. Come on. We’ll talk after we get started. It was an important business conference and I could not leave early. Then traffic was heavy and it was farther to the station from our office than I thought. That was all.”

Watching for trucks, street-cars and machines of all sorts, they made their way to where the new car was parked. Exclamations of delight pleased Mr. Lee. Dick wanted to know all about it. It was not of a highly expensive make, but as their father said, it would hold them all. “I almost need a smaller one, too,” said he, explaining, “though I’m not on the sales end of affairs. They’ve done me the honor to put me among the executives, kiddies, and ask me to tell how I managed to do so well in my little factory. I told the president, that it was nothing, only quality of goods and good management; but he had me discuss products and management at this conference.”

“Good for you, Pop!” said Dick.

“But I’m going to ask you all to help me, children. To make this change and to live in a city is going to draw heavily on what I had saved. In fact, there isn’t any too much left, except some property in the home town. So don’t get any big ideas of what we can do here in the way of living like some of the people you will see.”

“Aren’t there any folks just like us, Papa?” asked Doris, rather bewildered. They had started now and slowly Mr. Lee was driving the car, up a hill and behind an immense truck.

“Plenty of them, Doris, and thousands not half so well off.”

The children were now too much interested in their surroundings to ask questions. Their father explained a little about some of the streets through which they passed, and pointed out some of the buildings, though he was not yet familiar with the city and was compelled to keep to well-known thoroughfares on his way out to the suburb where they were to live. "This is what they call 'downtown,'" said he. "When your mother and I considered locations near we found nothing suitable. So we are out where we can have a few flowers in the yard at least."

Betty looked with "all her eyes," as she said. Streams of cars filled the streets. Her father watched the lights carefully and was prepared to get out of the way when a reckless driver shot in front of him, almost shaving a street car. "Hey, you!" exclaimed Dick, but the man could not hear. "Why, if you hadn't swerved to the right that fellow would have hit us!"

"Yes, Dick. He was either intoxicated or just reckless. There are many such in the city."

But in spite of what tired Betty considered several narrow escapes, they successfully reached the suburb desired, where rows of houses, some of brick, some of frame, some of stone, had a bit of yard in front and behind; and on the porch of one there stood a slender and familiar figure.

"Mamma!" cried Amy Lou, wiggling down from between Betty and Doris. But Betty kept a stout hold upon her little sister until the car stopped in front. "I'll let you girls out here," said Mr. Lee, "but Dick may come with me to the garage."

Amy Louise flew to her mother, while the other two girls walked briskly up the short distance from the barberry hedge to the porch. The house was of brick, well-built and attractive. "Why, this is real nice, Mother!" exclaimed Betty, the last to be embraced, but as warmly welcomed. Betty was trying to remember to call her parents Father and Mother, since some one had told her it was more dignified.

They entered a hall of fair size, then a large front room with a big window in it, the piano in the right spot, a fireplace—why, it would be home after all! Familiar rugs and furniture met Betty’s eyes. Of them her last view had been what Betty called “ghastly,” all done up ready to be moved in that horrid truck. But the “horrid truck” had brought them unmarred to their present position. Here were all of their treasures—and each other.

“I don’t believe, after all, Mother,” said she, looking around, “that walls make so, so much difference!”

“Not with our own pictures on them,” replied Mother, understanding. “I wish that all you could have helped me decide where to put things; but if you girls think of any good changes, we shall make them.”

“Did you have a very dreadful time to find a place?” asked Doris.

“It was not easy. An apartment house did not seem to be the best place for children. This is not one of the most modern houses, but there are enough bedrooms, hard to find, and something of a kitchen. I could not imagine myself cooking for this family in some of the tiny kitchenettes we saw. We shall be comfortable, I think.

“We have the whole first floor. It is just a big house made into two apartments or flats. Only two people are above us. There are two furnaces and we have our own gas and electricity. We are to look after the yard. Running the lawn mower will be Dick’s job.” Mrs. Lee looked teasingly at Dick as she spoke.

“I thought I’d get out of that in a city,” returned Dick; but he did not seem to mind the proposition very much. He was still thinking of the new car, though he had been content to leave more detailed examinations until the next day. “The thing that’s most like home,” continued Dick, “is that good smell of cooking in an oven somewhere. Is it a roast, Mother? Yes, and I smell cookies!”

“Right, son,” and Mrs. Lee led the way to the kitchen, where cookies still warm from the baking were to be nibbled by hungry travelers. They would still have things to eat in the city!

Still further investigation disclosed a “den,” which had become a sleeping room for Dick; a dressing room off the main bedroom, making a safe and cosy place for Amy Lou’s bed, and a good bedroom for Doris and Betty. A large bathroom was at the end of the hall. “You haven’t any idea, children, how thankful I was to find this, with enough room, all on one floor, and nice and clean, with new plumbing!”

Betty looked thoughtfully at her mother. It was new to her to think about homes, which, so far as she had ever thought, grew upon bushes. And that rent was terrible. Wouldn’t it take more than Papa earned? Her mother assured her that it would not, but remarked that the increase in income did not amount to as much as they had supposed, because of increased expenses.

“Let’s go back,” said Betty, reacting to her first lesson in economic lines. But she was laughing.

“You know you wouldn’t do it for anything, Betty Lee,” cried Doris. “I’m just as glad as I can be. Won’t it be great to go to all these wonderful places?” This was after their mother had suddenly left them in their room, to answer a call from her husband.

“Yes,” sighed Betty, “but now listen, Doris—please don’t begin by throwing your things all around. We’ve a big closet, anyhow; but do let’s keep things straight as we can!”

“You can, if you want to. I’m getting into my bathrobe the quickest I can,” and Doris kicked a shoe under the bed.

“I suppose you are tired,” and Betty sighed again. “I don’t really care, either. It’s certainly good to pass Amy Lou over to Mother.”

“She could have been worse coming down, but I’m glad I’m not the oldest. She always gets stubborn when I try to do anything with her.”

Betty felt like telling Doris that she did not try the right way; but did not want to start further argument and realized that her own disposition was not in its best state after her day of being “chief boss,” as Dick had put it several times. Doris might take her hot bath first. Then it would be tub for her and bed as soon as possible after supper, which would be called dinner now, Mother said. Happily it was the week-end. There would be Saturday and Sunday for getting settled, seeing the city and hearing church music of the best. Then would come Monday and school. What a vista for Betty Lee! The future, though unknown, was enticing.

CHAPTER III—“THE FATEFUL DAY”

The “fateful day,” as Betty’s father jokingly called it, had arrived. On Monday morning there were great stirrings in the Lee menage. Betty’s mother was up early, getting everybody else up on time, seeing that the school credentials were at hand, ready to be taken by the children and presented at the schools. Amy Lou, fortunately, slept on, not waking until everybody else was at the breakfast table.

Betty started to get up when a mournful wail came from the bedroom. Amy Lou had been Betty’s responsibility and she could not quite realize that in school days now her first concern was to be her lessons, as her mother’s custom desired it to be, though in moments of stress, Betty knew well, she was to be on the “relief corps,” another of her father’s expressions.

“Not you this time, daughter,” said Mrs. Lee, rising. “Finish your breakfast and be ready when your father goes. You’d better take charge of all the grades and give Doris and Dick their papers when they get there.”

It was very exciting. What would the new big school be like? Dick and Doris talked steadily during breakfast. “If old Bill was just here,” said Dick, “I’d give him the Merry Ha-ha about our going to a junior high school!”

Doris settled her beads about her neck, looked down at her neat frock, chosen as suitable by her mother, then thrusting her napkin by her plate, she scampered, unexcused, from the table, to do last things.

Betty exchanged an amused glance with her father, who rose and went out to bring up the car. Betty hastily carried a few dishes, from their places, to the kitchen, as Mrs. Lee came out with a cross Amy Lou, and then ran off herself to get ready.

It seemed no time at all before they were in the car, driving to the school, which they had seen only in passing. The morning traffic was heavy and swift. Cars were making their rapid way in the

direction of “town.” Street cars clattered. Trucks and buses avoided them by inches only. Overhead there was the occasional roar of a plane from the flying field.

At last they had reached the green campus of the school. “I’m glad we go here,” said Doris, “instead of to that school we saw where the grounds are all gravel.”

“That was a new building, Doris,” said her Dad, “the grounds are probably not finished.”

“I don’t think so, Papa,” returned Doris. “You know how the school board man at home said that there was no use in sodding our new school grounds because the boys would spoil it all playing ball and things. And they put gravel on it, and every time you fell down running it hurt like everything.”

Doris had no reply to this, for Mr. Lee was stopping before the concrete sidewalk that bordered the school grounds. “Hop out, children,” said he. “I’m sorry that I can’t stop with you. You know what the buildings are, however. Inquire your way to the office of the principal, you know. Sure you know what cars to take to get home?”

“Yes, Father,” Betty answered. “Dick promised to wait for Doris; so if they can’t find me they’ll go home together. My, what a crowd!”

Mr. Lee glanced with some fatherly pride at the little group of three that walked from the car to the entrance of the grounds. There a long walk, paved and lined with beautiful shrubbery, led to the impressive front of the building that spread so widely with its wings and corners. Then he detached himself from the rest of the cars that were either drawing up to discharge pupils or were parked in a long row along the curb. The Lee children were already lost in the kaleidoscope of moving boys and girls, of all ages, heights, and costumes, most of them very nice-looking, Betty’s father thought. He hoped that there would be no trouble about their entrance papers. Mrs. Lee could scarcely risk taking Amy Lou to

the school, and he had told her that the children might just as well begin to depend on themselves, even if the city was new to them.

Nevertheless, it would have been better if it had been possible for a parent to accompany them, and no one knew that better than Mr. Lee. The hurry of their becoming settled had not been easy for any of them and a city offered many dangers, especially those of traffic. But as the fever of hurry had not yet infected them, it was likely that they would be careful in crossing streets and would observe the traffic regulations. He was glad to see that a traffic officer had been stationed at the school crossing.

“We look as well as most of them,” said Doris, though rather doubtfully, as she looked admiringly at a tall girl who was strolling by with a youth as tall as she. They were laughing and talking and the girl was wearing a silk dress as pretty and stylish, as light in color and as good, as Betty’s “Sunday frock,” Doris said.

“Yes,” said Betty, “but there’s every sort, and our pretty summer dresses that Mother made look all right. There—see that awfully pretty girl, Doris. Her green dress is trimmed with white organdy exactly like your blue one!”

The two younger children left Betty to go around to the entrance of their own separate building. Betty handed each of them the envelope with the respective credits and grades and then went up the steps with her own in her hand. Mercy, what a babel of voices! Betty stopped still and looked around. Good! There were all sorts of notices posted. She read them. That long line of boys and girls must lead to the “office.”

“Freshmen go to Assembly Hall,” she read. Now where was the “Assembly Hall?” Oh, that must be it, where all those younger looking boys and girls were going. She followed, joining the stream of boys and girls that in groups or singly entered the wide doors.

Oh, what a fine, big hall! Was this really a public school? Facing her was the wide stage with its handsome velvet curtains, and my,

all those pipes must be of a big pipe organ! Yes, there was the place for the organist at the side.

Betty slipped into a seat. Some one was reading names and telling them what to do. She would sit there and listen. It was pleasantly cool in the immense hall. Although it was morning, the September day was already warm. Betty felt a little confused, but soon concentrated her attention upon what was going on. Girls and boys were leaving the hall at times.

Finally she bethought herself of the fact that her name could not possibly be read out, since they had never heard of her. A girl who sat beside her looked friendly. She would ask. Yes, these were the names of all the freshmen who were coming in from other schools or the junior high right here. They had turned in their credits and were assigned to "home rooms and so forth."

Now what were "home rooms," and what did "and so forth" include? She could not ask the person who was reading the names. She hated to ask questions of any other pupil near her. She would seem like such a "dummy." But she must find out what to do. She would go out and see if she should go to the "office" first.

Quietly Betty slipped out of the seat and went out into the noisy hall. She went near the door and peeped into the office. Some one in the line thought that she was going to get by and nodded in the direction of the rear. It was a "snippy" sort of a look, Betty thought, that this girl directed toward her. Betty merely looked at her with a contemplative gaze and nodded in understanding. She would not say anything either. She could see what was going on. That was the principal, she supposed, busy with students. There were several teachers or assistants of some sort there. Yes, this must be what she must do; besides, her father had told her to go to the office. It was that sign that mislead her. My, what a long line. Would she ever get any attention from the principal? But Betty walked back and took her place in line, intending to ask some one in it what this line was "supposed to be waiting for."

But there were two or three boys, perfectly strange to her, of course, just ahead of her. And behold, two very tall lads walked up and took their places behind her. The first one was such a fine-looking boy, with a good face, indeed, rather striking features, clear grey eyes, “almost blue,” Betty thought, as she gave him a quick glance. He was dressed suitably and neatly, yet looked “very stylish,” Betty thought, and a silk handkerchief peeped from his pocket. The conversation of the two boys helped Betty through the first part of her wearisome wait.

“Going in for athletics this year, Ted?” asked the “other boy,” who was not quite so interesting, Betty thought, though he had a pleasant boyish, face, too. He was coatless and had his shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbows. But a neat tie finished his soft collar and he looked as fresh and clean as possible.

“I don’t know what I’m going to do, Harry, swimming, of course, and the usual gym work, perhaps. But Mother wants me to be in the orchestra this year and that takes a lot of time. To tell the truth, I’d like to have a little time for my lessons!”

“I’ve got to have,” assented Harry. “I worked my freshman year, but last year wasn’t so good, and Dad says he won’t stand for it. My grades weren’t so bad, but you should have heard the razzing I got! Dad took the card and went through the grades out loud.

““That grade in English from the son of a teacher!”

““Eighty in Latin, when you ought to have had ninety at least!”

“I mustered up grit enough to tell him that Latin was hard and that eighty was a pretty good grade and that I hadn’t failed in anything. But did that stop him? It did not.

““Fail! Fail? Hum! Mathematics, not so bad. Pretty respectable showing in science,’—‘well, make a better showing next year or I might have to put you to work.’ He gave me a quizzical smile, at least that is what Mother called it, and handed me back my card. Gee, sometimes I wish he would put me to work, but after all, if

you can get by with, your lessons, the old place here looks pretty good.”

“I’ll say it does today. How long do you suppose we’ll have to stand here?”

“Until after lunch time, that’s what.”

Betty, who had scarcely been able to keep from laughing out when “Harry” had been impersonating his father, so good and funny a performance he had made of it, now sighed. She was tired already. It was worse than waiting in line at the one moving picture house that their little town had boasted. She changed her weight, a light one, from one foot to the other. She fiddled with the long white envelope in her hand and once opened it to peep inside and make sure that its contents were still there.

But that was just the beginning. She held her place in line, wondering what the two boys to whose conversation she had listened were there to do. Perhaps there had to be some change in their work. But they talked about everything else. Finally Betty thought she would “just have to go and sit down somewhere to rest,” but she kept standing in spite of her real fatigue. She was toward the end of the line and only two or three persons had followed the boys at first; then a few scattered additions had been made. A few in front had dropped out.

Finally some one came from the office to make an announcement to the line. Only a few more would be interviewed before lunch; and after lunch, those who were new would be seen first. Others need not take their place in line until later, as all changes of schedule would be handled later in the day.

Immediately the line ceased to be one, as its components vanished. Betty again went into the auditorium and sank into a seat to rest. What was it that tired her so standing in line? She was probably just sort of tired from everything, all the change and excitement and the responsibility of getting Amy Lou down on the train, though, that hadn’t turned out to be so bad. Luckily some one near

her was discussing lunch; for Betty was hungry and did not enjoy the thought of going without what had always been the family dinner. It had been easy enough in the village for her father to come home from his business and for the children to come from school, returning in plenty of time for the afternoon session. Now it would be different indeed. Mother had said that dinner would be at night, as Father would have his lunch down town; and on the street car it would take the children almost half an hour to reach home, to say nothing of extra street-car fare. There was to be lunch served at the school, they understood, but would there be any today?

“No,” the girl behind her was saying in a low tone, though the names had long since been read out and the freshmen dismissed to the “home rooms.” Only scattered groups of resting pupils were here and there in the seats. Betty was in the next to the last row and three girls had just entered the last row together.

“I’m a wreck from standing in that line,” said the first one, as she dropped into a seat. “Aren’t they going to serve lunch today?”

Then came the answer, for which Betty listened. “No; don’t you remember that we never have lunch at first?”

“Well, I’ve only one year to remember, May, and I never did get anything straight when I was a freshman, at first anyhow.”

Betty’s heart warmed with a fellow feeling.

“I certainly wish that we could have one of those good lunches, but I suppose it won’t kill us to starve for once. Let’s go down to you know where and get a Swiss chocolate sundae. We can get back in time.”

“I’d rather not, May; besides I’ve only got my street-car fare and ten cents, I think.”

“I’ll lend you some more,” suggested May.

“Can’t possible this time; too tired, besides. There used to be a place opposite the school. What’s become of that? I used to get chocolate bars and sandwiches there.”

“New building across the street. Well, if you aren’t going, I am. Shall I bring you something? Maybe I’ll have a sandwich, too.”

“If you can get one for ten cents—no, here are some coppers. Hurrah!”

Evidently the girl behind Betty was emptying her store of small funds into the hand of the other girl. There was giggling and a scrambling after a copper that had dropped and rolled. Then one girl left and the other strolled over to join a group of girls by a window.

Betty wished that she had brought a chocolate bar which by the irony of fate she had taken out of her bag to leave it home! But she could go without a meal if she had to do it. She could get something to eat as soon as she reached home.

Rested now, she thought she would go over to the building which housed the junior high school and see if Doris and Dick were also waiting around. It was quite a little walk, or seemed so to Betty, but it was interesting when she reached the place and entered it. Scarcely any children were to be seen. She walked through vacant halls and decided that Doris and Dick had already gone home. She hoped that her mother would not be worried about her. There was no way of getting her word, though she had seen a telephone in the office. But of course she could not use that.

Time slipped by in some fashion. She went back to the auditorium, now about deserted. She watched the time, determined to be one of the first at the office door, and as all things come to an end at last, she found herself talking to a sober, dignified, yet kindly man in the office, arranging her schedule or, more properly, answering questions about the work she had covered, and receiving a “slip” to present to her “home room teacher” the next day.

It was all more or less puzzling to the young freshman from away; but she understood the next step and where she was to report on the following day. That would have to be enough. A somewhat breathless, excited, and very hungry Betty reached home at about

two o'clock in the afternoon, welcomed by her mother as a returning prodigal and directed to where she would find the "fatted calf" or a more attractive substitute.

CHAPTER IV—A REAL FRESHMAN AT LAST

Mother suggested putting up a lunch for the children on the second morning of school, but Dick said that they would not need any. "One of the kids said that we get out the same time tomorrow," said he. And Betty corroborated Dick's statement.

"I'll not have to wait in line today, Mother," said Betty. "That's all attended to. I know just what to do. You go to your home room, do whatever you are told to do and I guess you report to your different teachers. We get out at twelve-thirty. After we really have classes and two sessions there will be a place to get lunches, somewhere upstairs."

Back again in the echoing halls of the school building, Betty felt that the worst was over, yet she was both lonely and a little timid in regard to what was still before her. Oh for Janet or some one of the girls she knew! Other girls, who must have been in the eighth grade together, were walking arm in arm, or with arms around each other's waist as they approached the door of the same home room to which Betty's feet were carrying her. She wondered if poor little Doris felt the same way. She went into the school room with the others, finding its back seats well filled already. Accordingly she dropped into the nearest front seat, which was on the outside row near the door.

As it was not polite to stare, she believed, she did not look at the girls sitting around her except for glances here and there; but it was perfectly legitimate to gaze forward at the home room teacher. Was she going to like her?

Two teachers were standing, near the large desk in front and before the blackboard, which covered its appropriate space on three walls. The fourth side of the room was devoted to windows. The teachers were laughing and talking together, apparently in the best of spirits. Then a gong rang, or something made a sound in the halls and a corresponding ring in the room. Immediately one of the ladies

departed and the other turned to face the class with a great change of countenance, not exactly stern, Betty thought, but it was quite obvious that her home room teacher was ready to handle any obstreperous little freshman who did not want to keep order.

But no one was disorderly this morning. It was an event to enter high school. The expectant faces met the dignified survey of the teacher. In due time she explained what was to be done. Cards were there from the office. Schedules had been made out for each one. They were to report to their respective teachers at the rooms whose numbers were given. Lockers could not be given for some time. They would be obliged to carry their books and take them home, but it was remarked that they would want to study at home in any event. Books would be given out on the next day.

“Oh, then, you didn’t have to buy any books,” Betty thought. She wondered if her mother would like that. They would never buy any second hand books and her mother had ideas on germs. There were a number of questions that Betty would have liked to ask as the teacher talked, but she did not dare interrupt. There seemed to be too many things to remember. Of course, it was easier for the girls and boys that lived in the city all the time.

“And now,” the teacher was saying, “I want you to give your whole attention to one thing. On these cards that I am giving you, you will see what you are to write; and while I know that this is all rather new to you, that fact is not going to excuse you for making mistakes in what is really important. Pay attention and do not write until you are sure you know what to write down.

“Perhaps you wonder why I am saying this, but if you saw some of the cards that we have had in past years, you would not wonder at all. When you read that line saying the year of your birth, don’t put down the present year. Girls less than a year old are not admitted to the freshman class!”

There was a subdued ripple of laughter at this, though it was just possible that some of the girls did not understand the joke.

A few looked worried. But Betty had never been really afraid of teachers, having had no cause to be afraid, and she did not intend to begin now. Very carefully she read over the list of what she was supposed to record; and then, after the teacher was through with her explanation, she started in. There was nothing very bad about this. Of course they wanted to know your address and who your father and mother were and everything.

“Elizabeth Virginia Lee,” she wrote, her name “in full,” in careful round and legible hand. Writing was not hard for Betty, which was fortunate and would make her entire school life easier for her. Betty had been named for two grandmothers. At present she “rather hated it,” the long names, but she always added that they were good, sensible names and that her mother like them.

Betty remembered the year of her birth and was not obliged to count back as the teacher had suggested might be necessary. Indeed, the teacher had grown a little sarcastic while remarking that “they” were “not particularly interested in mere birthdays,” and that “birthday presents were not given.”

A colored girl across the aisle from Betty looked at the teacher with such a blank stare at this that Betty’s amusement was increased. My, the teacher was funny. She wasn’t so bad and was rather pretty, too. Once Betty’s intelligent and understanding look had caught the eye of her teacher as she was in the midst of one of the funny speeches and Betty was sure that the twinkle and comical raising of the eyebrows was for her.

“She shan’t have any reason to make fun of my card,” thought Betty. “She looked at me as if she thought I had some sense, anyhow.” But teachers were accustomed to find response in Betty Lee’s eyes and the mind back of them. At this stage, however, and particularly when the girls were dismissed, to find their respective teachers and the rooms where they were to recite, Betty was sure that she had no mind at all. If she had only known some one! But every one was busy with her own affairs, or went off with some other girls. And that building! Would she ever learn where to go?

Luckily her home room teacher taught one of the freshman classes in which she had been placed and in the same room. That was one off the list very shortly.

The halls were full of wandering pupils on the same errands that concerned Betty; but her mind was too set upon her purpose to see them individually until once, when she was almost run over by a tall lad who came flying around the corner from a run down a stairway, she recognized the boy who had stood back of her in line the day before.

“Oh, pardon me, please!” exclaimed the boy. “I had no business to do that. I knocked your purse out of your hand and everything!” Stooping to pick up Betty’s purse and scattered notes and slips, he added “I believe you were standing in line just ahead of me yesterday. Did you get all fixed up?”

“Yes; and I’m just finding my class rooms now.”

“That’s fine. You’re not from one of our schools—at least I couldn’t help seeing that the envelope you had didn’t have a city address.”

“No; we just moved here and everything is new.”

“Well, I hope you like it. This is a great school.”

“Oh, isn’t it! I suppose you’re a senior and know all about everything.”

The boy laughed. “Not exactly ‘everything,’” said he, “and I’m a junior. I hope I meet you again, but not to pretty nearly knock you over.”

“Oh, that was all right,” replied Betty. “You didn’t hurt me any.”

The boy started on, then stopped. “By the way, where are you living?”

Betty named the suburb and the street.

“I thought I saw you on the car yesterday. I live out that way, too, and maybe I’ll come around some time—that is, if it’s all right.”

“We should be glad to get acquainted,” said Betty, who felt sure that she could safely be friendly with this kind of a boy, who had looked so distressed at the results of his haste and had clutched her just in time to keep her from falling. “We don’t know much of anybody yet, for Mother and Father came down in a hurry to find a house.”

“Oh, there’s the girl I was hurrying to catch,” suddenly said the boy called Ted, as a girl came from the direction from which Betty had been coming. “Louise, come here and meet one of the new freshmen. Probably I’d better know your name, if I am to introduce you. Mine is Ted Dorrance.”

“I am Betty Lee,” smiled Betty, looking up at a tall, handsome girl whom she remembered to have noticed before in the hall and whom she found to be Louise Madison.

“Lou has a lot to do with one of the school clubs and is always looking for good material,” joked Ted. “I had my eye on this young lady for you yesterday. Any relation to Robert E. Lee?”

Betty shook her head. “We’re from the New England Lees, but I suppose back in England the two families were connected.”

“Well, the name Lee won’t hurt you any with the Southern families in this town, and there are a good many of them. But we’re keeping you and I’ve got to see you, Lou, about a matter of business.”

“All right,” said the older girl. “I’ll see you again, Betty, and I’m real glad to have met you.”

That was interesting, thought Betty, as she climbed the same stairs down which Ted Dorrance had been running. Louise Madison must be a wonderful girl. She seemed to be perfectly at home—perhaps she was a senior. Betty wondered what sort of a club it could be that freshmen could join. Louise had passed her a few moments before Ted had come dashing down. She must have finished

whatever errand she had and started back very soon. Well, she now knew two pupils in this school, but not a freshman!

This time Betty was ready at twelve-thirty to start home with the rest. She just made the same street-car with Dick and Doris and listened to their accounts on the way home. Like Betty, Doris did not know any one in her class, though Doris said that they “smiled at each other;” but Dick knew several of the boys and had found out all sorts of facts, particularly those relating to athletics. “There was a bunch of us talking together,” said he, “and we’re going to have some great gym work and everything. The eighth grade boys said that they have great games at Lyon High School. Did you take in the size of that stadium, Betty? And a fellow they called Joe said that he helped with a stunt the junior high had at the faculty and senior basketball game last winter. That’s a sort of funny affair and the senior team usually beats, though when the athletic teachers play with the rest of the faculty it isn’t so dead easy, I guess, from what they said. But first they have a sort of athletic or gym show. I’d like to be on it.”

“Yes, and break your neck,” remarked Doris with sisterly lack of being impressed.

“Never you mind. The girls do something or other, too. Maybe you’ll have to, so far as I know.”

“Oh, if that’s the case, I’ll never do a thing! Couldn’t you get excused, Betty?”

“Don’t worry, Doris. It isn’t likely that you’d have to do anything too hard for you. And there’s always Mother, and Father, to decide what is best for us.”

“But they always stand by anything school does.”

“Of course, because there’s never anything out of the way. But they wouldn’t let anything happen to us if there were anything that wasn’t fair or right. Gracious me, if I hadn’t anything more

to worry about than what may happen next winter I'd be thankful. What are your teachers like?"

That started the children on a new track and Betty had amusing and detailed descriptions of what had happened and what this teacher and another were like. Doris was in a home room for girls and Dick in one for boys. "There are a great many of us boys," said Dick with much dignity. "I don't know just how many but I shall find out. Then when you write to Janet, be sure to have her tell Bill."

"Can't you write to Bill yourself?"

"I don't like to write letters," calmly replied Dick. "Besides, Bill might think I was getting stuck up telling him such big stories as I'd have to tell."

"And I suppose Janet won't think I'm stuck up?"

"Janet will think that everything you do is perfect, just as she always has."

"That is news to me, Dick. Why we've had some of the most—well, disagreeing arguments over things that you ever heard of."

"Of course. Janet has a mind of her own. But all the same you needn't worry over what Janet would think. I know. Bill's told me."

"Then you think I'd dare write Janet everything about Lyon High, do you? Of course, I'm going to risk it, Dickie, anyway. And I think it was nice of Bill to tell you that."

"Oh, Bill didn't do it to be nice. He thought Janet was silly."

This was not so flattering, but Betty laughed. She had brought it out herself.

CHAPTER V—JANET HEARS FROM BETTY

“Hello, hello; that you, Sue?”

“Yes—Janet?”

“Nobody else. Going to be at home for a while?”

“Yes; can you come over?”

“That is what I’d like to do, for what do you think?”

“Anything exciting going on?”

“Not exactly, but I’ve a letter from Betty Lee at last!”

“Oh, then you will bring it over with you, won’t you?”

“Of course. That’s what I’m coming for, although we might just as well make plans for the Sunday-school picnic while I’m over. This is a real good long letter. I thought she’d never write as she promised, to tell me about everything. I’d almost begun to think Betty had forgotten us! But she hasn’t, at least she says she hasn’t, and she’s been so busy, of course, and everything new. She wrote this at several different times. But there, I’d better let her letter speak for itself. She said to tell you all the news, and sent you her love and everything, so I’ll just let you read all of it, even the more or less private part if you want to. I’ll not get to your house for a little while, for I have to go down street for Mother first. She has to have some soap and starch and other groceries. She’s been doing up something extra. But I thought I’d better call you up to see if you’d be there.”

In due season Janet Light appeared at the home of her friend, where the two girls repaired to the big swing in the back yard. There an old apple tree spread wide branches over them and let the sunshine of late September come through its leaves in fitful fashion, dancing with their shadows on and about the slightly swaying lassies. It was Saturday morning, hence their leisure after early morning tasks were over.

“And see what I have to show you,” said Janet, drawing from the envelope the letter and something with it that fell on the floor of the swing, almost going through its slats.

“Oh, a new picture of Betty!” exclaimed Sue, reaching down carefully to pick up the unmounted photograph, a small one. “Isn’t that cute? And it’s good of Betty, too. Why, it doesn’t look like a snap-shot.” Sue turned it over to examine it.

“It isn’t. It was taken at some shop. Betty tells about it in the letter.”

“That’s Betty’s smile, and what a good light on her hair. Betty’s hair is a real gold, just like what you read about in books. I always wished I had hair like Betty’s. And I never saw such dark blue eyes as Betty has. They look straight at you here. I think Betty is a real pretty girl, don’t you?”

“Yes, but she’s no doll. And I think Betty’s ‘gold’ on the inside, too. That letter didn’t sound as if she’d forgotten us this soon. Read it.” Janet held out the thick packet of folded sheets.

“Oh, you read it to me. It will sound twice as well in your ‘mellifluous’ tones. Kate had to put ‘mellifluous’ in a sentence at school yesterday.”

Janet laughed. “I may leave out the messages to me, then, but I’ll read it if you want me to. Thank fortune, Betty writes so a body can read it. And she says that we simply must come down to see her at the Thanksgiving vacation. I can’t wait to read you that. Her mother says so, too, she wrote. Do you suppose we could? I haven’t said anything to Mother yet.”

“Wouldn’t it be wonderful? But—clothes and everything—I’m afraid not.”

“We have as good things as Betty has.”

“I haven’t anything that would do to travel in, though, and I’m afraid I can’t have a new winter coat. My old one’s a sight!”

“Why it looked good enough to me last winter. But listen now. I’ll begin.”

“Dear Janet,” the letter commenced. “I’ll have to begin with apologies, of course, and I’m hoping that you’ve received the two picture post cards I sent. I meant to send some to all the girls and haven’t. But honestly, I’ve been so busy and it’s all been so mixy, if you know what I mean by that, that I just haven’t gotten at a letter that would give you any idea of how things are. It looks sort of hopeless now, to tell the truth, but I’m going to start in anyhow, even if I have to write at several different times. The longer I put it off the more there will be to tell. You haven’t any idea how much I’ve missed you and how I’ve almost started to tell you things; that is, I’d think ‘I must tell Janet that,’ and then I’d think again that you weren’t anywhere around!

“Talk about being lonesome! Of course I’ve had the family, but not a single girl at first. I have several friends now that I know more or less, but nobody that takes the place of the girls at home. You see I still call it home. I’m not sure that the city will ever seem like home, but it is very interesting and the place where we live is ever so nice. It is all on one floor, which makes it easy for Mother, and we have enough room, though we wouldn’t have if we hadn’t gotten rid of so much stuff before we moved. Still, there is a little room on the third floor where we can store some things, like our trunks and boxes. Mother likes it, though she has been lonesome, too, for all the friends. But of course Mother and Father used to live in a city, so it doesn’t seem so strange to them. Two people live on the floor above us, but there is a separate entrance and stairs and everything separate in the basement.

“There is a good church near enough to walk to it and Mother has been to some of the missionary meetings and suppers and all, and we have, too—to the suppers! So Mother and Father are beginning to be acquainted. I’m in a Sunday school class, but I haven’t had time to go to anything besides just Sunday morning, for there are too many lessons and school things that take my time. I just

have to get a good start. But I'll have time pretty soon. The class has monthly meetings. They wanted me to be in some kind of a pageant, but Mother said I'd better not try it, for I wouldn't have time to practice.

“And now about the school. Honestly, girls, I don't know where to begin. Not all the high schools are as fine as ours, for ours isn't as old as some of them and Father says it is modern in every respect. They are so crowded that they simply have to build new schools, which Father says is a good thing. In some old schools they've been actually heating with stoves, not even a furnace. So Father said.

“Well, the building is big and the grounds are gorgeous, full of beautiful trees and shrubbery. I'm no architect, so I can't tell you about the building except that it spreads out and up three stories, besides the basement floor, and Mother says we need wings! The basement floor isn't under the ground or anything, and all the freshmen have their lockers there. We put our wraps and books there when we do not need them and get them out when we do. We have a 'home room' and a teacher in charge of it, and we go there the first thing in the morning and the last thing before we go home. She tells us things, the teacher, I mean. Some days we don't do the same things. Sometimes we go to the 'auditorium' and hear somebody speak, or something happens there, but not much yet.

“At first I simply felt lost. Just imagine. Girls, there are twenty-eight hundred boys and girls that attend our high school and I don't think that counts the pupils in the junior high. That is more than half as many people as are in our home town!

“Dick and Doris are very much set up over being in a 'junior high school'—though I don't mean that unkindly. But they think it as wonderful as possible and like their teachers. Dick is more interested in athletics than he is in his lessons and Father has to keep him at his lessons a while in the evenings after he has been outdoors enough, as Father thinks. Doris is working away to make good grades. She has her eye on things that the other girls do and

wear but that is only natural, and I imagine that we need all the good advice Father and Mother give us. Mother says not to join anything until we get a good start in our lessons and learn more about living here. Oh, yes, I was to send some message to Billy, but I told Dick he could just as well write himself, and it may be possible that Billy will hear from him, though I couldn't say positively. You know how much the boys like to write!

“By the way, I'm putting in a little picture of myself. Mother let me go down town with, one of the girls that lives not so very far from us; at least we take the same street car home from school. So we went down one day right after school. She invited me, and took me to a real good moving picture, and we stopped in at a cute little place where they take cheap photographs. We also had a grand sundae at a wonderful place and came home not a bit hungry for dinner. And that makes me think—we have dinner at night, for Father can't come home very well, it is so far, and has a noon lunch down town. We children have one at school, and my, what grand lunches we do have! They give it to us at about what it costs, so it doesn't quite break us up to buy it, enough for the time we have to eat it. But everything, street-car fare and all, costs more in a city. Father drives us to school, mostly, and then goes on down to his business.

“I think that I shall have to stop, though I've been scribbling as fast as I could, and I believe I'll just send this right off, though I'm not half through with all there is to tell. I'll try to write something about the folks we have met when I write again. More things will have happened, too, I suppose, but I've got to stop now. Give Sue my love and now I want you both to plan to come here for your Thanksgiving vacation. Mother invites you, too. She said it would do me good to see some of you. Auntie can't come for she's going to some family reunion or other, and we can make room for you. Please try to do it!”

But the letter was not finished with this. A dash and a new date began the next part in which Betty said that since she had been

interrupted she might as well add something more to her “book” she was writing to Janet. There followed more details with a comical description of “her trip down in charge of the family,” her arriving to find no one, and the “time she had the first day of school.”

The “private messages” to Janet were only some loving remarks with which she closed and those Janet let Sue read herself.

“I’m sure she does miss you, Janet, just as I have missed my cousin Moira. I don’t see why Uncle had to move ’way out to California. I’m afraid I never will see her again.”

“Oh, yes you will—and wouldn’t it be a great place to go to visit her?”

“Y-yes, if I ever could. I’m glad I have you left, Janet. I know why you and Betty have liked each other so much. You’re both so cheerful and stout-hearted some way.”

“Why, whatever made you think that?” asked Janet, surprised.

“Mother said that about Betty, and I’ve noticed it about you, only I hadn’t put it into those words.”

“It’s very nice of you to think it about me. I’m just as glad to have you, Sue, and we’d better see a great deal of each other, just as we have since Betty left. And if Mrs. Lee herself invites us to come, let’s try as hard as we can to go to visit Betty at Thanksgiving. We’d not need much in the clothes line for such a few days, our school dress and our Sunday dress, a change of underclothing, I suppose, and our wraps. Betty would never be ashamed of us if we didn’t have new and stylish hats and coats.”

“I believe Betty did say that her old coat would have to do this winter, though I’m not sure. Perhaps it was you that mentioned it. Well, it doesn’t matter. I’ll go if I can, Janet, and be sure to give Betty my love when you write to her. I hope she’ll write to me.”

“Oh, she will, Sue. Of course Betty will, if she is inviting you. But you can see what a rush she’s in. It must take a lot of time just to

get to places on the street cars. Mother said it would take over half an hour to get down town from some of the suburbs. And maybe it's more than that. I believe I'd rather live here, where you can walk to church and school and to the groceries and picture show and everything."

"I can imagine that Betty is pretty lonesome sometimes," added Sue, gravely looking at the letter which she still held. "But it seems just like a nice adventure that you read about, and if we can go, we'll have a share in some of it."

CHAPTER VI—FRIENDS AND FUN

Had Betty Lee imagined any faintly romantic attraction to her dainty self on the part of Ted Dorrance, she would have been disappointed during these first weeks in the new school. He always spoke when they met in the halls provided he saw her; but he was usually with other boys and very much engrossed in whatever he was discussing with them. Hurrying crowds on the way to classes had little interest for Betty as well. She, too, was absorbed by the busy and interesting life, and soon had friends among the girls in her classes.

Betty, though friendly, was by nature not inclined to make close friends immediately. But girls that recite together and have the same lessons will find much in common. Betty's good recitations and her hand that went up often to answer the questions of different teachers were sufficient introduction to her classmates, who heard her name, as she heard theirs, when she was called upon to recite. She cheerfully lent a pencil or pen for a moment, or answered some question before class about the lesson, or sat upon her desk, opposite some similarly perched girl, to chat about coming events. There were "hundreds of freshmen" and that literally; but they resolved themselves into the comparative few with whom she recited in her different classes.

Long before the Thanksgiving visit, which she anticipated from her old home chum, she was accustomed to school and work and thoroughly liked many of the girls, especially a few who were "very chummy" with her, she told her mother, and sat with her at lunch, or waited for her after class, or planned their work or recreation together.

Louise Madison, she found to be a senior, president of the Girls' Athletic Club, a large association, indeed, consisting of all the girls who "went in" for athletics. A certain amount of gym work was required, but one could take more, to be sure. Yet Betty's parents were a little hesitant just yet; and not knowing the wisdom of

the teachers in charge, preferred that Betty wait a little, except in swimming, which her father said she ought to know as well as possible, so that she could “swim to Europe” in case something happened to the ship before it reached port.

At that remark, soberly delivered, the family had laughed, but Doris asked in good earnest, “When are we going, Papa?”

“Aw, Dodie,” said Dick, “can’t you tell a joke when you hear one?”

“Well, we probably shall go some day,” airily said Doris, provoked at herself for having spoken too soon, and none too well pleased with her twin. “You think you’re very smart!”

“Doris,” quietly said her mother with a reproving shake of her head, and trouble was avoided.

The freshman to whom Betty was most attracted, and that very soon, was Carolyn Gwynne, a bright, warm-hearted, generous girl, alive to everything and enthusiastic about many things, yet with a certain poise that Betty decided was due to the fact that she had always lived in the city. Her pretty brown head often bobbed along by Betty’s fair one and her face was alight with various expressions as she told Betty “all she knew and more,” as she herself said.

“Everybody likes Carolyn,” said Peggy Pollard, who had seen the grades through with Carolyn. “It’s because Carolyn goes out of her way to do things for people. She has a lovely family, too, and that makes a difference, don’t you think, Betty?”

“Oh, yes. Wouldn’t it be terrible not to be happy at home?”

“It certainly would.”

Peggy herself was a “darling girl,” Betty thought, prettily plump, like Carolyn, though shorter than either Carolyn or Betty. Her locks that fell around her shoulders just now, being allowed to grow and variously trained on different days, were of that dark brown red that belongs with what seems to be the same color of eyes and a pinky complexion. But Peggy did not go without a hat as much as the other girls, since freckles “were one thing she

wasn't going to have!" If she could only tan decently now! "You have a dimple on one cheek, Betty Lee," said Peggy, "and Carolyn has one on the other. Those cheeks ought to be on one person!"

"Oh, aren't you funny, Peggy Pollard!" exclaimed Betty. "Carolyn's cheek added to my cheek,"—then they both laughed, thinking of another meaning for "cheek." They were in a mood for silliness anyhow, Peggy said, for they were on their way to the auditorium for a "pep" meeting. The occasion, of course, was fall foot, ball. Enthusiasm must be aroused for the "Lions," soon to fight their first battles on the gridirons of various schools in the city and suburbs. But Betty did have two dimples.

In common with the rest of the scholars of Lyon High, Betty and her friends were delighted to have an auditorium session, not only for what usually went on, but for the cutting of recitation hours!

"Carolyn's going to have a garden party, Betty," Peggy continued. "Has she told you about it?"

"No—I hope I'll be invited, though," laughed Betty, climbing the stairs now for the recitation room and her freshman locker, just secured in the last few days. "My, isn't it nice not to have to carry your books around any more!"

"Yes," and Peggy slid her hand up along the brass railing of the stairs. "But I imagine Carolyn just decided about it last night. All their fall flowers are so beautiful now. They have a wonderful big place, you know. Have you anything else to do Saturday?"

"No, only some shopping down town with Mother. I could put that off. She has a lot of things to do for Dick and Doris."

"You might get your shopping done in the morning, perhaps. I'll tell you what cars to take, though it might be that Carolyn could come for you, or somebody call for you in their car."

"Oh, I could get there, I think, if it is not too far from the car line. I'm getting used to going around now."

“It isn’t so easy sometimes, even for those of us that have always lived here, and our fathers and mothers like to be careful of us, of course.”

“Will there be a large party? I might meet some of the girls somewhere, wherever you have to change cars.”

“Yes, probably you could. Why, I think that there will be all our crowd and some others we don’t see so much of, real nice girls, you know.”

Betty was glad to be included in “our crowd,” but there was no further opportunity for conversation. Boys and girls were pouring into the different entrances of the auditorium, seeking their regular seats, which had been assigned.

“Oh, look!” exclaimed Peggy. “We’re going to have the band! Say, don’t they look fine in their uniforms? Well, ’bye—sorry I can’t sit by you.”

The high school band did look resplendent. As Betty took her seat they struck up a lively popular air and played it through while the school was assembling. They were on the platform, where the principal stood beside a chair, probably thinking that his presence would have more effect if he stood. And the presence of the dignified principal always did have a calming effect. No nonsense or disrespect was ever shown to him, for the very good reason that he would not tolerate it. A school of this size, and a city school, with its variety of composition, called for no weakness in the men and women who had charge of its discipline, though in this school all due consideration was given to the rights and needs of its pupils.

It was a pretty scene. Betty was glad that she sat on the end of one row of seats, for she could see so much better. Eagerly she leaned forward, not to miss any part of scene or action. But before they were seated, they all turned as usual, at the signal from the principal, to salute the flag, whose bright stripes and stars showed at the principal’s right. Already the pupils were trained to say in excellent unison the phrases which pledged them to the flag of

their country and that “for which it stands.” Together they made the right gestures at the right time and Betty had not gotten over feeling thrilled to be a part of so great a company, or over the patriotic tie that made them one.

Carolyn sat not far away, in front of Betty, and as soon as they were seated she leaned back to nod at Betty and form with her lips the words, “I want to see you after this.”

Betty nodded her understanding. She was going to be invited to the garden party, she thought. But what was the principal saying? He sat down, after making a few announcements and handing the conduct of the meeting over to some boy, whom Betty supposed the president of the Boys’ Athletic Association, though she had not caught the last words of the principal. The program was not so different from that of the meetings which Betty had attended in the little school at home, when there was a general gathering in honor of athletics, but oh, how much bigger everything was.

The band was several times as large, and how well they played! It must be something to learn to play in a city where there is a symphony orchestra, Betty thought. Ambition stirred. She just must belong to one of the musical organizations of the school, some time if not now!

Now the yell leader performed, leading the school in different yells for the team and school. Betty’s face was one wide smile. These were new and funny yells. The team had to come forward and some speeches were made. Some of the boys were shy and awkward; others, used to it, said their say with greater freedom. Some funny expressions were used. Betty thought of how they must grate on the ears of her strict English teacher who had been particularly severe in regard to slang at their last recitation. What would she say if she heard some of the things that Betty had been surprised to hear girls say, girls that seemed to be nice and were undoubtedly attractive? Such girls in the village at home were not welcomed to intimate friendship and as a rule belonged to a class careless and unrefined at home.

Little thoughts like these ran through Betty's young head as she applauded with the rest and tried the yells, such fun to say; though she did not know some of them. But they were easy to get, "crazy" as they were. But the wilder the better, when it comes to athletics, or so the modern rooters seem to think. The band indulged in funny little crashes at quick signals from the yell leader. Betty, with one eye on the principal, saw him smile occasionally. All this was allowed; but, after all, it was an orderly performance, if wildly enthusiastic. "My, they all know how to do it, don't they?" she said to Carolyn, who joined her on their way from the auditorium.

"Yes, but they wouldn't I guess if they didn't have people in charge that won't stand for any nonsense. Got your Latin all out?"

"Yes, though I'm shaky on some of it. It's terribly hard for me to memorize. If she didn't have us go over it so much I'd never get it."

"That's what teachers are for, I suppose," laughed Carolyn. "But what I wanted to see you about was this: I want to have a garden party while the weather's nice, so I'm asking everybody for Saturday—just informal invitations, you know, not the way my big sister does when she gives a party! Can you come? We'll have a picnic dinner outdoors, unless the weather does something awful. But it's pretty dry and I don't believe it will rain. We had such a lot of rain last week and our flowers are so pretty now. Please come."

"Why, I'd just love to, Carolyn, and I think it's nice of you to ask me. I don't know of any reason why I can't come. I'll ask Mother tonight and let you know sure tomorrow. It's practically sure, though, because I can do what I like Saturday afternoon."

"All right, Betty. I'll expect you. I'll give you the address and tell you how to get there when I have time."

The girls hurried along with the rest of the crowds going to recitation rooms. It must be said that Betty's mind wandered a little occasionally, whenever it was safe to let it wander, from the subjects of the lessons to the delightful prospect of next Saturday.

This was the first of the week. What should she wear? She did not like to ask Carolyn, but perhaps she could manage to bring up the subject with Peggy, or some of the other girls, when she knew who were invited. Suppose there should be some freshman boys. Peggy hadn't said and neither had Carolyn.

That afternoon, after school, Betty rushed into the house with her books for night study and deposited them on the table with a slight thud. Her eyes were alight and the "one dimple" was much in evidence. "Mother, I'm invited to a garden party! It's at Carolyn's on Saturday afternoon and they're going to have a picnic dinner outdoors. Can I go? May I go, I mean?"

"I shall certainly want to say yes, if you want to go, as I judge you do." Mrs. Lee was smiling, too, as she looked at her glowing young daughter. She folded a garment she had been mending and laid it aside. "Tell me about it."

"Well, you know who Carolyn is, don't you?"

"I ought to by this time," and Mrs. Lee's eyes twinkled. "It occurs to me that I have heard you mention her before."

Betty laughed. "I suppose I have raved about Carolyn. But she is the dearest thing."

"I am sure that it is a perfectly proper friendship, Betty," assented Betty's mother. "The Gwynne place has been mentioned more than once in the paper and I read of a large garden party given there by Carolyn's mother, about two weeks ago, I think."

"Oh, was that the gorgeous place that had the pictures of it in the Sunday paper?" Betty looked a little dismayed. "Why, they must be very stylish and wealthy folks—but Carolyn likes me—I know she does."

"To be stylish and wealthy, my dear, does not always make people snobs, and there are other assets that they may recognize in other people, too. If you and Carolyn are congenial, there is no reason

why there should not be a pleasant friendship between you, at least now.”

Betty looked thoughtful. “You mean that after a while their way of living might make a difference and that Carolyn would have different friends!”

“Perhaps. I don’t know, Betty. Separation sometimes makes it impossible to keep in touch. But don’t let me start unhappy thoughts about this. I shall do everything I can to let you have friends and a happy time. You always have; why not here in the city? Just so you have none that will hurt you. But you are not likely to choose that kind, I think. Please remember, Betty, that you can’t touch coal without getting black.”

“But you ought to be friendly with everybody, oughtn’t you?”

“Certainly, so far as being kind—but let the older folks do the reforming, Betty. Well, all this about one innocent party? What should you wear, Betty?”

“Just what I was going to ask you! But I’ll find out from Peggy. They are going to play tennis and things. I wish I had a real ‘sport costume,’ for I don’t suppose they’ll wear ‘party dresses’ to an outdoor party like this.”

“Perhaps we can fix something up, Betty. If you only hadn’t outgrown everything so! We can’t afford new clothes right now, after all our moving and what we have had to buy to fix up this place. And social prominence does not enter into our plans right at present.” Mrs. Lee smiled at Betty, who was sitting in a low chair now with her hands folded on her knees.

“It never does,” laughed Betty, “but you usually can’t help having it. I should think it would be a rest not to be president of a club or responsible for church things. Nevertheless, Mother, don’t hide your light under a bushel!”

With this advice, Betty jumped up to run out into the kitchen and pantry, for investigation of the cooky jar. Crumbs about showed

that Doris or Dick had been there before her, and she heard Amy Lou's childish laughter coming from the back yard. But Betty's lessons were hard for the next day and she returned to the living room to take one of her texts back to her room and study a while by herself.

CHAPTER VII—CAROLYN'S GARDEN PARTY

The rest of the week went by in pleasant anticipation of the garden party, Betty's first. To be sure there had been "loads of picnics," and lawn fetes for the church, usually in the spring or early summer. But a real "garden party" must be different. There was much consultation about clothes between Betty and her mother. One of the girls had said that of course one wouldn't wear her old clothes, or her Girl Scout or Camp Fire Girl suits, as you would on a picnic to the woods. She was going to play tennis, and her mother had gotten her an "awfully pretty" white sport suit!

Well, what was a sport suit anyhow? Mrs. Lee took Amy Lou down town, one morning when Mr. Lee could drive them down, and spent a rather trying morning trying to shop with a child. She looked at dresses and patterns, with a view of fitting Betty suitably for the occasion. But the new things were expensive. Finally, by letting down a skirt Betty had and arranging a suitable blouse, or upper part, what Betty called a "near-sport" frock was evolved.

Then, after all the effort, Betty came home one afternoon with a new idea. "Mother, it's turned so awfully hot—Indian summer, I suppose—that Peggy says she isn't going to play tennis or anything on a court, and she's going to wear her light green flat crepe that is her second best, or else some real cool summer dress, whatever happens to be ready. Peggy doesn't care! I believe I'll just wear my pretty thin blue and let it go at that. I don't want to play tennis either, especially when I don't know anybody much and not so very many can play. Carolyn says she's going to pay all her social debts at once and have a big party, so I'll be lost in the multitude."

Like Janet, Mrs. Lee privately thought that Betty would never be "lost in the multitude," but she did not say so. "So Carolyn is paying all her 'social debts,' is she?" asked Betty's mother, amused at the "social debts" expression. "It is just as well that you have

decided on the blue. It will look pretty in the gardens and I'd dress for the flowers instead of the tennis court."

"Aren't you poetic, Mother! It's a shame that you went to all the trouble about the other dress, though."

"That will be so much clear gain, child. You now have another frock, which will come in for service at some time, no doubt."

When the day and the hour arrived, Betty's father arrived home late for lunch, as he could do on Saturday, unless there were some executive meeting. That settled the question of how to get to the party, and Betty called up two of her friends to say that her father was going to take her and that she would stop for them if they liked. Naturally they were glad of the opportunity, for the Gwynne estate was out at some distance, almost a "country estate," Peggy had said. "Call up," said Betty's father, "when you want to come home, or rather, when I should start from home in time to reach you. We'll take note of the time we spend getting there. Then I'll bring a machine full of whomever you like."

"Oh, that is so good of you, Mr. Lee!" exclaimed Dotty Bradshaw, one of the freshman girls whom Betty had invited to ride with them. "But perhaps Betty will want somebody else, though," added Dotty, happening to think that perhaps she was taking too much, for granted.

"Why, Dotty, of course if we call for you we'll see you back home. We're sort of new to the city, though, so perhaps you can tell me who live places that wouldn't be too far away."

"Most anybody that attends our high school would be all right," answered Dotty, "because girls that live in other parts of town would go to other high schools."

"Of course! I didn't think!"

"Well, I don't know about that," said Selma Rardon, the other freshman in the car. "There are sometimes people way out, like Carolyn herself."

Betty was already assured by the very different dresses of the girls with her, and when she arrived at the beautiful place where Carolyn lived she thought how silly she had been to worry about clothes. Still, you wanted to be suitably dressed, and when you knew hardly anybody, there was some excuse. And oh, there were boys, too. She saw a number of lads whose faces she knew by having seen them in the different freshman classes. Then there were others whom she did not know at all. By the time Betty and her friends turned into the drive which led to the house, most of the boys and girls had arrived, it seemed and were dotted in groups all over the closely clipped lawn which still looked like velvet between its flower beds and shrubbery. Oh, wasn't it beautiful? Betty was so glad that her father could see where the party was.

"I was afraid you weren't coming at all, Betty," said Carolyn, squeezing Betty's hands, "but there are still a few that haven't gotten here."

"I waited for Father to bring us," replied Betty, "and we didn't quite know how long it would take to drive out."

"Well, you're here now and I'm going to ask Peggy to see that you meet everybody. I'll have to be darting here and there and everywhere to see that they all have something to do."

Carolyn looked so pretty, Betty thought, and she wore the simplest of summer dresses, to all appearances, though the material was fine and sheer, a sort of chiffon, Betty thought; for Betty was just becoming aware of styles and materials, matters which she had left to her mother, and most wisely.

There was the usual tendency of the girls and boys to separate into groups of boys and groups of girls, but Carolyn had announced that first they would stroll to see the flowers and go to the pool and the greenhouse and that each boy must join some girls, not necessarily one girl. In consequence the groups were mixed by the time Betty and her friends began their stroll around the grounds and Peggy took Betty into the midst of one. Dotty Bradshaw accompanied

them, though Selma had been drawn away by one of her special friends. Dotty was “cute,” Peggy said.

Here were Mary Emma Howland and Mary Jane Andrews, the two Marys of Betty’s algebra class. Then Chet Dorrance, whom Betty afterward found to be Ted’s brother, was feeding the goldfishes in the lovely pool from a box of something held by Kathryn Allen. Budd LeRoy perched on the stone arm of a seat that curved artistically in grey lines, back a little from the pool, and talked spasmodically to Chauncey Allen, Kathryn’s brother, and Brad Warren. Budd, Chauncey and Bradford were not freshmen, Betty thought, but she wasn’t sure. Who could be sure about all the freshmen there were? Chet Dorrance looked a good deal like his brother, though his hair was lighter and Betty decided that he didn’t look quite so smart, but not many of the boys could touch Ted for looks.

The boys all wore coats, though she knew that some of them, at least, would have felt more comfortable without them, as she had seen them Friday at school. Later on, however, when games and sports began, many a coat was to be found hung on the back of a garden bench or over the slats of a trellis. Carolyn may have given the word. Betty did not know. She usually kept her eye out for what boys did, on account of Dick, whose social etiquette she helped superintend, little as she knew herself. Between three and four o’clock it was very warm indeed. Later it began to cool off and seem like early October.

“Isn’t this the loveliest place?” she said to Chauncey Allen, by way of making conversation. After introducing Chauncey to Betty, Peggy had darted off to start Budd and Bradford in tennis, about which they had inquired. Chet Dorrance and Kathryn Allen had finished feeding the goldfish and sauntered to the big stone seat, where Chauncey suggested that he and Betty also sit. Kathryn was a pretty, slight little girl with an olive complexion, very black hair and dark eyes. Chauncey was as dark in his coloring but was of a much larger build.

“Pretty nice,” replied Chauncey. “They’ve got fine gardens and a good tennis court, that much is certain; but their house is pretty old.”

“But it looks so—distinguished,” said Betty. “Those big pillars and the wide porch and the drive with that sort of porch built over it—I never can remember the name for it.”

“You can’t prove it by me,” grinned Chauncey. “I don’t know either, although we have one. Yes, the Gwynne place is considered a fine old estate, so my dad says. Mother says she wouldn’t have it for it isn’t modern enough to suit her. She doesn’t like high ceilings and great rooms that are hard to heat in winter.”

“Oh, I love them,” cried Betty, “though maybe it’s because I never have to bother about furnaces and things like that. I’d just love to have a great house and big grounds like this.”

“Where do you live?” asked Chauncey.

“In an apartment. My father’s just come to the city this fall and we took the best place Mother could find. We still have a home in my home town, but I don’t suppose we’ll ever go back there to stay.”

“Would you like to?”

Betty shook her head negatively. “I’m thrilled to death to be in our big high school!”

Chauncey grinned pleasantly. “It is pretty good,” he acknowledged, “but I hate to study sometimes. I hope football will go all right for our team this year. There’s one of the big high schools that is our greatest rival, and O, boy—if we don’t beat them this year!”

Betty had not heard about that, but she loyally echoed Chauncey’s wish.

“How about going up to the house for that fruitade Carolyn said would be ready pretty soon?” asked Chauncey, including the

group, for two other girls had come up to the pool and were now joining Kathryn and Chet.

The suggestion was promptly acted upon and Betty now found herself walking between tall pampas grass and well trimmed bushes of all sorts along a path to the house and talking to Chet Dorrance, who asked her if she had bought her season ticket for football yet.

“No, I haven’t. Are you selling them?”

“No, but Ted is.”

“I’m awfully sorry, but Carolyn told me that if I hadn’t promised, one of the girls wanted to sell me one, so I promised.”

“Oh, that’s all right. It was probably one of the girls on a pep squad.”

“What’s a pep squad?” laughed Betty. “That must be one of the things that I haven’t heard about yet.”

“You’ll hear a lot about it, then. Why, they have them in the G. A. A., girls that talk it all up and make ‘enthusiasm’ and support the athletics, you know.”

“What is the G. A. A., please? I must be terribly dense, but remember all the things I’ve tried to take in. You’re not a freshman, are you?”

“Why, no—what makes you think that?” Chet was privately thinking that there must be something after all in experience, though as he was no larger than a very dear freshman friend, who had been left a little behind in the race for high school, he had been “insulted” more than once by being considered a freshman.

“Well, I did think that you were one, since your brother is a junior”—Betty had almost said that he looked so much younger than Ted the tall, but she halted in time. “But you seem to know all about everything, and even the freshies who live here don’t always remember everything.”

“I could get all that from hearing Ted talk, you know; but of course, there isn’t much about the school that I haven’t heard about—I wouldn’t say know, of course.”

“It must be nice,” said Betty, thereupon pleasing her escort, who immediately began to enlighten her upon the workings of the athletic association and the girls’ share in it. The G. A. A. was the Girls’ Athletic Association.

“Oh, yes! Of course. I hear them call it a club. I’ve even had it explained to me—but not the pep squads. I only wish I had time for everything!”

“You don’t have to do everything your freshman year, Betty.”

“That is what Father said—so I’m not. But that doesn’t keep you from wanting to do things.”

“You’re right it doesn’t!” Chet was thinking of several things that he had wanted to do and still wanted.

A great glass bowl just inside the screened porch on the side of the house away from the sun, supplied a cool drink of oranges and lemons, whose slices floated about pieces of ice. A maid in cap and apron served them and fished out a whole red cherry to put in Betty’s glass. And didn’t it taste good!

Then, in the shifting of position and accidental meetings of this one and that one, Betty found herself with Mary Emma Howland and another freshman boy whom she recognized as the brightest lad in the algebra class. “Oh, yes,” she said, in answer to Mary Emma’s question whether or not she knew “Sim,” and brightly she smiled at him.

“We never were introduced,” said Betty, “but when you recite every day together you can’t help but know people, and whenever Mr. Matthews calls on ‘James Simmonds’ he looks as if he expected to have a recitation.”

“There, Sim!” laughed Mary Emma. “I told you you were the teacher’s pet!”

“Much I am!” and James Simmonds looked as if he did not appreciate being complimented, even by two merry girls. He was a tall, thin boy, with light, sandy hair, thin face and light eyes, but eyes that were keen with intelligence when they did not twinkle with mischief. “And I’m usually called ‘Simmonds’ by the men teachers.”

“So you are,” acknowledged Betty. “But I didn’t know they called you ‘Sim’—I thought it was ‘Jim.’”

“I’m generally known as Sim,” said the boy, “but sometimes it’s ‘Jim’, or ‘Carrots.’”

Sim exchanged a look with Mary Emma, who giggled. “Sim’s my fourth or fifth cousin,” Mary Emma explained. “He lives at our house to go to school while his father and mother are away this year.”

As Betty looked inquiringly at Sim, he explained that his father was an engineer and was in South America with his mother for the year. “I’m going there some day,” said he. “Say, they have mosquitoes and snakes and all sorts of queer things, and there are some man-eaters down there, cannibals, you know—oh, it’s a wild country all right!”

“That doesn’t sound so very good to me,” smiled Betty. “Do you really want to go where there are snakes and things like that!”

“Certainly! Mary Emma you bring Betty Lee out some time and I’ll show her the things they’ve sent us.”

“We really have some beautiful things from South America, Betty,” said Mary Emma, and Betty was thinking how interesting it would be to see them. My, she was getting acquainted fast! But just as Mary Emma was beginning to tell her about a handsome purse that had come for her mother, Peggy came running out of the house door and stopped before the porch bench upon which the three were seated. Peggy was wearing something funny on her

head and carried something, a straight piece of pasteboard, in her hand. Large black letters said something or other.

“Oh, here you are, Betty. I was looking for you. Carolyn wants you to be one of the social engineers. We’re going to have games for everybody on the lawn now and you’ll have to help. Come on! ’Scuse Betty, please, Mary Emma—and Sim.”

Betty rose to follow Peggy inside. There were several girls, all adjusting these pasteboard caps or hats, that looked like short stove-pipes. Carolyn was apologizing, though Betty thought the idea clever. “I didn’t have time, girls, to make caps, anything pretty, you know, and I went to a picnic where they had these. They looked cute and I thought they’d do.”

“Of course they’ll do,” said Peggy, adjusting the cap to Betty’s head, merely by wrapping the two ends about and fastening them, top and bottom, with ordinary clips. So that was what the big black letters on the plain gray pasteboard said, “SOCIAL ENGINEER.”

“But Carolyn,” protested Betty, “I don’t know everybody and how can I be a ‘social engineer’? I suppose you’re going to have games to manage?”

“That’s it, and it doesn’t make a bit of difference whether you know people or not. Your head-gear makes it perfectly proper to speak to anybody. I’m sure you’re good at things like this—from your looks, you know!”

“Thanks for the confidence,” laughed Betty. “All right, I’ll do the best I can.”

For the next hour the lawn looked pretty with the groups that played the old-fashioned games as well as those of a later date. Here were flowers and shrubbery, light dresses, darting figures, much laughter and little shrieks in the midst of excitement, when some one was caught or some one became “It.” Then tables were brought out upon the lawn. Carolyn and Peggy pressed several of the boys into service to help place them, but after they were set,

with silver, napkins and flowers, a pretty vase in the center of each table, the “banquet,” as Betty later reported at home, was served them as perfectly “as if they were grown up” by persons whom Betty supposed to be the servants of the house. Mercy, she would never dare invite Carolyn to their apartment! And she did love Carolyn!

Not that Betty was ashamed of simple living—Betty was trying to think why she had such a thought about Carolyn—but that could be puzzled out later on. The present was too pleasant for a single disturbing thought. It was cool now and seemed more like the time of year it really was. Sunset hues were showing. And they were to stay till the Japanese lanterns all about were lit, with some hiding game or treasure hunt that Carolyn had mentioned to the “social engineers” as their last effort and fun. And now, after the pretty ice-cream in the freshman colors and the delicious cake with the double frosting, lovely baskets of grapes and peaches were being passed.

Betty slowly ate the juicy grapes of her bunch, one by one, as she talked to Peggy on one side of her, or Chet Dorrance on the other. One of the junior boys had been “fired,” according to Chet, for “cutting classes, disorderly conduct and disrespectful behaviour.” Oh, no, he couldn’t come back now. His parents had been over to see the principal and they might get the “kid” into some other school—Chet did not know. And Betty was to watch Freddy Fisher carry the ball at the first football game in the stadium. “If you go with Carolyn and Peggy,” said he, “they’ll tell you who everybody is that’s doing things. You’ve seen ’em all, though, haven’t you?”

“Yes, but I’m not sure I’ll know them on the field. I guess I am going with Carolyn and Peggy.”

“Of course you are,” decidedly remarked Peggy, who had turned from her other neighbor in time to hear Betty’s last sentence. “What is it you’re going to?”

CHAPTER VIII—BETTY HEARS THE LIONS ROAR

Nothing could have been more appropriate for exciting athletic affairs than the name which had been given to this high school in honor of a distinguished public servant, interested in education. It scarcely needs to be explained that the football team of Lyon High was called the lions, on and off the gridiron, or that posters and the school paper carried fierce-looking drawings and cartoons of the King of Beasts in action. A golden yellow, relieved by black, in the costumes of the Lyon High band and in the sweaters of the team was supposed to suggest the tawny coat of what could “eat up” any other team in short order. Lions figured largely in various badges and insignia of all sorts. Betty Lee had early decided that she must some day wear one of the pins or rings that bore the “Lyon High Lion.”

Oh, it was good to stow away books in the freshman lockers and hurry with the rest of the big crowd to find seats in the stadium, seats where one could see everything!

The girls lost little time at their lockers. “Come on, Betty,” called Carolyn. “I’ve got some newspapers to sit on. Yes, I should say bring your coat! Your sweater won’t be enough. I promised Mother to wear a coat and wouldn’t have needed to promise, either. I don’t care to freeze myself.”

This was not the first game. That had been duly played in the home stadium, not so long after Carolyn’s garden party, and Betty had felt all the thrills of seeing the great stadium come to life for the first time in her experience. After this big school, college could not bring her more! Yet thrills could be repeated. Never would this place become so accustomed, Betty was sure, that she would not have them. Then, this was the GREAT GAME. It was the one between the two largest high schools of the city and was an annual occurrence, long heralded, the great game for which the teams prepared. There had been a lively meeting in the auditorium

beforehand, that very morning. The championship was at stake! “Oh,” said Betty, “I don’t see how I can stand it if the Lions don’t beat!”

“Don’t suggest such a thing,” Peggy called back. “Of course we’ll beat!”

There was a large crowd, parents and friends included, as well as many alumni of the high school, who were interested enough and loyal enough to see at least this one chief contest every year. But Carolyn, Betty and Peggy, with some of the other girls, were among the first among those dismissed from the last Friday classes. Their season tickets were punched at the stadium entrance before the stadium was appreciably filled.

“We’ve a grand choice, girls. Hurry!” Carolyn tripped rapidly down the steps in the lead.

“Down there, back of those boys, Carolyn!” called Peggy, who knew as well as Carolyn the “strategic point” that they wanted to reach if no one were ahead of them in securing it. “First come, first served here, you know, Betty,” Peggy added, hopping from one high step to another in a short cut.

Carolyn was spreading newspapers and holding them to keep them from being blown away in the slight breeze. “Sit on ’em in a hurry,” she laughingly urged, and settled herself on the further one, next to two of the teachers, who were spreading out a steamer rug. “Sensible girl,” said one, smiling down at Carolyn. “Is your coat warm enough?”

“Yes, Miss Heath, and we have on our sweaters beside. Peggy and I nearly froze at the University stadium last week, so we bundled up this time. Did you see the game with State, Miss Heath?”

“Indeed I did.”

“Good for you,” chuckled Carolyn. “You like athletics, don’t you?”

“Very much—when some one else does it.”

“But you wouldn’t have time,” suggested Carolyn. This was the Miss Heath whom all the girls liked so much, girls of any rank from freshmen to seniors. She was always fair, though you had to work for her. No “getting by” with poorly prepared lessons.

“No,” assented the adorable Miss Heath, “I’d have no time, not even for setting up exercises.” She looked at her teacher friend, a lady from the rival school, and laughed. “What do you think, Carolyn, would it be polite for me to sing with you our school songs or do any rooting for Lyon High when my friend from our rivals’ school is sitting right by me? By the way, Miss March, this is Carolyn Gwynne, one of our freshmen. You know the Gwynne place, out on Marsden Road?”

“Oh, yes, quite well. How do you do, Carolyn. I think I have met you at your home. I belong to a club that met there last year.”

Carolyn said the appropriate remarks in reply and was fortunately not obliged to decide what was the polite course for Miss Heath to follow. So far as she was concerned, no scruples would have prevented her enthusiasm for Lyon High, for the good reason that Carolyn forgot everything but the game when the contest was on.

Peggy, and Betty, too, third in order from the teachers, leaned around Carolyn to bow in friendly and respectful fashion, but at once they gave their attention to the crowd and the field. On the track a few runners were practicing, their costume looking very cool for the chilly fall breezes. A few boys were standing about on the field or central “gridiron.”

Betty filled her lungs with the fresh air that was not blowing too sharply. She was accustomed to the curving concrete that rose high behind her and stretched to right and left, to the field before her and to the gymnastic or athletic performances that had seemed so queer at first because of the larger numbers and the better equipment. By this time, too, she knew the team, its best members and what they were likely to do, though in the confusion of the game it was sometimes hard for her to recognize a play.

As the game was with a city school today, there were as many or almost as many rooters for the visiting team as Lyon High itself could offer. As the seats filled rapidly, competition between rooters began. Rival bands with tooting horns and rolling drums made a dramatic appearance, paraded, and finally took position. Rival yell leaders led rival cheer, though Lyon High, trained by its athletic director to good sportsmanship, gave a complimentary yell or two for its guests, using their own battle cries or merely giving hearty rah-rahs for the rival school and team.

Then the pandemonium was at its height when the teams ran out upon the field and the excited youngsters on the stadium seats rose and shouted their greetings. Betty stood and waved and gave the yells with the rest. She might not have been long in Lyon High, but she was a part of it now! It was her school! There! That was Freddy Fisher, upon whose plays so much depended. There went that mysterious tall boy that somebody said came from Switzerland and somebody else said was a Russian. My, but he was an active chap! He was almost as good as Freddy, Chet Dorrance had told Betty, but he didn't always understand the signals and occasionally the team was penalized for something that he did either accidentally or on purpose. "He's a hot one when he's mad," said Chet, "and I guess he still thinks in his own language, whatever that is, though he likes to play and learn all the new signals pretty quick, the coach says."

"Peggy, there is your hero," laughed Carolyn.

"Who?" inquired Peggy.

"The 'Don.'"

"Oh, yes. I did say that he deserved as much glory as Freddy for that last game, didn't I? He gave such fine interference."

"The 'Don'?" inquired Betty, puzzled.

"They have him Spanish now, Betty. He's been Russian, German, Hungarian and I don't know what all and I think the boys like to

tease us girls by making up something new about him all the time. But isn't he sort of handsome?"

"I'd hate to say, Peggy, if you like his looks," countered Betty.

"Betty likes them fixed up and awfully clean, like Ted Dorrance, Peggy," mischievously said Carolyn.

Betty flushed a little, but smiled. "I have a brother, girls. He's better now, but time was when Dick would just as lief never wash from 'early morn till dewy eve' as Father used to say. 'Aw, what was the use of washing before breakfast when you had to wash right after it?'" Betty gave a comical imitation of Dick's tones.

"So after assisting in rounding up Dick to be washed and being embarrassed more than once by his grimy looks, it's no wonder if I like 'em clean at least. But I suppose I went through that time of hating to be washed myself."

"I doubt it, Betty," answered Carolyn. "I think you are always dainty, if you ask me."

But now the time of the contest was at hand. More excitement and cheers called for the attention of the rooters to duty. They yelled for their own teams now, under the frantic leadership of active yell-leaders. The Lions' little mascot, arrayed in his mask of a lion's head and a suit as tawny as the coat of the biggest lion in the "Zoo," ran up and down, waving large paws and trailing a long tasseled tail.

"Lions, rah!
Rah-rah-rah-rah, Lions!
Eeney, meeney, money mi,
Lions win when they half try—
Eeney meeney money mi,
Chew'em-up! Chew'em-up! *Lions*"
(Roar)

The influence of the living models at the Zoological Gardens, on whose fearsome roars many of these high school pupils had been, figuratively speaking, brought up, made this characteristic roar, with which many of Lyon High yells closed, very realistic. It had been with a mixture of startled surprise, amusement and admiration that Betty, Doris and Dick had first heard it that fall. But now even Amy Lou tried to imitate it.

“Hickity, rickity, spickity jig!
Zippity soom and lickity rig!
The Lions are loose,
Get out of the way!
They’ll romp to the finish.
And Capture the Day Gr-rr-rr—LIONS”

Another favorite yell was both prefaced and ended with a student roar from the Lyon High part of the stadium. It was short and vigorous:

“Lions! Lions!
And they’re not tame!
Go it, Lions,
And *win that game!*”

Some unexplained delay gave time for a brief rendering of a short high school song. “Make it peppy!” called the leader, “one stanza and a yell for the team!”

This closed the preliminaries and in a tense stillness on the part of the spectators the game began. From the first it was exciting, for the teams were well matched. “Now let the Lions Roar,” was balanced by “Now let the Eagles Scream,” in several good plays by each in the first quarter.

The Eagles kicked off but lost their advantage almost at once. For a little the struggle resulted in little gain for either side. A trick kick failed. Line plays gained little. Both teams resorted to punting and

the Lions gained some yardage. Betty, Carolyn and Peggy shared some tense moments when the Eagles' quarterback made a good run of thirty-five yards before he was pulled down by Peggy's new hero, the "Don," who came in for much cheering from Lyon High rooters.

"Oh," said Peggy, sitting back weakly, "I thought he was going to make a touchdown! How did he get away?"

"I don't know," answered Carolyn, "but he's a smart player, the best they have. He's Bess Pickett's brother, you know."

"He ought to be somebody, then," replied Peggy. "What a pity he doesn't go to Lyon!"

"We don't need him," proudly said Carolyn. "Wait and see Freddy Fisher wiggle and twist out of—" but Carolyn did not finish her sentence for interest in what was going on. She was, however, a true prophetess, for as the quarter was drawing near its end, their Freddy caught an Eagles' punt on his own ten-yard line and raced through the entire Eagles' team for a touchdown, almost caught several times, while the excited spectators stood and shouted.

"Get-that-man! Catch him! Catch him!" called the Eagles.

"Look out, Freddy! Go it! Get there!" shouted the Lyon High rooters. "A touchdown Freddy! Atta-boy!"

The Lyon High band struck up a victorious strain, while Freddy, once more the conquering hero, lay upon his ball to get his breath.

During the second quarter there was no scoring. The Eagles were determined to prevent further scoring by the Lions and risked little punting. They were able, however, to spoil any fine little plans of the Lions. Betty, who could not remember sometimes the various positions of the players, though she could note their work, watched the vigorous tackling and the opening struggles of the plays and found it necessary to make an effort not to become too worked up over the contest. But the Lions must win this time! They had barely won over the Eagles the year before, but the championship was not

at stake then for an outside team had developed into one that had beaten both Eagles and Lions, and the Eagles had lost one other game.

Time out saw some of the boys going out to the side lines and as they returned, Ted Dorrance saw a vacant seat just below where our three girls sat and vaulted into it. "Hello!" said he. "This is a better place than I had before. Anybody rented it?"

"Not that I know of," laughed Carolyn. "Some freshman we don't know or some outsider sat there, I guess."

"He's lost out now," said Ted. "How are you ladies enjoying the game?" Ted looked up at Betty as he spoke.

"It is a wonderful game," sighed Betty, "but I can't feel easy about our beating yet!"

Ted laughed, drew a package of peppermint "life savers" from his pocket and handed it up toward the feminine fingers. "Perhaps these will do you some good," said he. "As to feeling easy, nobody does, though some would say so. But take it from me, girls, and keep it under your hat, something is going to happen."

"Oh, tell us, Ted!" exclaimed Peggy.

Ted shook his head in the negative. "Official secret. I happened to get hold of it. Sh-sh!"

Betty, with both dimples showing this time, for she really had two, exchanged an amused glance with the merry Ted, who now whirled around as several boys returned to take seats beside him, and one, looking up from below to see no room there, hopped into another vacancy lower down.

"You'll not have to fight for your seat, Ted," remarked Carolyn. "Aren't you seniors proud of Freddy?"

"Yeah. But I wish this was a game where the coach could put in a few substitutes. However, the other team is as bad off."

As he spoke, the attention of all centered on the gridiron once more; but Betty was handing Ted the little package of “life savers,” and as he took it, he leaned back to whisper near her ear as she stooped, “Watch the Don!”

Inquiring eyes met Ted’s with interest. He nodded. “Do as I said,” he said jokingly, as he, too, turned to give his full attention to the field.

Betty wondered. The “Don” was noted for his good interference. Were they going to let him do something else? Anyhow she would watch him, as Ted directed. How nice it was of Ted to tell her! But Carolyn had given her an amused glance just after Ted had turned away. She must be careful or those ridiculous girls would keep on teasing her. Not that she cared.

Very conservative, indeed, were the plays of the third quarter. Very watchful were both teams. But the Eagles must score if possible, of course, since the only score had been made by the Lions. Hard they fought. Alas—the Lions were penalized for some breach of the rules by Don, nothing serious, Ted said, just some little regulation about “time”!

“That old heathen!” exclaimed Ted, looking back at Betty, who wanted to ask Ted if this were what she was to watch Don for. “But just wait. We’ll show them!”

Next in excitement came a fifteen-yard holding penalty imposed on the Eagles. But as if in desperation, toward the last part of the quarter, a forward pass by the Eagles was successful, and Jim Pickett, clearing all interference, made a seventy-five-yard run and a touchdown.

“Now hear the Eagle scream!” exclaimed Ted. “What’s the matter with our team that they let Jim get away with that? But it was a pretty run. Jehoshaphat, we’re even now! No—they’ve lost the kick! Hooray, we’re one ahead!”

Ted was either talking to himself or to the boys around him, but the girls followed his boyish discourse with interest. And the next calamity was even worse. In the next play one of the fiercest Lions was hurt. They walked him off, but one arm hung limp and Ted, who again rushed away to find out the damage, returned with the information that “Skimp’s arm was broken!”

“Oh, will that let them beat us, do you think?” asked Betty, leaning forward.

“Not necessarily,” replied Ted, “but it’s a big loss,” and Ted looked a little grim. “Besides that, Freddy’s twisted his ankle, mind you!”

“But we mustn’t give up, Betty,” urged Carolyn. “We have to root all the harder to encourage the team!”

What had become of the play Don was to make, Betty wondered—if that was what Ted had meant?

The play of the third quarter, interrupted by much time out, went on to the finish, the Lions discouraged and not doing their best, Ted said. The Eagles made apparently easy gains and took every advantage, until after a rapid advance toward their goal and in the last few minutes of the quarter Jim Pickett made another touchdown by catching the ball punted to his position and running free to the goal. In the excitement the final point to be gained by the kick was again lost. But now the Eagles’ score stood ahead! Where were the brave Lions?

“Well,” said Carolyn, “now comes the tug of war. It’s the last quarter and everybody is tired out, and Freddy is limping off the field and it doesn’t look so good!”

“Never say die, Carolyn,” Peggy cheerfully put in. “The boys aren’t going to lose the championship without a fight!”

Ted had disappeared again. The Eagles were having a snake dance and their band was parading, the forty pieces blaring triumphantly. “My, they do play well,” said Betty. “It’s grand that the high schools are big enough to have such music!”

“I can’t say that I appreciate the Eagles’ band right now, Betty,” said Peggy, “and you won’t either, when you’ve been here a little longer.”

A gleam of hope seemed to arrive with bright Ted, who came jumping up to his seat just below the girls and smiled as he sat down. “We’ll lick ’em yet, girls,” he cried. “Freddy is resting a little and getting his ankle bound up, and he’s going to play all right. They’ve a pretty good substitute for Skimp; at least I think that Bunty will play a good game. So all is not lost. Cheer up!”

The Eagles’ heroes were just as glad for a short rest as Freddy or any of the weary Lions. Recumbent forms lay about the field, presumably drawing strength from Mother Earth. Then, as the immense audience began to grow restless over delay, heads were bent together, in conference over coming plays, and the formation was made, while encouraging though brief cheers came from the rooters. After all the singing, cheering and rooting in every known way and the expenditure of considerable energy and enthusiasm, the band, the cheer leaders and the occupants of the seats in the stadium were tired enough to long for the close of the game. Yet tensity marked the opening of the quarter.

“Let’s go,” suggested one of the teachers next to the girls. Carolyn looked around in surprise, to see if it could be Miss Heath, usually so loyal to the Lions. But possibly with the teacher from the other school she rather hated to see the finish.

But no, it was not Miss Heath who had suggested going. “If you like, certainly,” she was saying, “though it may be a little difficult to get through the crowd.”

“That is so,” replied the other, “but I think the game is practically over. Your big runner is injured and I scarcely think that the Lions can do much, with the substitute that they have for that other boy. I saw him play once before and he lost advantage once by fumbling when he might have done something.”

“Oh, can’t we ‘do much’!” said Carolyn, in a voice low enough not to be heard by Miss Heath or her friend. “She thinks she’s so sure of the Eagles!”

Peggy and Betty grinned back at Carolyn, but settled themselves to watch the fray.

Again the struggle was on. Good! Freddy Fisher was running about as actively as ever, watched by the Eagles. Twice the ball was given to him, but although he did not appear to be lame as he ran, he could make little headway before he was downed. The Eagles “screamed” again, rooting loudly, and hoarse encouragement came from the ranks of the Lyon High rooters. “Atta-boy! Freddy, rah! Fight, fight, fight, fight!”

Then came the surprise. Betty had forgotten to follow Ted’s advice in regard to watch “Don.”

Who had the ball this time? Betty was as surprised as any one to see “Don” with the ball, freeing himself from immediate interference and starting off. Oh, could he do it!

The surprised Eagles pounded after the mysterious foreigner while from the Eagles’ rooters cries of “get that man! Get that man!” were wildly repeated.

Betty’s heart was in her mouth. “What did I tell you!” Ted was shouting to the boy next him, as the Lion rooters stood up in a body and cheered. “Run for it, Don! Watch out for Matt! Look out there, Don! Hooray, they didn’t get you that time!” In these and like phrases, the boys in front of Betty and others expressed their feelings, while the lad on his way was trying to escape his enemies, all too ready to recover from their surprise and take measures to stop him.

Betty’s view was unimpeded. Now a tackler launched himself at Don. Oh! Don stumbled a little! No, he got away and the tackle clutched the air. “He’s free! he’s free!” cried Carolyn, jumping up and down.

Gaining a little on the pursuit, running with more confidence, the “Don” sped down the long path toward the goal, the ball held tightly. Cheers arose and the fierce roar of Lyon High in rejoicing followed the running lad. A few Eagles still followed—but Don had escaped! The “mysterious” player was to divide honors with Freddy in the championship game and equal the number of yards won by the Eagles’ quarterback, Jim Pickett.

“He’s made it! He’s made it!” shouted Ted, embracing the boy next to him, as Don completed his spectacular play and won his touchdown. “Girls—what did I tell you, Betty! Now watch the Lions do a snake dance!”

The Lions’ second touchdown put them ahead and after that there was nothing but grim effort, defence, blocking and wary play on both sides until the quarter ended. The Eagles, indeed, tried one or two desperate chances in the hope of scoring, but the Lions, with equal determination, blocked their every attempt, while an almost silent stadium of spectators watched closely every play.

Miss Heath was behind her friend as they climbed the steps of the stadium, but happening to pass Betty and Carolyn, she gave Carolyn a meaning smile and reached for Betty’s hand to give it a squeeze.

“She can’t say anything, to gloat over our victory, of course,” said Carolyn, “but I can’t help be mean enough to be gladder because that other teacher was so sure we were defeated!”

“What about the Don now, Betty?” asked Peggy. “If he isn’t so ‘slick’ as some of the boys in dressing up, he was ‘slick’ in winning the game for us, wasn’t he?”

“Oh, the Don’s all right!” said Betty. And just then she felt a hand at her elbow. It was Ted, who thus boosted her up a few steps, telling her that the plan was to make “them” feel secure and then “spring Don.” “So long, girls—good game, wasn’t it?” Ted finally inquired, leaping up the rest of the way and again joining the boys.

A tired but happy Betty clung to the straps of the crowded street car on the way home. Doris was riding home in an automobile, with the little daughter of a neighbor, but Dick grinned at Betty from the far end of the car and joined her when they left it at their corner.

“Say, did you ever see a fellow as heavy as that foreign fellow looks run like that? But he isn’t quite as slippery as Freddy. They might have caught him if they hadn’t been so surprised. What became of Doris? I didn’t see her there at all. I hope she didn’t miss it.”

“No; Marie’s folks were there, with her and Marie, and I saw Doris getting into their car while we were waiting for the street car.”

“Just to think! We’re the champions of the scholastic what-you-call it. Didn’t I yell, though at the last shot, when the last quarter was over and the game ours!”

CHAPTER IX—SHOWING OFF LYON HIGH

The game that won the championship for the Lyon High team passed into history without much effect upon Betty's relations to any one. It must be said that the Lyon High boys and girls could not always forbear to mention their victory in the presence of their rivals from the other school and were immediately dubbed too "cocky" over the "accident" or "trick" which permitted the result. But argument died out in the interest of other things and the football season closed at the usual time.

The next bit of excitement for Betty was the visit of her friends from home. "Please arrange," she wrote to Janet, "to come in time to visit the school on Wednesday at least. Of course, I could take you to see the buildings; but it will be so much more interesting for you to see them full of all of us. And I can introduce you to the girls and everything.

"You must meet Carolyn and Peggy, that I've told you about, and then there are such a lot of other nice girls; and we'll probably have an auditorium session Wednesday morning with something or other that you would enjoy seeing go on. It isn't going to hurt you to miss a day or two of school—please! Get the teachers to let you make it up and tell 'em why."

In consequence, two bright-eyed and inwardly excited girls descended from their car at the railway station, to find Mr. Lee meeting the crowds that were hurrying along with their bags inside by the long train; and Betty was close to the iron gates, watching with eager look to catch the first glimpse.

Betty had not known Sue as intimately as Janet, but she had always liked her and Sue belonged to her Sunday school class as well as to her class in school. At any rate Sue was as warmly received as Janet and tongues went rapidly indeed on the way home.

"Tell me everything," Betty had said, and in reply Janet had suggested that Betty "show them everything." But the sights had

already begun, for Mr. Lee went home by a roundabout way to drive through one of the most beautiful parks, from which they could see the river and its scenery and villages on the other side. He also drove past the high school which Betty attended and Betty was quite satisfied with the exclamations of her friends.

“I met Father down town,” Betty explained, “for I went right down after school, with some of the girls, and we had a soda. Then I went to Father’s office and waited for him to be ready. Did you girls miss much school?”

“Only this afternoon, and tomorrow, of course,” Sue answered. “Janet’s father drove us to Columbus, so we caught this train.”

“It’s pretty yet, isn’t it?” remarked Janet, looking about at the trees and bushes in the park, “and not a bit of snow.”

“We had a wee bit one day; but you can notice quite a difference, one of the girls said, between the climate here and where we used to live.”

“Doesn’t that sound awful, Janet?” asked Sue, “where she used to live!”

“But then you couldn’t visit me here, you know,” Betty hastened to say, and Janet smilingly replied “Sure enough.”

“Anyhow, you still own your house and the lot next to it, don’t you?” queried Sue.

“I guess so—don’t we, Father?” answered Betty, who did not pay much attention to business affairs, and Mr. Lee nodded assent as he drove rapidly along the boulevard, now homeward bound.

“Do you know, Betty,” said Janet a little later, when they were almost home, “I never was inside of an apartment house!”

“I never either,” laughed Betty, “till I came here; but we don’t live in a real apartment house. Ours is what they call a ‘St. Louis.’ And don’t you know when one of the girls called it that—her own place, I mean—I thought she said she lived in St. Louis! I didn’t like to

ask her to explain how she lived in St. Louis and went to school here, so I kept still and afterwards heard somebody else speak of a St. Louis flat!”

“I’m going to keep still, too,” said Janet, with some firmness. “You shan’t be ashamed of your friends from the ‘country.’”

Mr. Lee spoke now, with a kind smile. “Betty isn’t one to be ashamed of two such nice girls, and moreover, girls, I think that you may vote for the country, or at least the lovely little village that is still home to us, when you see how every one except the wealthy must live in the city. I own to my wife that there are some conveniences and advantages. She rather likes it now. But it’s pretty crowded and unless you like that, the small town is better. Fortunately we live away from the street cars, a few squares, so you may be able to sleep at night.”

“Mer cee,” exclaimed Janet. “But I shan’t mind not sleeping—I’m not sure I could anyway. Just to think of being here with you, Betty!” and Janet squeezed Betty’s arm in anticipation.

“Here we are,” cried Betty just then, and Mr. Lee, driving in, ordered them facetiously to “pile out.”

They “piled,” while Dick and Doris, still disappointed that they, too, had not been permitted to meet Janet and Sue, came running out, followed by Amy Lou, whose mother was trying to hold her back or at least to throw something around her to protect her from the frosty air. “O, Janet, it’s going to be such a glorious Thanksgiving!” exclaimed Sue in Janet’s ear, as she followed her up the steps and into the house. And Betty was crying to the welcoming mother, “O, Mother, they can stay over Sunday and don’t care if they miss school on Monday!”

“Well, isn’t that fine,” warmly responded the hostess. “I’m glad, too, to see the girls from the old home and thankful to have room enough to tuck you away. Take the girls back to your room, Betty, and have them get ready for dinner. Doris, you may set the table if you will, and Betty will help me take up the dinner presently.”

This was the beginning. On Wednesday morning, Betty took her guests to school with her, for Janet, particularly, wanted to visit a few of the classes. Sue told Betty that she could “dump her any place” if she liked. Impressed with the numbers and the apparent complexity of the system, the girls visited one or two classes, met Betty’s home room teacher and the others, in a hasty way between classes, and then waited for Betty in the auditorium or the library, where there was much to interest them.

There was an auditorium session, with a few exercises appropriate to the Thanksgiving season and then a brief organ recital by a visiting organist, whom the principal had secured for a real treat to the entire school.

“Oh, I’m so glad that you heard our big organ,” said Betty as she took them to the library to leave them there while she went to her last class before lunch.

“And it was great to see that immense room filled with nobody but high school pupils, and their teachers, of course,” added Janet, “only—only, I believe, Betty, that I’d be too confused. Some way, I like the little old high school at home, and we have such a pretty building, even if it is small.”

“Oh, you’d get used to it,” Betty assured Janet. “I have, and still, there’s something in what you say, of course. Now I’ll be right up to take you to lunch; it’s on the floor just above the library, you know, and I’m going to bring Carolyn and Peggy along so we’ll sit together at lunch and talk. Don’t you think they’re sweet?”

“Peggy’s a perfect dear,” promptly Sue replied, “and Carolyn is too nice for words, simply adorable.”

After this tribute, the girls followed Betty into the library, where Betty spoke to the librarian in charge and took them to a seat at one of the tables. “You can look at the books, if you want to,” she whispered. “I spoke to Miss Hunt, so it will be all right.”

The time did not drag, for boys and girls were coming and going, or sitting at the tables to read or examine books. The girls felt a little timid about investigating any of the shelves, but the pleasant librarian came to speak to them and to suggest where they might find books of some interest. Accordingly, each with a book spent a little while in reading, though, it was hard to put their minds on anything requiring consecutive thought.

And now bright faces peeped in, for Janet and Sue sat not far from the door. Betty was beckoning and leaving the books upon the table, the two guests joined Betty, Carolyn, Peggy and Kathryn Allen, whom they had not met.

“This is Kathryn Allen, girls,” said Betty in the breezy, hurried way made necessary by the rapid movement of events. “I’ve told her who you are. Let’s hurry in and see if we can get places together. Mary Emma Howl and said she’d try to save places for us at that table by the window that we like. She’s in line now. Look at that long line already! I’m glad we happened to have first lunch, Janet, since you’re here.”

“What is ‘first lunch,’ Betty? Do you have to take turns?”

“Yes. There are several periods. Father says that that is the only thing he doesn’t like about this school, that there isn’t enough time to eat without swallowing things whole. But it isn’t as bad as that, really; and most generally we don’t try to eat a big meal. Still, things are so good, and you get so hungry, you know, especially if you can’t eat a big breakfast.”

“I don’t like all your stairs,” said Sue, “but I suppose it can’t be helped. I guess your mother’s right—you need wings.”

“Oh, you get used to where rooms are and it isn’t so bad. Of course, the building does spread out awfully and up the three stories and basement. And by the way, we can eat all we want to this time, for I saw Miss Heath and told her that I had company, and if I was a little late to the first class would she give me a chance to make

it up—and she was in an awful hurry and said, maybe without thinking, that I could.”

The tables did look tempting. “First lunch” saw the whole array of pretty salads and desserts, the chief temptations to the pupils, the steaming meats and vegetables, so good in cold weather. Cafeteria fashion, the long line passed, choosing what to put on their trays, and oh, the noise, within the concrete floors and walls! Sue said to Janet, as they walked along, that she was fairly deafened; but she had no sooner sat down with the other girls at the table where places had been successfully held for them by Mary Emma, then she began “shouting” with the rest to be heard.

Betty saw to it that her guests had a good selection of viands, for neither Sue nor Janet were inclined to take enough, not wanting to run up the price for their young hostess. “Mer cee, Betty, do you want to kill us?” asked Janet as Betty placed a particularly toothsome looking fruit dessert in her tray, in addition to the modest piece of pie which she had herself selected.

“Oh, no, not yet, Janet. Remember the turkey we’re going to have tomorrow; but you must have nourishment!”

Carolyn’s tray was slimly furnished, Janet thought, and she wondered if she could not afford to get more; or did she just like desserts? Peggy had meat, dressing and gravy and a fruit salad, of which she began to dispose with some haste, though daintily enough. Sue and Janet concluded that they must not look around too much, though the surroundings were so interesting, but apply themselves to the contents of their trays, not a difficult task, since everything was so good.

“Is there anything else you’d like, girls? I can go back as easily as not,” said Betty, pouring milk from a bottle into her glass.

“No, indeed,” answered both the girls together. “We have too much now,” added Janet.

“If you can hear what I say,” called Carolyn across the table, around whose end the girls had gathered, “will you, Janet and Sue, come with Betty to our house Friday evening after dinner? Say about half-past seven or eight o’clock? I’ll call up, too, Friday some time. I’m going to have a few of the boys and girls to meet your cousins, Betty.”

“Oh, how lovely, Carolyn, but I should have the little party myself. I can’t let you do it. I was going to ask you and Peggy and Mary Emma and several other girls for Saturday. I had to wait to make sure that the girls really got here, you know.”

“Well, that would be just as nice as can be, Betty. I’d love to come, but I know such a lot of the boys and girls, so please come to our house.”

“We could do both, then,” said Betty.

“All right, we’ll see about it, then,” assented Carolyn. “Oh, yes, Chet, see you right after school!”

Carolyn had turned to answer Chet Dorrance, who spoke to her, tipping his chair and leaning back from the next table. A crowd of boys there were not uninterested in the little group of girls, whose demure glances had been cast in their direction occasionally.

“That’s Budd, Janet, next to Chet,” Betty was saying, “and Kathryn’s brother Chauncey is right across at that other table, the boy that just sat down there with his tray. They’re all sophomores. But there’s a freshman bunch at the next table. I told you about Budd and Chauncey and some of the rest when I wrote you about Carolyn’s house party, didn’t I?”

“Maybe you did, Betty, but I can’t remember, only about those you ‘rave’ about, like Carolyn.”

“I imagine that you’ll meet a lot of them at Carolyn’s. Isn’t it wonderful of her to entertain for us? I think I did say to her not to have too much planned for Saturday and that I was hoping that nothing would happen to keep you girls from coming. I was pretty

scared about it when I heard from Sue that her mother was half sick; but you did come, thank fortune!”

It was more easily possible for bits of conversation with one person to be held, since when more were included it was necessary to raise the voice. The general conversation and laughter, the jingle of silver and the clatter of trays and dishes seemed to be louder than the numbers served would justify, although there was no special carelessness among the boys and girls, and oversight made rude scuffling or trick playing impossible, had there been any temptation or time for it. “It’s just this big, echoing room, Sue,” said Janet, for both visitors noticed it. “But it’s lots of fun, and such good eats for next to nothing, according to what Betty says.”

“They just charge enough to cover expenses, of food and help and so on,” said Betty, who had turned back from talking to Kathryn in time to hear this last. “How was the pie, Janet?”

“Grand; good as home-made.”

“It is ‘home-made.’ I wish we had time to go back and see all the place they have to cook and bake. Well, we can’t do everything in one day, can we?”

“We are doing enough,” replied Janet. “My brain is whirling as it is, going from one thing to another and trying to remember who is who and what is what.”

“Don’t try,” said smiling Betty. “I’ll tell you again, or remind you. I felt the same way at first, and remember that I had to learn to live it and do it—them—everything!”

On the way out Betty had a chance to point out, figuratively speaking, both Freddy Fisher and the “Don” of football fame, and she almost ran into Ted Dorrance in the hall. “Say,” said he, catching Betty’s shoulder for a moment, “we seem to run each other down, don’t we? Oh, beg pardon!” The last expression was addressed to Janet, whom he had brushed against in avoiding Betty

and a crowd of teachers that were coming from the opposite dining hall, sacred to the instructors of youth.

“Please stop a second and meet my friends that are visiting me—Miss Light and Miss Miller, Mr. Dorrance, a prominent junior, girls.”

Betty smiled up at Ted as she added the last in complimentary fashion, but he shook his head at her, pleasantly acknowledging the introduction. “She doesn’t say what I’m prominent for, you notice,” but with a salute from his hatless forehead, Ted was gone. There was no standing on ceremony when school hours were on and everything, even lunch, ran on schedule.

“I’ll not have to hurry as much as I thought, girls, since it was first lunch. I’m about crazy today, I suppose, with delight at your being here and wanting you to know about everything and everybody. What would you like to do while I’m in class and study hall? Want to visit both of them?”

“How many periods have you this afternoon, Betty?”

“Three, but one of them’s in gym.”

“All right, we’ll visit study hall and gym and stay in the library or auditorium during your class.”

So it was decided. “Gym” proved most interesting. Study hall was full of possibilities, Sue said, for it was interesting to see whether this one or that one studied or not, to guess who they were and to recognize those whom they met. And after the last gong had rung, how odd it was to pass through those crowded halls, where pupils were putting away their books in their lockers, getting their wraps from them, and going to their home rooms until dismissed. It was all on a bigger scale than in their home school. And the crowded street car was another feature, not so pleasant, perhaps.

But Betty looked out for the girls, to see that they had each a strap, until Chet and Budd and a freshman boy Betty knew, who were, happily, near, caught Betty’s eye and signaled the girls to come

where they were sitting, half rising, yet holding the seats until the girls should be ready to slide into them.

“Now, then,” said Chet, hanging to a strap in the aisle, after a brief introduction to Janet and Sue, “what do you think of our school? I noticed you had company, Betty.”

“We’re quite overwhelmed by the school, really,” answered Janet, politely, and smiling up at the boy whose seat she was occupying. “But we have a good school, too, and I think you can learn anywhere.”

“I suppose you can,” said Chet, “if you work at it. Did you see the stadium?”

“Yes, and it’s just marvelous. I don’t wonder Betty raves over everything!”

This satisfied Chet, who did not much care for the remark about learning anywhere. “I’m invited to meet you at Carolyn’s Saturday, no, Friday night, so I’ll see you there. Yep, coming,” and Chet moved down toward a boy who had beckoned him.

Gradually the jam lessened, as one after another reached a stopping place. By the time Betty and her friends had reached their own stop, every one was seated. Budd was the last one to swing off, and like Chet he parted from them with a “So long, girls, I’ll see you Friday night.”

“Those boys must know you pretty well Betty,” said Janet.

“They do. Ever since Carolyn’s party.”

CHAPTER X—MORE FESTIVITIES

“Thanksgiving always means turkey and mince pie to me,” frankly said Dick, as he sniffed savory odors and executed a clog dance on the kitchen floor to the detriment of its bright linoleum.

“Scat!” said an unappreciative sister at the close of the brief effort. “This kitchen isn’t big enough for any antics.” But Betty was grinning and Janet, who was wiping dishes, tapped a toe in time. “We’re clearing the deck for Mother’s greatest efforts,” Betty continued. “Nobody can have the roast turkey just right as she can. Thanks, Janet. There’s the place to hang the towel. Now you girls get ready, while I peel the potatoes and do a few other things. Mother, shall I wash celery now?”

“Why, that will be very nice. You are bound to leave me nothing to do, I see.”

“That, my dear Mother, is your imagination and a beautiful dream. When we come home from church and find the turkey cooked and the potatoes ready to mash and the mince pie sizzling hot—yum, yum!” Betty was hanging up the dish pan and hurrying to put the celery in cold water.

“Church!” sniffed Dick, still hanging around.

“Just for that,” grinned Betty, “I believe I’ll urge Father to take you with us.”

“If you do,” threatened Dick, shaking a fist, though, grinning, as he disappeared altogether from his position in the kitchen door, and they heard him scampering down the hall.

“Now he’ll get out a book or something,” said Betty to Janet, “and settle down for awhile. The point is, we really think it better to have Doris, at least, at home, to amuse Amy Lou and keep her out of Mother’s way a little; and since they didn’t want to go to church with us, it’s all right. Oh, you are going to enjoy the service, I think. One of our very best preachers is to give the sermon at the sort of

union service of the churches; and it's in one of the very prettiest churches, too, with a big vested choir and everything! There will probably be some grand solo, or quartette, or something special, and we want to get there early enough to hear the chimes."

"Sue and I will get ready, then, right away—shall we?"

"Please, and I'll whisk into something and we'll be off in a jiffy, when Father's ready to go."

In such active fashion Thanksgiving Day began for this household and its guests, with everybody in fine spirits. The air was cold and Dick was hoping for snow. "Gee, I bet the boys are skating up home," said he as he followed his father to the garage.

"I doubt it," replied his father, "but you're not going to get as much snow and ice as you want here, I suppose."

Three happy girls, warmly clad, climbed into the machine with Mr. Lee and they were soon whirling on their way toward the church, whose service was almost as new to Betty as to her guests, with beautiful music and an impressive message. And then came the return to the warm house, the smiling mother with her face a little flushed from frequent bastings of the turkey, and the good old-fashioned Thanksgiving dinner, which makes every one thankful whether he was in that mood before or not.

As usual, Mr. Lee stopped to let his passengers enter by the front door, while he drove to the garage, and Betty was rather surprised to have her mother open the door for them, though probably the night latch was on. Mother kept things locked up as a rule, since coming to the city.

"Hang up your wraps here in the closet, girls," breezily directed Mrs. Lee, "and go into the living room to meet our guest."

"Guest!" thought Betty as she gave her mother an inquiring look. Who in the world had come?

"It is one of the boys that your Father knows, Betty," replied Mrs. Lee, speaking softly in reply to Betty's unspoken question. "It

seems he asked him to come for Thanksgiving dinner and forgot to tell me—so by all means make him welcome. I think he goes to one of the high schools and works in between times.”

Betty, wondering, and guessing at the cordiality which her mother must have used to cover up her ignorance and make the boy feel at home, followed her mother from the hall to see a tall, rather heavy boy rise and stand a little awkwardly to be introduced. Dark eyes, unsure of a welcome, met Betty’s. Why—why, it was the “Don!”

From the rather sober, polite girl who was ready to make a stranger welcome, Betty became a wide-awake, welcoming friend. Her mother, in a low but cordial voice, was mentioning a name that Betty had heard but never remembered, and then she was giving the girls’ names to the guest.

“Why, Mother, this is the hero of our championship game!” Betty was stretching her hand out with a smile. “Does Father know it? And where is Dick? He ought to be worshipping at your shrine!” Betty hardly knew what she was saying in her surprise. The other girls, following Betty’s example, shook hands with the tall lad, who seemed to lose a little of his shy attitude under this complimentary greeting. It was nothing so unusual, to be sure, for the Lees to have some lonesome body to share their Thanksgiving dinner, yet her father’s forgetfulness and the surprise of his acquaintance with the “Don” were two unexpected features of the situation. But trust Mother to handle it!

“Dick went off somewhere almost as soon as you went to church, Betty,” Mrs. Lee was saying. “I’m glad to know that he will find a friend in Mr. Balinsky. Please excuse us all for a few minutes. I’m going to ask the girls to help me take up our dinner. Mr. Lee will be in shortly and Amy Lou will keep you company, I suppose.”

Amy Louise, who had reached the point of showing one of her picture books to the “big boy,” soberly nodded assent. Doris was nowhere to be seen, but she was found cracking nuts for the top of

the salad and announced to Betty, “We have everything ready now, I think.”

“Well, you certainly have been a help to Mother,” said Betty warmly, “and did you know that Ramon Balinsky is the ‘Don’?”

“Why Betty Lee! How wonderful! No, I never saw him close enough at school; and then you couldn’t tell, on the field, in his football clothes! My, won’t Dick be simply stunned? I’m going to see where he is and call him!”

“His name has been in the school papers, but we’ve always called him the ‘Don’, so for a minute I didn’t know him, all dressed up, too, in his Sunday clothes, I suppose. He usually looks so dingy at school, but Mother says he works, so of course, poor kid!”

“Maybe he doesn’t have enough neckties and shirts, Betty,” added Doris, in a sepulchral whisper. “Bet he’ll like our dinner all right!”

Dick needed no rounding up, for he breezed into the back door just then, to be told by Doris to, “just go into the front room and see who’s going to be here for dinner!” And the girls busy with trips back and forth, from kitchen to dining room and dining room to kitchen, smiled to hear the whoop with which Dick welcomed the older boy. It was not loud, but enthusiastic, and an immediate sound of conversation in Dick’s boyish treble and Ramon’s deeper tones indicated, so Betty whispered, that Dick was finding out everything that they “wanted to know but wouldn’t ask.”

Mr. Lee came in from the garage and held up his hands as he heard Ramon’s voice. Then he pretended to be frightened and whipped outside again into the little back hallway where the refrigerator stood. “You are forgiven, sir,” laughed his wife. “Come and carry the platter with the turkey to the biggest place I’ve prepared, and do not drop it on pain of dire consequences!”

“Honestly, Mother, I forgot all about it, but you don’t mind, do you?”

“Not a bit. I supposed he was some lonesome youngster that you had found, but you can tell me all about it later.”

“I knew you would have a big dinner as usual”—but Mr. Lee now accepted the hot platter with the turkey and reserved further remarks for the future. And soon both young and older heads were bowed around the long table while Mr. Lee said grace.

“Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for these evidences of Thy goodness and bounty and for all the mercies of the year—for health and strength and work and human love and friendship. Bless us all as we offer our gratitude. Forgive us if we have not served Thee well, strengthen us for the future, and keep us in Thy care, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

Ramon’s solemn black eyes looked respectfully at Mr. Lee as he raised his head after the blessing; but Amy Lou made them all smile by a long sigh and a little leap in her high chair as her father picked up the carving knife and fork. There was plenty of conversation at once, in which Ramon could take part if he liked; but no one expected anything, it was evident, and the chief interest, it must be said, centered in the good dinner, with compliments to the cook. Never was there such good dressing, or a turkey so well done and juicy at the same time. The cranberry jelly was a success and Betty’s mashed potato was a marvel of whiteness. It was fortunate that there was plenty of gravy. Janet had brought the spiced peaches from the home town and felt much honored that Ramon liked them better than the cranberry jelly with his turkey, not that he said so, of course.

As usual, there were too many things, but there would be other meals, as Mrs. Lee said when her husband told her that nobody was eating “the other vegetables” and that dressing and mashed potato would have been enough. Ramon cast a look at the great dish of grapes, oranges and other fruit on the buffet, with a little bowl of cracked nuts and a plate of fudge, and then viewed the hot mince pie before him. “You must have a piece of Mother’s pumpkin pie, too, Ramon,” said Betty. “She always bakes pies for

the suppers and things at home, church suppers, I mean. And do you remember, Mother, the time we had the dining hall at the fair?"

"Do I?" smiled Mrs. Lee. "Our aid society made enough money to buy new dishes and carpet the church, but oh, how we worked!"

"I think that it is cake where your Mother excels," said Mr. Lee, "but I suppose we shall not have any this noon."

"If you want it, Father," said Betty.

"We shall reserve that for our supper lunch, Betty," said Mrs. Lee, "and we want you to stay for that, Ramon."

"Thank you, madam—that would be too much, I'm sure. I expect one of the boys, I think. I—I ought to call him up, I suppose, for he was to come for me at three-thirty or four and I may not be able to get back to where I board by that time."

"Call from here, Ramon," said Betty. "Oh, Mother, I'm glad you did put those fat raisins in the mince meat!"

But all the conversation did not center upon the food. Mr. Lee drew out in the course of the dinner some facts from Ramon in which the girls were very much interested. He had, indeed, come to America directly from Spain, but his father was Polish and Ramon had seen Paderewski in Poland. He had attended school for several years in a small eastern town where he studied "English and American," he said.

"I was so behind in everything English, you see, that I had to be put in a lower grade at first than I would have been in in my own country; but I made three grades in one year because I could do the mathematics and such things; and so when I learned to read and speak your language pretty well, it was not so hard. A friend of my father's brought me here, but he died."

"Oh, do you understand all the football language now?" asked Dick.

“He certainly must, Dicky, or he wouldn’t have done what he did,” suggested Betty, who did not think that Dick should have asked that question. But Ramon only laughed a little.

“I know most of it now, Dick,” Ramon replied, “and I can stand being punched or kicked without wanting to knock the player down. Is that what you call ‘good sport’?”

“Yep,” said Dick. “That’s good football.”

“Do you expect to finish high school here?” kindly asked Mrs. Lee.

“If I can,” answered Ramon.

After dinner all but Betty and her mother went into the living room to visit; but the two made short work of putting away the food and making neat piles of the soiled dishes, and soon they joined the rest. Amy Lou was sleepy but would not leave the scene without a fuss. Consequently she was permitted to stay. Ramon called up the “boy,” who proved to be Ted Dorrance.

A little music and a few quiet games were all that the time afforded before Ted alighted from a big car and ran into the yard and up the steps to ring the doorbell. Betty answered the ring and friendly Ted strode in. “Can’t stay a minute,” said he, “the ‘Don’ here?”

“Yes, come in.”

“In a moment. Say, Betty, I’d like to have a hand in giving the girls a good time. How about a little fun tonight? Chet has an idea.”

“I’m sure we are free for anything, Ted, and it is good of you. Father and Mother say that Ramon must be brought back here for supper tonight, so why can’t you come, too? Or, I tell you what—would some of you come for a taffy pull? Come to supper, too, of course.”

“I couldn’t do that, Betty—had such a big dinner and all the folks are around at home. But do you give me leave to bring whom I can tonight?”

“I think so! Bring Louise and somebody else for Ramon.”

“Great idea. Let’s see, three of you, all freshmen?”

“Yes. The girls were in my class.”

“All right. It’s a surprise party, then, just as Chet had the nerve to suggest. Tell your mother and surprise the girls.”

“Glorious. I’m delighted that he thought of it. Do get Carolyn and Peggy if you can.”

“They already know about it, in case it is decided.”

“Oh, then you really meant to do something!”

“She doubts my word! Listen—don’t get refreshments ready, unless you have the stuff to make the taffy. I don’t know whether the girls could bring that or not and the stores are closed. We were just going to order ice-cream sent around, and what else we could get.”

“Listen, Ted, yourself. Mother has the most delicious cake, extra big, because we baked up for company, you know. Have the ice-cream if you must, but not another thing, please.”

What fun it was to plan something with Ted! Betty felt quite grown up. First they had a senior to dinner, now here was a junior, with probably Louise coming and loads of fun ahead!

The girls and Ramon were both wondering what could detain Ted and Betty in the hall, but Ramon hesitated to rise until Ted should appear. That he did at once, however, with a last word to Betty. He was properly respectful in meeting Betty’s father and mother and bowed a friendly greeting to the girls, Dick, Doris and little Amy Lou, who had wakened and was sleepily arranging a row of tiny dolls on the window sill.

“The boys have something on hand and want the ‘Don’ this afternoon. I’ll deliver him in two or three hours or so. Supper will not be too early, will it?”

“Not after a late dinner,” Mrs. Lee assured Ted, “but it would be better to ‘deliver’ our guest by seven at least.”

“Before that, I promise you,” answered Ted. “Don’t forget, Betty, our little scheme.”

“How could I?” replied Betty.

CHAPTER XI—THE “SURPRISE” PARTY

“What is the great scheme, Betty?” asked Doris.

“I’m not telling, Dodie,” said Betty, “but you will know before long perhaps. It’s just something the boys and girls are going to do. By the way, Mother, may I consult you about something? I need permission for something not to be divulged as yet.”

“You are making us curious, Betty,” lightly said Janet. “Come on, Sue, try that new tune of yours on Betty’s piano.”

Mr. Lee had left the room and Dick followed him to ask that the car be gotten out for a ride. “All right, son. Perhaps the girls and Mother will like to go.”

Betty and her Mother escaped to the kitchen, where they started on the dishes, hoping that the sounds of china would not be noticeable in the front room. The visitors were only too good about offering their services. “You must go, Mother, with Amy Lou, because you’ve been in working all day,” said Betty, with decision, “and that will never do on Thanksgiving. Besides, there’s something else on hand and I don’t know what you’ll think of it!”

“Confess, Betty,” said Mrs. Lee, smiling and making a fine suds for her glasses and silver.

“First tell me that you’ll go, Mother, for I’ll stay and finish these up and begin to fix things for our supper.”

“All right, child. I’ll go. Now what?”

Betty at once told about the surprise party “all rather on the spur of the moment, Mother, at least as far as having it tonight is concerned. And I think Ted is in it only because he found Ramon here and thought it would be good for him to stay.”

“Why do you think so—because Ted is older?”

“Yes. But it gives him a chance to take Louise to something different, you see. I think that Ted has a sort of ‘case’ on Louise Madison.”

“I see. Yes, Betty, I think we can manage it. Haven’t you any idea how many are coming?”

“No—that’s the mischief, but I suppose not a great many.”

“We are well prepared for things to eat. If the cake does not last as long as we thought, it does not matter. Your friends will be welcome. There is that fruit cake that I baked for Christmas, too, and we can use that if we run short. We’ll make a hot drink and the cake and ice-cream, with taffy, ought to be enough in all conscience, especially on Thanksgiving. If your father is ready before we finish, whisk off the tablecloth, Betty, and use the lunch things for supper. But don’t concern yourself about the meal. Just get your room ready for the girls to take their wraps to and look around to pick up anything that is out of order. Fortunately, Amy Lou will want to go to bed before they come.”

“Yes, and everything is all fixed up for company, even if it doesn’t exactly stay put with all of us. Oh, you’re so nice, Mother! It’s such a relief!”

At this point, Janet and Sue ran out to the kitchen and took aprons from the hooks upon the wall. “Did you think that we wouldn’t want to help?” asked Sue, reproachfully. “Let me wipe and you put away, Betty, for I don’t know where things go.”

“Well, since you insist,” laughed Betty, pulling a dry towel from a drawer. “Come help me take off and fold up the big tablecloth, Janet, and a lot of the dishes and nearly all of the silver can go back on the table. Where are the other linen things, Mother?”

“Same drawer as usual. After lunch we’ll take out the leaves and,”—but Mrs. Lee did not finish, for she had nearly told the reason for making more room in the dining room. The two large rooms ought to hold quite a number of boys and girls, she thought.

But Mother was tired, as Betty had surmised, and she knew that she needed to get away for a few minutes at least.

Mr. Lee had been obliged to do something to the car, or change a tire, though no one inquired what, when, after just time enough to get the main part of the dishes done, they heard a honking in front. "That couldn't be Ted back with Ramon, could it?" thought Betty, rather panicky. But it was only the family car honking for passengers. All was well!

"Aren't you coming Betty?" asked Janet, surprised.

"No, Janet, I want to start things and some one ought to be here in case Ramon comes back early. He has to come when they bring him, you know. Moreover, if you all go, it is just as well not to be too crowded."

Betty was glad to be by herself for a little while. She finished putting the kitchen in order, washing the last pan. Then she flew back to the bedroom to see that dresser and all were neat and to hang away a few things that she and the girls had left out. She decided that there was a prettier set of lace covers for the little dressing table and put them out. She hoped that the girls would not notice particularly and she looked up some embroidered guest towels, ready to whisk them into place when the guest should first arrive. Or her mother could put on the finishing touches in the bath room if she were welcoming the crowd. Betty felt a little excited, wanting her friends to like her home and knowing that some of them, Carolyn among others, had so much more room. It was hard to be so crowded. No, it wasn't. It was all right when they were by themselves, and she was sure that anybody that was anybody would like her for herself! It was Betty's first feeling of responsibility for the appearance of a house, a temporary one, to be sure. She had been accustomed to do what she was told, but the roomy old place "at home" had no such problems as this apartment.

There was a ring of the bell before Betty had thought about the light supper, though to be sure her mother had said she was to feel no responsibility for that. Betty rushed to the door, to find Ramon there. Again he looked apologetic and hesitatingly said, "I'm afraid I'm too early, but Ted and the boys brought me on. Ted is driving around to see one or two of the girls."

"Come right in," cordially Betty invited. "Sit down and read the paper or something till I start things a little in the kitchen. I think the earlier we get our supper, or lunch of a sort, out of the way the better, don't you? Or did Ted tell you what is going on?"

"Yes, he did," replied Ramon, as he obediently walked into the living room after having divested himself of his overcoat and hat. "Say, Miss Betty, we had such a wonderful dinner that you surely won't do much for supper, will you? I feel as if it's an imposition for me to come back, and yet,—"

"And yet what would be the use of going home and then coming right back to a party?" finished Betty.

"Well, that was it, of course; and then it is so homelike here and so different from what I have all the time."

"Do you really like it, then?" asked Betty, pleased.

"Who could help it? And now why couldn't I help be chef? It would be what you call fun. I could tell you of so many things that I have done since I came to your country, and I earned my meals one time in a restaurant. I do not always tell that to the boys and girls, for they do not understand, and yet my people in Spain and Hungary and Poland are of the best."

"Father thinks it is what you are, inside, that makes you," said Betty, nodding a determined little head. They were still standing just within the living room door.

"Oh, your father! He is a big man! I fix his car at the garage where I work after school, and before school, too. And he forgot to tell

your sweet mother and yet she made me welcome.” Ramon was smiling in amusement as well as appreciation.

“Oh, could you tell that?” Betty chuckled. “Mother thought that she had successfully concealed her surprise. But she was glad to have you come, you understand that, don’t you?”

“Yes, and all of you helped.”

“Well, now let’s see, Ramon. Come on into the kitchen and help me decide what we want. We’ve got a lot of that salad fixed and if you will crack a few more English walnuts we’ll fix a pretty big glass bowl of it and pass it instead of putting salad around at each place. Nobody could finish his salad at dinner time. And I’ll put on the lunch cloth or what-you-call-it—and you can set down all that fruit and the bowl of nuts on the buffet. My, imagine me bossing the gr-reat football hero of Lyon High, and a senior at that!”

Ramon only laughed at that and took the large apron, soberly offered him by a Betty with twinkling eyes, and tried to fasten it around himself. But he was not used to tying a bow in the back, Betty told him, so she would finish the operation. “Now see what an artist you are in the dining room first, Ramon.”

Thus Betty, while she arranged the linen pieces on the table, waved a hand at the buffet and flew into the kitchen herself. “Won’t they be surprised when they come back?” she called, appearing in the door with a whole head of lettuce in her hands. “And it will be fine to have you to help us make the table small after supper. Father always has to help with that because the table sticks and we can hardly push it together. Do you think you would be strong enough?”

Ramon gave Betty an amused look. “Yes, Miss Betty, I think I’m strong enough and I’d do anything for any of you!”

“Well,” sighed Betty, “I really don’t believe in having your company work, but under the circumstances it is a great help! You see Mother had been doing so much cooking, so I made her

promise to go out for a ride.” With this Betty disappeared from view, to wash the lettuce under the faucet and run into the pantry for the big glass dish or bowl.

Ramon finished arranging the fruit and nuts and went out into the kitchen declaring that he was no artist and that she could change anything that he had done. Betty managed to keep him busy, but it was only about fifteen minutes before the whole family arrived, Dick to utter another whoop at seeing his hero in an apron, and the girls to join the activities with much fun and lively conversation. Mrs. Lee was allowed only to supervise and make the coffee and Mr. Lee declared that he would not think of being underfoot in such a busy kitchen and dining room.

“The boy looks happy,” he said to his wife. “I’m glad I asked him to come. He’s a very sober, lonely chap, so far as home is concerned. He probably has a good enough time at school, especially since he made such a hit in football, as you tell me.”

“I wonder how he gets his lessons, if he works so hard,” said Mrs. Lee.

“How do any of them get their lessons?” asked Mr. Lee in return, “with all that is going on. It hasn’t hit Betty yet, thanks to our management.”

Young appetites were ready for the supper that spread so invitingly on the pretty table; for it was decided to set everything conveniently near, since they were their own servants. Then afterwards the girls quickly cleared the table, and Ramon, without remark and under Betty’s direction, took out the leaves and made the table small. Betty and Janet together at one end pushed against Ramon on the other. “It will give us more room and look better,” explained Betty to the girls, who were still ignorant of what was to come. Betty, too, was ignorant in regard to who was to come. She was as uneasy and restless as a girl could be and not show that something was on her mind. Ramon was wondering what excuse he could offer for staying so long, but it took some time to clear

away the supper and while Mrs. Lee told Betty to “go and entertain her guests and she would finish up the dishes,” Betty, by way of camouflage, said, “we could leave them till morning of course; but it will be nicer in the morning not to have them before us.” Sue rather wondered at Betty’s easy compliance.

At last the bell rang, not a steady ring with perhaps another, but a series of rings in rhythm. Janet and Sue looked up surprised from a puzzle that Betty had given them and Ramon to work out. But Ramon grinned and Betty laughed, running to the door. “Something’s up,” said Sue. “I suspected it!”

Laughter and greetings filled the hall. “S’prise Party!” called Peggy’s voice.

“Ted again!” exclaimed Janet, rising, “and Peggy Pollard and Carolyn Gwynne!”

And now they thronged in, bringing the cold air with them from the open hall door. The girls entered first, surrounding Janet and Sue, to shake hands in the spirit of fun and surprise, while Carolyn saw that the names of the girls were understood by Janet and Sue who might not have met them all or had not remembered their names. Carolyn was always thoughtful.

Betty, after telling the boys to leave their hats, caps and coats in the hall, came to the group of girls and led them back to the room where they could take off their wraps and powder their noses if they liked. Mother, bless her, had swiftly put on the finishing touches and the guest towels in the bath room after Amy Lou was in bed and the various washings up after supper were completed.

“Yes, Betty,” Carolyn excitedly told Betty, “we had thought of doing it and then pretty nearly gave it up because we weren’t sure of your liking it; and I hadn’t been in this ducky apartment before and wasn’t sure that you had room for a party. But when old Ted called up and told me what boys he’d rounded up, I telephoned then to the girls and we all met at Louise’s.”

So it was a “duddy apartment,” was it? Trust Carolyn’s generous soul. Betty was sure that Carolyn liked her for herself!

Naturally Ted had a “few souls” old enough for himself and Ramon. There was Louise Madison and a pretty junior named Roberta Ayers. The Harry Norris whom Betty had first seen with Ted Dorrance was there, a good friend, evidently, of a small, fair sophomore girl, Daisy Richards. It was rather unusual, of course, this mingling of ages or classes at a small party, but the invitation to Ramon was the cause of it all, and Betty was so glad to have Ted, who had been so “nice” to her, she thought, at a party in her house. Yet, of course, she had not given the invitations. Where would she have stopped if she had? For not all the girls and boys that she would have wanted were here.

Of the younger boys there was Chet Dorrance, Chauncey Allen, Brad Warren, Budd LeRoy, James Simmonds and two freshmen boys whom Betty scarcely knew, Andy Sanford and Michael Carlin, whom the boys called Mickey or Mike according to their fancy.

Janet and Sue found themselves surrounded by the group of boys when they came in from the hall and Betty had escorted the girls back to the bedroom. Ted did the honors of introduction, but it was only a few minutes before Betty was back and acting as hostess.

Mr. Lee had disappeared long since. Mrs. Lee was putting Amy Lou to bed at last accounts and the door of bedroom and dressing room was shut. Dick and Doris, feeling rather out of it, had moved into the kitchen till Betty, at last seeing everything started, thought of them and looked them up.

“No, Betty,” said Dick, “I don’t want to be introduced all around! But I’ll come into the dining room, if you want us, and talk to some of the boys, if it happens that way.”

“I’d like to have you at least see the fun and of course when the refreshments are served you must be with us. I’ll probably need you. Would you mind?”

“I’ll help,” said Doris. “It would look better.”

“So it would. And will you, Dick?”

“Yes.”

“And you can help pull the taffy. I do hope Mother will know how to cook it, though perhaps Louise knows.”

“I’ll tell her,” said Dick, and Betty felt relieved about the family. Everything was just all right! And Mother did know, she said.

Ted and Louise were good at starting games. Brad, however, prevailed upon to play some lively tunes upon Betty’s piano and the rest hummed to tunes or sang when there were words to the melodies.

Pencils and paper were called for by Louise Madison, who announced that five minutes, or less, would be given for every one to make words out of what would be given them when they were ready to commence. Betty hurried to get paper and as many pencils as the family could command. Fortunately, most of the boys carried pencils in their pockets, Dick and Doris had a supply of stubs among their school things, and with much whirling of the pencil sharpener in the kitchen, they were soon ready.

“And, O, Mother, won’t you please start the candy to cooking? It has to cool and be pulled after that, you know.”

“Yes, I know,” said Mrs. Lee, who rather regretted sacrificing the excellent syrup from the home town, so much better than that she bought in the city. But it was worth while, for Betty’s pleasure, and to entertain her friends, after all. “I will see to it and call you when it is ready. Luckily Amy Lou is sound asleep.”

But no sooner had Betty remarked to Louise, as she handed her the supplies, that her mother was starting the syrup than Louise cried, “Oh, I have to learn how to do that. I never pulled candy but once and it was such fun. Would your mother mind having me around?”

“I’m sure she wouldn’t.”

Immediately the kitchen was invaded by several of the girls, but all except Louise came back for the game. Ted, thereupon, told the "Don" to "call time," and he vanished in the direction of the kitchen, while a few smiles were exchanged among those that were left. "Ted will know how to boil candy for taffy after this," said Kathryn Allen.

"Well, somebody has to try and taste it." smiled Betty.

"Everybody ready!" called the "Don," quite at his ease by this time and with a real home atmosphere back of him. Had he not been the only one of them invited to the Thanksgiving dinner? And Mr. Lee had not known then that he was a football player, either. "Don" was not aware that that fact would have made no difference to Mr. Lee, one way or another, though he was not opposed to the game.

"Five minutes, Louise Madison said," he continued. "I will now announce the words. No proper names, or foreign words, Louise says. It's 'Lyon High School.'"

The scribbling began. "Can you use slang?" inquired Brad.

"Better not."

"Why isn't there an 'e' or a 't' in it?" remarked Janet. "I could make so many more."

Carolyn was writing fast and furiously. "Oh, give us five minutes more, so we can really think on each letter!" she begged.

"Of course a girl will beat," said Chauncey. "They're so much better in English!" Chauncey was pretending to scratch his head and think. In reality he was too lazy to bother with a game he did not enjoy, though too polite to beg off. He had sixteen words and that was enough. He bet nobody else had "solo."

But Chauncey was right on the girls' having the most words. Several boys had twenty words in the five minutes, but the girls made a business of it and Kathryn Allen had the largest number, though Andy Sanford, who was on the staff of the school paper, came within two of her number, forty-five.

“How did you do it so fast, Kathryn?” asked Mary Emma.

“I just went lickity-cut in any old order till I got through the letters that way. Then I went back again and did a little thinking that time and had the other few minutes to do it in. I took ly and li and lo, and did the same way with all the letters.”

“Did anybody else get solo?” asked Chauncey.

Alas, Kathryn had that, also holy, of which Chauncey had not thought.

A delicious odor of boiling syrup was commented upon by several. Louise, carrying the glass in which she had just tested the candy, came in to inquire who had the most words and how many. “All right, Kathryn gets the prize. Ted, where’s that prize?”

From the kitchen Ted appeared, hunting in his pocket for something.

“Nobody said there was to be any prize. That’s not fair,” said Sim, grinning.

“Would you have worked harder, Sim?” Ted inquired. “Here it is, Kathryn,” and he handed her a long, slim package tied with a blue ribbon. They all watched while Kathryn took the ribbon and tissue paper from what was so evidently a gift “of pencils. Two five centers, Kathryn,” said Ted. “May they bring you to fame.”

“You did well, Kathryn,” said Louise. “Somebody got fifty at a senior party the other day, but I’m not sure but we had more time.”

“Help me, Andy,” said Kathryn, “and let’s see how many we can get. Please give me all the papers, so we can compare.” Consequently, while Ted, accused of “licking his chops” over all the candy he was tasting, followed Louise out to the kitchen, and somebody started up the music again, Kathryn and Andy, helped by Betty, who gathered up all the other efforts, made a fairly full list. “I had just started on the s-h’s,” said Andy. A little later, after working as much out themselves as they felt like doing and

comparing their papers, they announced that they could read what they had if any one wanted to hear.

“Let’s hear them, Andy,” called Chauncey from near the piano. “How many words can the experts make out of the old school name?”

“Leaving out abbreviations, plurals, and odd words, here they are: lying, lingo, lion, lo, log, loch, loo, loon, loin; yon, yo-ho; O, oh, on, oil, oily, only; no, nigh, noisy; high, ho, hog, hill, hilly, holy, his, hollo, holly; I, is, in, ill, illy, inch, inly; go, gill, gin; scion, shiny, shin, shy, si, sigh, sign, silo, silly, sill, sin, sing, sling, soil, solo, soon, song, son, sol, so; chic, chill, chilly, chin, cling, clog, cog, coil, coin, colon, con, colony, coo, cool, coolly, coon, cosy, coy—and we forgot lynch, shoo and shooing, and Andy says that colin is another word for quail and that shoon is in the dictionary. So that’s over eighty and pretty good, we think.”

Chauncey started a mild applause and remarked that Andy and Kathryn would probably teach English some day.

“Not on your life,” said Andy, “though I may run a paper at that!”

Mrs. Lee could not help wondering if every one would be careful not to drop his candy while it was in the process of being pulled, but she said nothing and provided plenty of greased receptacles. Ted and Louise started several other quiet games while the candy was getting to the proper temperature. Then they began to try a small portion.

“How many want to pull?” asked Ted. Every one wanted to try “just a little bit,” which was well, or the supply would not have been sufficient. Those who had never pulled candy before were instructed, that there should be no sticky or slippery masses clinging more unhappily than wet dough to the greased hands—after a great performance of hand-washing in the kitchen.

All this made much laughter and general merriment, not to mention certain antics of Ted and Harry and a few of the younger boys. But

no one tried any “sticky” tricks, as Betty put it; for once upon a time, Dick had come home from a party with his hair full of taffy, horrible dictu!

In various stages of whiteness, the separate pieces of taffy were carefully laid upon the owner’s saucer or plate, with a clean white label bearing the “name of the author,” said Betty. Much had been eaten during the pulling, for some “preferred their taffy hot,” they claimed; but each was to take a little home, to prove that they had pulled it, Ted said. Oiled paper would be in demand, thought Mrs. Lee, who hunted up a roll to have ready.

But the ice-cream had arrived. The big white cake was cut, also a loaf of fruit cake; and in the chairs which had been gathered up and brought to the front of the house with the appearance of the guests, the girls and boys sat to eat slowly the cold cream, enjoy their cake and lay the foundations of future friendships or cement those already formed. The high school “case” between Ted Dorrance and Louise Madison was not particularly serious in its outlook; for Ted, like many boys, was admiring a girl older than himself just now, but some demure young miss of a younger class, or not in his school at all, was likely to take his later attention.

CHAPTER XII—A CHANGE OF PLAN

“Is this Mr. Gwynne’s residence?” asked Betty, a little timid, for a deep masculine voice had answered her ring at the telephone.

“Yes,” the response came, pleasantly.

“May I speak to Carolyn, please? It is Betty Lee.”

“I’ll call Carolyn.” There was a few moments of waiting.

“Lo, Bettykins. I was just going to call you.”

“Were you? What were you going to tell me?”

“You say what you were going to first.”

“I’d rather not.”

“Please.”

“Well, though I just hate so to tell you what I’m going to.”

“So do I hate to tell you!”

Betty’s little laugh, came to Carolyn over the wire.

“Wouldn’t it be funny if it is about the same thing! Why Carolyn, I’m just sick about it, but I don’t see how we can come to your house tonight. Father has to have a conference or something tonight down town and can’t drive us out to your place. He’s staying down for dinner somewhere, you know. So there’s no one to take us and Mother doesn’t think it’s safe for us to go on the car and then walk as far as we’d have to, especially coming home.”

“That would be all right with our putting you on the car here. But really, Betty, it is a sort of relief, because I was wondering how to tell you that I can’t have the party at all! Sister’s having the house both nights, and besides, I was going to have you at least taken back home, so your father wouldn’t have to come for you, but the cars will be in use, too. It was too bad of my sister not to tell me and Mother did not happen to say anything till this morning when she was asking my sister what she wanted for decorations.

I said, ‘Why, Mother, didn’t you tell me I could have a party?’ and Mother looked startled. ‘Why so I did! I hope you haven’t everybody invited!’

“So then I made it as nice for her as I could and said I thought I could change it to an afternoon one, and Betty, since you had that gorgeous party at your house, won’t you let me have you and some of the other girls at our house Saturday, tomorrow afternoon? Please. I’ve telephoned the boys that my party had to be postponed, so this will be a ‘hen party.’ I’ll have some sort of a party in the Christmas vacation, perhaps, to make it up to the boys, not to mention liking the fun myself.

“Will you mind awfully, Betty?” Carolyn’s voice was both regretful and persuasive.

“Why—no, Carolyn—only it isn’t necessary for you to have us at all, you know, and I’ve invited all the other girls.”

“I know how we can fix that, easy as pie, Betty. I’ll call all of them up—I know whom you were going to have, you know, and I’ll tell them that you and I are entertaining together at our house!”

“We-ll, but you’ll have to let me really help, you know, get the refreshments and everything.”

“I’ll see about that—there will be such oodles around, with Sister’s two parties, and we’ll have all the benefits of her spuzzy decorations and won’t hurt a thing, you know. Let’s have it a thimble party. Didn’t I see you making something for Christmas?”

“Yes. I brought a hanky I’m hemstitching for Mother in school and worked on it a little while in between lunch and class. It’s so hard to get a chance without her catching me at it at home.”

“Bring it along and finish it up, then, Betty. Is it settled, then?”

“Are you sure you want it that way?”

“Sure; and Mother will feel better about it, too.”

“Very well, Carolyn. I’m sure Janet and Sue will be delighted to come, and of course I shall.”

Thus it happened that Betty and her guests enjoyed an excellent moving picture, censored by Mrs. Lee, on Friday afternoon, with attendant pleasure of favorite sundaes and shopping in the big stores; and they had the evening quietly at home, early to bed this time, to catch up for the night before. “It is a good deal of fun with those boys,” said Janet, “but I think that it will be more restful tomorrow at Carolyn’s without them.”

“And you will love Carolyn’s home, Janet,” replied Betty, though laughing at Janet’s expression.

A soft snow fell that night. In the morning the girls looked out upon a beautiful world of white, soon to be spoiled in the city by the traffic and the soot from the good furnace fires that kept the people warm. But at Carolyn’s that afternoon little had occurred to lessen the loveliness of the snow scene. Beautiful evergreens drooped a little with the weight upon their branches. Drifts piled here and there by bushes that seemed to bear feathery blossoms. It was the first “real snow,” Dick said, and welcome, particularly to the children.

Betty had not expected so many girls, but here were not only those whom she had invited to her expected party but a number of others. It was very satisfactory. Now Janet and Sue would know just about all the girls that she wanted them to meet.

Opinions might differ about the afternoon’s being “restful.” But it was as restful as girls of high school age would be likely to want it to prove. Janet and Sue were impressed with Carolyn’s lovely home, inside and out, and declared that seeing it with the snow must be almost as good as seeing it with its flowers. Carolyn brought all the girls whom they had not met to each of them and although they did settle down with their bits of fancy-work or Christmas presents, Carolyn had them change their seats in order that groups of different girls might be together. Some things made

in the arts and crafts department of the school could be brought to be worked on and Betty saw articles that she “longed to make,” she said. Janet was always a little quiet when she was first with girls strange to her, but her lack of conversation was not noticeable in the babel of voices after the girls were fairly launched upon various topics that interested them.

“Yes,” replied Betty to one, “I’ve met the mysterious ‘Don.’ His real name is Ramon, but the boys all call him ‘Don’ now, I’ve noticed, so I suppose we might as well. He doesn’t mind, he said.”

“Did you hear that, Lucille? Betty Lee knows the ‘Don.’ Well, what is he, anyhow? Spanish, as they say. I always think that the boys may be ‘kiddin’ us, you know.”

“He really is part Spanish and part Polish and some of his people were Hungarian, at least they lived in Hungary for a while and he said they were ‘nice people.’”

“How did you know so much? Is there anything mysterious about him?”

“I was just talking to him one time. He doesn’t seem the least bit mysterious to me, but I don’t think that he has anybody related to him in this country. He just boards somewhere, I suppose.”

“Then that isn’t a bit interesting.”

“Oh, yes, it is, Lucille,” spoke Peggy Pollard. “Chet Dorrance said that the Don told Ted a little bit one time and there’s somebody that’s either after him or that he’s after, I think.”

“My, isn’t that news for you?” laughed Lucille. “Peggy, you’re always so clear!”

“Well, do you suppose that Ted would tell what the boy told him in confidence?”

“Ted must have told something.”

“Couldn’t Chet overhear it, maybe?”

“Then he is really mysterious, you think, Peggy.”

“Yes. I asked him last night if he was mysterious and he said he was!”

There was a general laugh at this. “Peggy’s drawing on her imagination,” said Mary Emma.

“Where did the Don take you last night, Peggy?” queried Lucille, “to a picture show?”

“No, but he was at the same surprise party I went to,” and Peggy gave a mirthful glance in Carolyn’s direction.

“Well, if Don as the boys call him isn’t mysterious, you are, so let’s change the subject.”

Peggy had thought that with so many other girls, about twenty in all, Betty might not like to have the surprise party talked over; or it might be that some one would feel hurt at not having been included in the sudden affair. For these reasons she was quite willing to have the subject changed.

“Wouldn’t this be a delicious night to go sledding, girls?” she asked, looking out from the large window near which she sat toward the broad expanse of snow that covered the lawn and stretched beyond the clumps of bushes and trees over the spacious grounds.

“Too soft, I’m afraid, Peggy,” said Mary Emma Howland. “It didn’t melt, though, when the sun came out. I wonder if it would pack and make enough. The wind had swept the ground pretty bare at our house, but hasn’t out here.”

“Perhaps it didn’t snow everywhere alike,” brightly suggested Kathryn Allen. “Sometimes it rains out in our suburb when my father says there isn’t a particle of rain down town.”

“The paper says that there is a blizzard out West,” said Carolyn. “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we did have sledding, next week anyhow?”

Betty explained to Janet and Sue what she had mentioned before, that the winters were considerably more mild here than their own and that everybody rejoiced when there were winter sports, making the most of them; but none of the three thought of any particular good time as on its way to them because of this unexpected snow. Soon came the pretty refreshments, when all the girls laid aside their work to enjoy them.

They were asked to go into another room, apparently a breakfast room, or a dining room on a small scale, Betty thought, where a round table was set for them. There a tiny turkey, which was a container for candy or nuts, stood at each place, connected with the central lights overhead by a gay ribbon. Betty's place card bore an Indian on snowshoes, a wild turkey over one shoulder and a bow in one hand.

"I 'spect there's some turkey in this 'chicken salad,' don't you, Betty?" said Janet next to her.

"Carolyn always has such lovely things," replied Betty, though she had been entertained there but once before. But this was perfect for an "afternoon tea." Instead of tea they drank cocoa, however, and last they were served to tiny ice-cream roses and delicious little cakes with pink, white or chocolate frosting.

"I've done nothing but eat good things since I came to this city," Sue declared after they came home, "and we've had enough different kinds of fun to last all winter! No, thank you, Mrs. Lee, I don't believe we can eat a speck of supper, or dinner, whichever you call it here."

"We might sit down with them, girls," Betty suggested, "for we didn't really have a heavy meal at Carolyn's!"

But Betty had scarcely gotten seated at the home dinner table than she rose to answer the telephone. "Oh, who is it? I can't quite understand. The telephone buzzes a little. Now I get it—oh, yes, Chet! Honestly? Why, yes, that would be great fun. I don't know, though."

Betty listened a little. "Wait a minute. I'll have to ask Mother and see what the girls say. Please hold the 'phone a minute."

The telephone was in the hall and Betty rushed around through the living room to where the family were. "Mother!" she began excitedly, "that was Chet Dorrance and he wants to know if we girls can go bob-sled riding tonight. It's freezing like everything and the boys have got water poured on some hill—this afternoon, you know, and the snow all packed down!"

"What boys are going and what hill is it, Betty?" inquired her father.

"Chet said that he and Chauncey Allen and Budd LeRoy would come after us. We can take the car, the street-car, he said, and get off almost right at the hill, anyhow the place where it is, one of the houses, I suppose, maybe a place like Carolyn's."

"Betty, I can't have you start in to go out with the boys in the evening."

"But this isn't like that, Mother. It's a big crowd, not so very big perhaps, but at least two bob-sleds and we take turns."

"Sure the hill doesn't deposit you near some car line or shoot you across one? I saw a kiddie nearly killed this afternoon shooting across a road, down hill, on his sled." Mr. Lee was interposing this remark.

Betty looked worried. "Chet is waiting on the line, Mother. Oh, I do want to go!"

"Suppose I talk to him, then, Betty," suggested Mrs. Lee. "I don't want to keep you from any pleasure, but I want to make sure that it is safe, you know. Yes, a crowd to enjoy the sport is all right if they are careful boys, not reckless."

"You met them all here, Mother."

"Yes." Mrs. Lee was on her way to the hall.

“This is Betty’s mother speaking,” she said, taking the receiver. “Betty is anxious to accept your kind invitation, but I want to inquire about the safety of the sport. Where is the hill located and just what are you going to do?”

“Aw, Mother’ll spoil it all, Betty,” said Dick, who was listening, while Betty stood half-way between hall and the dining room double doors. Betty frowned and shook her head at her brother, who passed his plate for a second helping of meat and potato. Dick was going out himself with his sled and the hill had been passed upon by his father, though Dick in his peregrinations did not always ask permission. That was one of Mr. Lee’s little worries for fear that in a city he could not so easily know just where his son was spending his leisure hours or whether his company was all that it should be. In the country town there was just as much danger of contamination, but they knew so well what was to be avoided and what companions were safe and who were unsafe.

Mother, however, had not “spoiled it all.” She came back smiling and put her arm about Betty to lead her in the room with her. “Chet explained it all satisfactorily, and I am rather glad to know that Ted Dorrance and a group of the older high school boys and girls will be there. There is a ‘sled load,’ I understand, though that used to mean a different sort of sled, in the country. Moreover, it is on the Dorrance place, and it may be that you can be called for. I think myself that the street car is safer, however, and so I told him.”

“Mother!” exclaimed Betty, half embarrassed.

“Don’t worry, child. Parents have to manage some of these things. I liked Chet and he is not offended. It is most likely that his own parents have a few remarks to make occasionally. Chet is not old enough to drive a car, Betty.”

“Well, I’m obliged to you anyway, Mother, for letting us go. Did you ring off?”

“Yes, I never thought that Chet might like to speak to you again.”

“Your mother isn’t yet used to having young men ring up and talk to her daughter,” mischievously said Mr. Lee.

“And I hope that I shall not get used to it for some time,” firmly replied his wife. “Betty’s not going to run around regardless; and I’m so sure of her that I know she does not want to do it either.”

“I’m perfectly willing to wait until I grow up a little more,” said Betty. “But this is different.”

“Yes, this is different.”

It was different. Betty never forgot this first winter fun of her freshman year, the night so beautiful, the snow so white, the little company so gay. Moonlight made the most of the scene. It was the first time that Betty had seen the Dorrance place, rather the house, which stood back, facing a road which was marked “Private” and wound around a short ascent to where two houses were built, some distance apart, upon a hill in a thick grove of trees. But the hill began to descend where the houses were and only the trees and chimneys could be seen from the main road where ran the street cars. A path had been well cleared and machines had gone over the road since the snow had fallen. Escorted by the three boys, the three girls ascended the hill after leaving the street car and heard, while they talked, the merry laughter of a group just preceding them.

“So this is where you live, Chet,” said Janet, by this time well acquainted, for she and Chet had pulled taffy together and joked each other while they did it.

“Yes; it’s a bit of a climb for some folks, but my mother uses the car most of the time and I suppose it isn’t more than a good square’s walk to the house. The hill we’re going to slide on is the other side of the house. You see there’s really a ravine there, but this hill is wide and the way the ground slopes and humps around it makes a good long hill of it. We’ve got it as slick as can be and we’ll shoot across a narrow brook at the foot. It’s good and frozen tonight and getting colder. You’ll all come in the house and meet

Mother first. But we're going to make a big bonfire to get warm by and Louise, Ted's girl, you know, says we can roast marshmallows the same as if it were summer."

"So this is Betty Lee," said pretty Mrs. Dorrance, holding Betty's hand a trifle longer, as she was the last girl of the group. "Both Ted and Chet have spoken of you. I am glad to meet you and I hope that my boys can give all you girls a good time tonight. I've cautioned them to be careful of you."

"Now, Mother!" cried Chet. "You don't understand. Of course we'll take care of them, but they're pretty independent, too, and they'll tell us if they don't want to do anything, at least Louise will tell Ted!"

"I hope so."

"We want to do what everybody does," gently said Betty, "and I'm sure the boys know about the hill and everything, don't they, Mrs. Dorrance?"

"I hope so," whimsically replied Mrs. Dorrance, who was timid about sports of all sorts, though she rather liked this confidence in her boys.

Then the fun began. The girls and boys in warm sweaters and woollen caps gathered about the bob sleds at the top of the hill. One with Ted guiding and full of the older ones went first, down, down around, up a little, swooping down till it was lost to view and only the little squeals and shrieks of excitement or a whoop from some boy reached Betty's ears.

"I'll let you take this one down, Budd," said Chet. "Budd's an expert, girls. Now not too many. We've another right here and I'll take that first. Chauncey, watch how I take that curve and you can take it down next time. Come on, Betty, as soon as Budd's sled goes and rounds the curve all right we'll start, I think."

Shortly Betty found herself flying among the shadows, through patches of moonlight, around the breath-taking curve, shooting

down a straight, steep descent, holding tight, breathing in the fresh, frosty air, happy as a bird. Again and again they climbed and descended till they were tired and lit the great pile prepared by the boys in an open space. The flames shot up, lighting the gay colors of the sweaters and coats, the bright young faces and the snow man that some one started to build while marshmallows were really being toasted. A snowball fight or two livened the scene for a little, and oh, how surprised they all were, when some one looked at a watch in the firelight and announced that it was getting late.

“Don’t put on any more wood, boys,” said Louise Madison. “I’ve only been able to toast anything in this one corner as it is; and if it is as late as that we’ll go in, for Mrs. Dorrance will be calling us.”

As if the hour had been noted at just the right time, some one came running out of the house to tell the company that refreshments were ready—and such funny ones, ordered by the boys, no doubt, the two Dorrance boys that were hosts. There were hot tea and bottles of pop, hot “wieners” and fresh buns to put them in, hot beans in tomato sauce, pickles, real spiced home-made ones, and for dessert what Dick always called “Wiggle,” jello or a kindred article, this time holding an assortment of fresh fruit together and served on a plate with an immense piece of frosted spice cake.

Somebody, the cook, Betty supposed, stood behind a long table by which they were to pass in cafeteria style, each taking, as the cook indicated, plate and silver and being served to the variety of foods by Chet and Ted, who with laughing faces had put on a white paper cap and a white apron. These the two boys kept on as they followed the rest into the dining room, to which a maid beckoned them. But all helpers disappeared at once. Mrs. Dorrance only looked in upon them to see that they were happy, and perhaps to assure Louise that the chaperon was doing her duty in being about. Jokes and fun and more hot things offered by Chet and Ted completed the evening’s enjoyment.

“It’s too much for you to go home with us, boys,” said Betty, rather thinking that she made a “social blunder” by saying so, but feeling

that if they put her on the car she could see herself and her friends home.

“Couldn’t think of anything else,” replied Chet, guiding Janet down the rather slippery hill at the front. “You don’t know how late and dark it will be when we get off the car near your house. The moon’s setting now, or else there’s a cloud or two. Wouldn’t it be great if we kept on having snow!”

“But dear sakes,” said Betty, “we’ll be in school and have to study!”

“Not to hurt,” remarked Chauncey Allen.

CHAPTER XIII—BETTY MEETS TROUBLE

There are degrees of satisfaction or of disappointment, but Betty Lee had never met what she would consider real trouble connected with her school life until after Christmas in her freshman year.

The happy Thanksgiving vacation with Janet and Sue as her guests came duly to a close after a pleasant Sabbath during which they went to Sabbath school and church and spent part of the afternoon in wandering around the main art gallery of the city, open to visitors. The girls took an early morning train on Monday and Betty, more or less upset by too many good times, went back to school not feeling much like study. But neither did any one else and the teachers in the main, having had a good rest themselves, seemed not to be too hard on any one.

Betty, however, buckled down to the work of what is always the hardest term of the year, that before Christmas, and had many delightful anticipations of that beautiful celebration. They could not “go to Grandma’s” this year, but they could and did enjoy Christmas day together. Accustomed, now, to the demands of the city school, she felt a real satisfaction in the fact that her work was being well done and her grades upon the cards such that she need not feel ashamed.

There were many interesting distractions toward Christmas and Betty joined the Girl Reserves, the group that included freshmen in her high school, in time to help with the Christmas basket which was to go to make some one’s Christmas brighter. The stores, with their fascinating windows, the hurrying crowds of shoppers, the entertainments and the Christmas music, all had their accustomed charm; but Betty’s vacation of only the one week, with an extra week-end, was spent largely at home, for none of the girls whom she knew well entertained and were absorbed in home affairs.

Again it was hard to settle down to work, but Betty was anxious to do well in the semester examinations and worked particularly hard

on her Latin and mathematics. By some shifting of pupils, Betty was now in the adorable Miss Heath's Latin class, though she had not begun the year with her. Betty was always very shy with her teachers and although Miss Heath was most "human," as Carolyn said, and friendly with the girls and boys there was a certain bound over which none of them stepped and Betty never presumed even upon the privileges which she might have enjoyed, in a chat or talk or consultation. It was characteristic of her family, perhaps, to be independent. Even at home she always wanted to "get everything herself" if she could, preferring to spend much more time upon a problem rather than ask any one for light upon it.

And now Miss Heath, gave them an examination which they all felt was important. Indeed she told them so. "It is going to help me find out whether you have gotten the important things that I have tried to teach you," she said. "As you know, I have emphasized some things. Some things we have gone over again and again. I see you smile, for you think that we have gone over everything again and again. So we have. But this may help you, too, in reviewing for your semester finals. The questions for those I do not make out, except in some line assigned to me by the head of the department. This I call a review examination and its results will be most interesting to me. This is not to 'scare' you at all, and it will be recorded in my grade book as an ordinary test, but I want you to use your brains to the best of your ability. Day after tomorrow, Thursday, at this hour, come prepared for a test."

The next day a strange teacher was at the desk, a "substitute," young and worried. The boys who were in the habit of "acting up" performed as far as they dared, Betty reported at home; and the girls giggled, "because they couldn't help it. It was so funny."

"You have to know how to manage the freshmen in this school," said Carolyn to Betty on their way from the room. "I wonder if Miss Heath will be back tomorrow. She looked half sick yesterday and took some medicine as we went out."

“Did she? I didn’t notice. That is too bad. I wonder if we’ll have the test, then.”

“Oh, of course. That would be the easiest thing for a substitute to give and she wouldn’t miss doing it, I should think. But perhaps,” Carolyn hopefully added, “perhaps Miss Heath couldn’t make out the questions.”

“She talked as if she had them already made out,” thoughtfully returned Betty, determined to go over all the vocabulary and the paradigms hardest for her to remember. “I’m going to put all the time I can on Latin tonight.”

“I’m not,” laughed a boy behind Betty, who had caught her last words. “We have basketball practice and I’m invited to a good show tonight. Oh boy!”

Betty smilingly remarked that he’d better not miss a little study even if he did know everything, but the lad grinned and shook his head as he passed her.

“I don’t like Jakey,” said Carolyn, as her eyes followed him and the confused group of boys and girls, passing and repassing in the hall. “He’s smart as can be and gets along in Latin better than I do, but there’s something tricky about him once in awhile and he’s so terribly conceited. He can’t stand it when you can answer a question that he has missed or can’t put up his hand for. I know. I’ve watched him. Did you see those boys change their seats? She didn’t know any better and they did it for fun I suppose, just to do something.”

“Do you mean during class?”

“No. Just before class began. Jakey slid into that one just behind you.”

“I didn’t notice.”

“She may, if they are in different seats tomorrow.”

The zero hour came. Betty looked at the questions on the board. Oh, they weren't so bad. It was fair. There were the special things that Miss Heath had emphasized, some of the hardest to get, to be sure, but Betty had studied hard and she had freshened up on the vocabulary lists and some of the rules of syntax, for she dreaded the translations, sentences that Miss Heath would make up, some of them at least.

Betty's cheeks were hot, but she worked away. Mercy, her fountain pen had given out. She took a pencil and found its point blunt. Hastily she traveled to the pencil sharpener and put on it as sharp a point as possible. Miss Heath did not want them to use pencil for examinations if it were not necessary; but this wasn't the semester final, when Carolyn said you had to use ink, they said. But she'd better sharpen two pencils, perhaps.

Betty scarcely saw the rest of the scholars as she returned to her desk for another pencil, so absorbed was she in thoughts of the examination questions. There was a whisking of something on several desks as she and some one else passed down parallel aisles at the same time, she to return, the other to go to the pencil sharpener. As she sat down and looked off thoughtfully at the board, the teacher was looking in her direction and two of the boys were chuckling behind her.

The teacher rapped for order and Betty, turning, caught a glimpse of Peggy, who was looking daggers at somebody behind Betty. But Betty was finishing her paper. The time was nearly up. She read over what she had, put in a long mark over a vowel in one of the declensions, looked for other omissions or mistakes, and puzzled over her last English to Latin sentence. She hoped it was right. There went the bell. Betty made ready her paper. Now it was handed in. Now they were in the hall. The test was over. What a relief!

"Did you see what those boys were doing?" asked Peggy, as Betty and Carolyn caught up with her at the door of the room where they were entering for another class.

“No, what was it?” questioned Carolyn, but the teacher just then beckoned Betty, to give her back a paper that she had failed to return with the rest given out to the class, and Betty missed Peggy’s reply.

“That was a very good paper, Betty,” said her teacher. “I found it with some sophomore papers where it had gotten by mistake.”

Betty was disappointed to find only an eighty-eight for her grade, but she knew that anything over eighty was good with Miss Smith. Tests were popular just now at Lyon High. All too soon would come the semester finals!

The busy week ended and Monday came again. The same young substitute was in Miss Heath’s place. She was “terribly cross” with the boys, Peggy said, but she didn’t blame her. Four or five of the freshman boys tried to see how far they could go and went a little too far for their own good, for when there was some chalk throwing at the blackboard, during written exercises there, the teacher called several boys by name to take their seats and see her after class. “If any one else longs to be sent to detention, he or she may just keep on with the fun as these have done!”

There was an immediate cessation of performances, for D. T., as it was called, was not popular.

“By the way,” the teacher added, “I should like to see after class for a moment Betty Lee and Peggy Pollard.”

Betty, who was at the board, pausing in her work to listen to the startling interruptions, was surprised to hear her own name. What could the teacher want with her? But after a surprised look at the somewhat grim face of an otherwise attractive young woman, Betty turned again to the board and finished the verb synopsis on which she was engaged. The class work went on as usual, with correction and assignments by the teacher, recitation and occasional question on the part of the class.

The boys who had been told to stay remained in their seats at the close of class and Betty, raising her eyebrows at Peggy, gathered up her books and went to one of the front seats to wait the teacher's pleasure. She felt in a hurry, for she was due at study hall on this day and it was on the third floor, quite a climb from the basement floor.

With eyes demurely on her books, she listened to a brief and sharp rebuke delivered to the boys, who scurried out of the room as soon as they were ordered to "detention" that evening, immediately after the close of school. At "detention" some victim among the teachers, who took turns at the disagreeable task, was in charge of a room devoted to the derelicts from duty who had from one cause or another been assigned to an extra hour in study after their classmates and others had gone. How long that extra hour! And when there was "doubly D. T." or detention for several days, alas!

That Betty was to receive any rebuke was the last thing that she expected, though she was nervously wondering for what she was asked to stay. She looked inquiringly, and in Betty's unconsciously sweet way, as the boys disappeared, and was beckoned to a seat in front of the desk. "Come also, Peggy Pollard," said the teacher, Miss Masterman. "I believe this is Peggy, isn't it?"

"Yes'm, and that's Betty Lee."

"Peggy, did you exchange papers with any one Thursday?"

"No'm," replied Peggy, looking surprised.

"Did you communicate with any one?"

"No'm."

"Think a minute. Are you sure that you did not say anything?"

"No'm—oh, yes, I did say something, but it wasn't anything about the examination. One of the boys was acting smarty and I told him to stop it."

"Just what did you say?"

“It wasn’t very polite,” said Peggy, her face very red, but her lips curving into a smile. “I told him to mind his own affairs and leave me alone. I was mad for a moment.”

“Are you sure that was all of the communication?”

“Yes’m, perfectly sure. I was too busy!”

“Very well. You may go, Peggy. That is all.”

The teacher’s face was calm and cold as she turned to Betty. Peggy had flown from the room in relief and Betty heard her unlocking her locker outside in the hall. She wondered if Peggy would wait.

“Please wait here a few minutes, Betty Lee,” said Miss Masterman. Betty, wondering, waited. She didn’t like the way the teacher looked at her. What could she have done to offend her. It couldn’t be anything like what Peggy was kept for. Why, she’d been “busy,” too, and had scarcely noticed anything except the questions and her paper. Besides, this teacher hadn’t walked around like Miss Heath, to go to the rear sometimes and know just what everybody was doing. She hadn’t seemed to be a bit suspicious that day. Miss Masterman now left the room.

In the next room her voice was to be heard. Why, she was telephoning—the office, Betty supposed. Mer cee! what in the world was the matter? Betty’s hands were cold. She grew more scared every minute. Perhaps something was wrong at home and Miss Masterman had gotten word. No, she had looked at her as if she had done something. Perhaps she’d have to go to detention, if not tonight, then tomorrow!

Betty unplied her books and piled them up again. She would leave all but her algebra in her locker tonight. There! Miss Masterman was coming back. She walked to her desk, took up a book, looked at it, put it down, gathered up some papers and put them inside the desk, went after her wraps and laid them across one of the desks. She was almost as uneasy as Betty felt. Probably she wanted to get home, though it was still the last period.

At last she said, "I suppose you are anxious to know why I am keeping you. You are to go to the office of the assistant principal and he is busy with some other pupils still. He or someone will telephone me when he is ready for you. He seems to have a good deal of business tonight." Miss Masterman smiled disagreeably. "It is in connection with cheating at examination that he wants to see you," and Miss Masterman looked keenly at Betty as she made this statement quickly in a sharp tone.

Betty gasped. "Why, Miss Masterman! I don't know anything about any cheating in the examination!"

"So?" coolly replied Miss Masterman. "Tell that to the assistant principal, then."

"Do—do you mean that you think I cheated?" vigorously asked Betty.

"I think that very thing."

"Then you are mistaken, Miss Masterman," said Betty, firmly and with some dignity. "I hope to be able to prove it."

The telephone bell rang just then and Miss Masterman answered it, saying, "at last," as she crossed to the room.

Betty, too, thought "at last." She was trembling from head to foot; but a little anger at the injustice of the charge sustained her and she remembered the kind face of the assistant principal. He had some children. Maybe he would listen to her. But what could she say, only tell him that she did not cheat. How did they think she could? Miss Heath would have called the assistant principal by his name in speaking of him—oh, if only Miss Heath had been there at that examination!

CHAPTER XIV—SENT TO THE PRINCIPAL

Betty went to her locker, put away all her books and took out her wraps. She would never come back if they thought she cheated! As in a dream she mounted the stairs and rounded the hall toward the office of the assistant principal. Several pupils were about the central hall, some of them leaving the office toward which she was making her way. Jakey Bechstein was slapping a cap upon his quite good-looking head and starting for the big outer doors with two companions. His big dark eyes were upon the nearest boy and he did not see Betty, though he closely passed her.

“What did he say to you, Jakey?” the boys was asking. It was one of the other freshman boys.

“Lo, Betty, going home?” asked a girl behind her. Betty turned and waved pleasantly to the girl, whom she knew slightly. “Not now, Adelaide—sorry. I have to stop at the office a minute.”

“Been into mischief, I suppose,” laughed Adelaide.

“Of course,” returned Betty, knowing that Adelaide was only in fun. But alas, it was only too true that something was wrong.

As Betty entered the office a boy was just leaving the desk, going out with tense mouth and a frown. But the assistant principal looked up in a friendly way at Betty, whose face showed plainly her troubled mind.

“Sit down, Betty. This is Betty Lee, I suppose.” Mr. Franklin, who as assistant principal usually saw all the offenders in school discipline before his chief, now came from behind his desk and drew up a chair not far from Betty’s. He looked tired as he stretched out a pair of long legs, crossed his feet and leaned back, one hand reaching the desk, the other dropped in his lap. Here was only an innocent-looking child, whom he did not recall meeting.

“Yes, sir; I am Betty Lee. Miss Masterman told me that I was to come here.”

“M-m. Tell you why you were to come?”

“She said that she thought I—I cheated in examination.”

The tears which Betty thought she would be able to keep back sprang quickly to her eyes, but she set her lips, wiped her eyes hastily, and continued. “But I did not cheat and I did not see it if the whole room cheated. I tried to make a good paper for Miss Heath!”

“You like Miss Heath, do you?”

“Oh, yes sir! If she had only—” Betty stopped, for she would not imply anything against the substitute.

“Sometimes it is a temptation to try to do well for some one.” Mr. Franklin was looking at her kindly, but soberly.

“I’ve been taught that it is wrong to cheat, sir; and I don’t believe it pays in the long run. Father says that the teacher usually finds out what you know or don’t know.”

“Usually, but not always when there are so many. Tell me about it, Betty.”

“But there isn’t anything to tell! I can’t think why anybody thinks I cheated. I worked hard on the review and went over the things I was weakest on, I thought, and ran over the vocabulary we’ve had, the night before. But I’m pretty good on vocabulary.”

“Girls sometimes are,” joked Mr. Franklin, at which Betty took heart.

“Won’t you tell me what happened, Mr. Franklin, to make her think I cheated?”

“Not yet. Near whom did you sit, Betty?”

“Why, Dora Jenkins sits in front of me; and on the aisle next, to the right, Mickey Carlin is across from Dora and Sim, James Simmonds, I mean, sits across from me and on the other aisle, across from me, there’s Sally Wright, a colored girl, and Peggy Pollard back of her. The alphabet is all mixed up in this class.”

“Who is back of you?”

“Andy—oh, no, Mr. Franklin, it was all different that day. I remember the boys changed—but I shouldn’t tell you!”

“Go on. One of the boys told me that they changed seats for fun on the day you had a substitute and it was not an exactly criminal act, though I don’t stand for it. Then they didn’t change back?”

“I suppose they thought they’d better not since she had seen them there, though I imagine Miss Heath’s roll is made out that way.”

“Never mind. Haven’t you the least remembrance who sat behind you or to the side back?”

“Seems to me it was Jakey Bechstein behind me and the boys seemed to be all mixed up around there. But I wasn’t thinking about it.”

“Did you leave your seat at any time?”

Betty thought. “Yes sir. I have an extra fountain pen and I thought I’d better fill it when I was partly through. But the ink at the desk was out. Then the ink in my pen that I was using gave out and I went up, twice, to sharpen pencils, thinking that I would need sharp points to make it legible enough for Miss Heath. She is always talking about our making our test papers especially legible.”

Mr. Franklin smiled. “Sensible woman. Well, Betty, I will tell you that there are three papers almost exactly alike and one of them is yours. Do you suspect any one of copying from you?”

“No, sir. If Jakey was where he could do it, he would never have to because he is as smart as any one in the class and almost never doesn’t have his lesson.”

“In other words, he almost always does,” smiled Mr. Franklin. “I am afraid we can not go by the usual order of seats, but I am finding out where the persons involved sat. You will admit that where papers are so alike there is room for suspicion.”

“Yes, sir. Is Miss Masterson correcting, or will Miss Heath do it?”

“Miss Masterson has read the papers carefully and discovered the similarity. Miss Heath will be back tomorrow. Every one has denied copying.”

Betty looked at Mr. Franklin and shook her head soberly. “Of course,” she said, “and I’m only one of them, I suppose. Well, Mr. Franklin, I’m not going to stay in school if any one thinks I’m that kind of a girl!”

“Do you think that you would be allowed to drop out, Betty? Think this over tonight and come to see me tomorrow at the same time. I may have more light on it—and you may think of something to tell me.”

Betty flushed at this. He meant if she had some confession to make! But Mr. Franklin was rising. She was dismissed, she saw. “I will come,” she said and went out, out of the main doors, too, down the steps, on to catch a street car home.

All the way Betty sat almost unconscious of the other people on the car, for at the first glance she saw no one whom she knew. From the first the incidents of the last few hours and those of the examination went through her mind. She tried to gather up a few fleeting impressions. Yes, it was Jakey who sat behind her, though it was unusual to see him there. That was why she could recall it, she supposed. He had grinned at her as she came back from the pencil sharpener. And there had been some whisking of something somewhere, just before Peggy had been seen to glare at one of the boys. That was probably what he was doing, taking something from her desk or teasing her in some way. My, it was a puzzle. But it was simply terrible to be under suspicion. Could it really be Betty Lee that was going through this? And the old nursery rhyme ran through her head:

“But when the old woman got home in the dark,
Up jumped the little dog and he began to bark!
He began to bark
And she began to cry,
‘Goodness, mercy on me, this is none of I!’”

When she reached home she tried to say this to her dear mother, who was sitting by the window mending an almost hopeless stocking of Amy Lou’s. But when she got to the “this is none of I,” her lips quivered and she ran to bury her head in the comfortable lap and sob out the story as soon as she could control herself sufficiently. Here was some one who would take her word!

“Dear child, dear child!” soothingly said her mother. “Don’t take it too seriously. I know how hard it is when a young person cannot justify herself to schoolmates or friends, but surely you have already made a good impression on your teachers. Don’t you think that when Miss Heath comes back tomorrow she will handle the matter? You said that the assistant principal is well liked and that the pupils think him fair. I think that they will probe the matter a little farther.”

“But what more can they do?” asked Betty from the floor, her head against her mother’s knee. “There are those three papers just alike!”

“And you wrote yours out of your own head. Stick to that. Besides, your father and I believe in you. Haven’t we seen your lips moving in all the declensions and conjugations so far, while you committed them, and haven’t I asked you more than once the Latin or English words of your vocabularies?”

“You have, sweetest mother that there is!” Betty drew a long sigh. “Anyhow it doesn’t do any good to weep and wail, does it? I believe I’ll call up Peggy and see what she knows and tell her my tale of woe. I didn’t tell you that she had to stay after school, too, and got asked questions.”

“Are you sure that you’d better, child?”

“Call Peggy? oh, yes, Mother. Peggy would be sure to ask me tomorrow morning what Miss Masterson said. I’ll bet she’s aching to call me up right now!”

Mrs. Lee’s face grew serious as soon as Betty left her to call up her friend. She was more disturbed by Betty’s news than she would have admitted to the child herself. Betty was so comparatively new to the school with no background of long acquaintance as in the old school. She had more than half a mind to go to school with her tomorrow. But she thought better of that. Let them work it out first. If necessary, she or Betty’s father would go to see the principal.

Betty was laughing now over something funny exchanged between the girls. “But it’s really very serious,” she heard Betty say next. “I dread to go to school tomorrow. Tell me ev’rything that you can remember about that examination. You wouldn’t mind telling the principal what you just told me, would you?”

The answer must have been satisfactory, for Betty chuckled. The subject must have changed then, for Betty made some remark not connected with this recent affair and shortly the telephone conversation closed.

CHAPTER XV—DETECTIVE WORK

In the good, steadfast atmosphere of a sensible home, whose heads were not easily stampeded, Betty felt better. Father was told quietly by Mother. But Betty's sleep was troubled that night and it was with many an inward qualm that she started to school the next morning. She intended to go on through the day, as her mother advised her, with as much quiet dignity as she could command, discussing the matter with no one.

Peggy, however, referred to the conversation of the day before when she met her by her locker, next to Betty's. "The boys were up to something, as I told you. It wasn't Jakey but the boy behind him, Sam, that I was glaring at, as you said. He tried to snatch a piece of paper off my desk, a blank sheet, it was, and I thought the boys were doing that just to be smart, taking things off the girls' desks and seeing what they could do without being caught. I mean that bunch of boys, you know, not Mickey or Andy. So maybe somebody got hold of part of your paper."

"The wind from that open window blew some paper off my desk once," mused Betty. "I believe it must have been Jakey that handed it to me, but I didn't think it was part of my paper that was written on. I stuck it under the rest. I did write out my translations on an extra paper first, for I didn't want to make any erasures and have a messy paper. But Jakey knows as much as I do. It certainly wasn't Jakey whose paper was like mine."

"Time will tell," said Peggy. "Don't worry too much, Betty. Whatever happens, your friends among us girls will believe what you say."

"Thanks, Peggy. You're a comfort. Please don't say anything to Carolyn yet."

"She might know something."

"How could she?"

“I don’t know. But at least I can tell her how I was questioned, and everybody knew that you had to stay after school, so how can you help telling her?”

“I’ll tell her that I was questioned, too.”

Betty however, had started to school as late as she dared. In consequence lessons and the day’s program were upon them. At lunch she remained in the room until after Carolyn and the rest of those going up to lunch had gone, and pretended to be detained by some notes she was writing. Perhaps it was not a pretense either, she thought, for she needed the notes. But she would not have taken them then if she had not wanted to avoid being with the rest of the girls. A few who were not going to lunch were nibbling crackers or chocolate bars and stirring about the room a little. The colored girl in her Latin class was there and Betty wondered if she had enough money for the lunch, little as some of it cost.

Sure enough, there were some chocolate bars and an apple in her locker! She had the chocolate bars in her sweater pocket and the apple had been presented to her in the hall by no less a friend than Budd LeRoy. She, too, would miss lunch and divide with Sally. Quickly she ran out to her locker, rifled the pocket of her sweater, discarded since the early cold morning, and brought her apple and her pocket knife.

“Have a bar with me, Sally,” she said, “if you are not going to lunch either, and I’ll cut this apple in two.”

“Why—thanks, Betty. That looks good. No, I thought I wouldn’t go to lunch today. But you’d better keep all of your apple.”

“It’s too big and it looks awfully juicy,” added Betty as she cut the apple in halves. “With my compliments, Miss Sally,” and Betty assumed quite an air as she handed the fruit to Sally, who laughed and thanked Betty again.

“Have you always lived in this city?” asked Betty for something to say, as Sally sat down in her own seat which was opposite Betty’s, by chance, just as in the Latin class.

In the soft voice and accent peculiar to her race at its best, Sally answered this question and asked Betty how she liked this and that teacher, Miss Heath among others. Miss Heath had not met her class that morning, to Betty’s deep disappointment.

“I saw Miss Heath come in the uppah hall,” said Sally, “jus’ befo’ the last class. She hurried into the office and I suppose she couldn’t get here this mawnin.”

“Oh, is she here?” asked Betty brightening.

“Yes. Say, Betty, did you see Jakey Bechstein take some of your papers off your desk at the test?”

“No; did he?”

“Yes, while you were sharpening your pencils. The boys were having fun behind Miss Masterson’s back when she was pulling down one window and putting up another for ventilation, though she didn’t know I suppose that they’re not supposed to do that with the system they’ve got here. They were pretendin’ to look at each other’s papers and grab a few off the desks and Jakey grabbed yours. But he kept them a while, and I saw him sneak them back just before you started for your seat.”

“I didn’t notice. But Jakey knows as much about Latin as I do. What would be the point?”

“Keeping you from getting ahead of him,” said Sally, taking a large bite of the apple and being obliged to catch some of the juice in her handkerchief. “Jakey’s not studying so much, I reckon, since he started basketball.”

Betty listened soberly and remembered the remark Jakey had made about not studying for the test. Could it be that he had copied anything from her paper?

It was worth while staying from lunch and sharing with Sally to hear this. Yet could she use the information to help herself out?

“If anything should come up about Jakey, Sally, or anybody, would you be willing to tell Miss Heath what you saw?”

“I sure would. I guess the teacher kept you and Peggy about something like that yesterday, didn’t she? I saw her look at Peggy when I heard Peggy snap off the kid that snatched at her paper.”

“Miss Masterson did ask some questions, Sally.”

Betty was deep in her lesson for the next hour when the girls came back from lunch. “Where were you, Betty?” asked Carolyn.

“Oh, I just decided that I didn’t want to go up, and I happened to have some chocolate bars and an apple. I’ll fill up when I get home after school.”

“I always do, and eat lunch, too,” said Peggy. “Miss Heath was upstairs for lunch. I saw her go into the teachers’ lunch room. It was funny for her to come in the middle of the day, wasn’t it?”

The girls wondered, but Miss Heath, though not feeling equal to a day of teaching, had come over for something else, as she had an idea which she wanted to share with the assistant principal. When Betty depressed, went into the office of the assistant principal after school, Miss Heath was there and looked like a fountain in the desert, or the sun shining through clouds, to Betty.

“Good afternoon, Betty,” she said pleasantly, though with dignity. “I came over to see about the little matter of the test. As soon as your principal is at liberty, I want to go over the questions with you.”

This was surprising—did she mean the real principal? Evidently not, for when Mr. Franklin came into the office, stopped on the way by several people, both teachers and pupils, she drew out a paper. “I am ready to go over the questions with Betty, Mr. Franklin,” she said.

“Very well,” said he, closing the door.

“Do you remember the questions, pretty well, Betty?” asked Miss Heath.

“I would know them if I saw them.”

“Have you looked up anything you did not know?”

“Yes—I wasn’t sure about several things that I wrote down; but I have forgotten what they were now.”

“Perhaps you will recall them as I go through the questions. I have your paper here,” and Miss Heath took out what Betty recognized as her own paper.

What was the point of doing all this! Betty felt confused, but she would answer all the questions if that would help establish her innocence of the cheating.

One by one the examination questions, or directions in regard to what was desired, were read. Betty replied slowly, saying in several places, “I didn’t put that all down on my paper, I think, Miss Heath. I thought afterward that I had omitted it, though I went all over it so carefully.”

Later, when they came to the translation, she said, “I couldn’t think of the name of that Dative, so I just put Indirect Object, because you said that in a way all Datives were indirect objects. But I looked it up and I could tell you now.”

“Take a piece of paper, Betty, and write again the English to Latin sentences.”

Mr. Franklin indicated by a nod some paper on his desk. Betty took the list of questions, thought a moment and wrote, slowly. “I always Have to take plenty of time on the English to Latin,” she said, “and there is one that I wrote two ways, but I wasn’t sure that either were right. It’s the one that has the accusative of place to which in it.”

Miss Heath nodded and her eyes twinkled. Whatever idea she had was turning out successfully, it seemed. But Betty was very busy with the sentences. She handed over the paper saying “It did not take so long, because I’d thought it out before.”

“I see. Betty, why did you use *appello* instead of *voco* here?”

“Because it is calling in the sense of naming, as you told us in such sentences.”

“Good. Why did you use the Ablative in the second sentence?”

“Because it specifies that in respect to which”—Betty got no farther because Miss Heath interrupted her.

“That is enough, Betty. Mr. Franklin, I’m satisfied, are you? The other person did not know, and the third youngster plainly copied the whole thing from him.”

Mr. Franklin nodded assent. “Betty,” he said, “you are cleared from all suspicion of copying and cheating. We know which ones of these papers were copied. You may thank Miss Heath for her little scheme to find out. We have already met with the others, but we can not tell you their names.”

“Oh, I don’t want to know!” exclaimed Betty. “Thank you so much!”

It was another Betty that ran down the steps, to find both Peggy and Carolyn waiting for her. Her face must have told them the story. “O, Betty! Is is all right?” eagerly asked Carolyn. “Peggy told me, when I asked her why she was waiting for you. Oh, you should have told me and let me worry with you! Was that why you wouldn’t come up to lunch?”

“Yes.”

“Please tell us how they found out that you didn’t—” Carolyn would not finish.

“Well, you saw Miss Heath, that darling woman! She came over on purpose to see all about it and she had the scheme to bring the

questions and find out how much each of us really knew about things. I really don't see how she told, but it must be that whoever copied couldn't give good reasons for what he would have missed on or something. She's a regular Sherlock Holmes!"

"And now, if you'll never tell a soul, I'll tell you what Sally Wright told me during lunch. I learned a lot by staying down and giving Sally an old chocolate bar!"

The girls promised, and the three, Betty in the middle, walked slowly toward the street, heads together, arms about each other.

CHAPTER XVI—SOME FRESHMAN CONCLUSIONS

What had happened between the teachers and the pupils who had cheated in the test was, naturally, not known, except that every one knew the penalty of losing a grade. The boys that had changed seats and generally “acted up” during the presence of the substitute were well rebuked and had to endure some penalty, the girls understood; but only those who had behaved ever mentioned the occurrence. The guilty carried it off with bland ignorance or nonchalance and pretended not to understand any jokes at their expense. Jakey Bechstein was out of school for several days, but came back as lively as ever and making good recitations. His basketball team lacked his presence.

At Betty Jakey never looked, but as she had never known him very well and as he did not ordinarily sit near her in any of her classes, she scarcely noticed that he avoided her till Peggy called her attention to it.

But the year went on and Betty had many more interesting things to take up her mind. The semester examinations were a nightmare, Carolyn claimed, but they managed to live through them, as they usually do. Miss Heath was particularly fond of Betty, she told her mother when Mrs. Lee, without Amy Lou, came to visit Betty's classes one day. “Betty is a very charming little girl, Mrs. Lee, and very bright. She is a friend of some of our best freshman girls, too, as I imagine you'd like to know. It is rather important, you know, what sort of friends the children like.”

The winter passed. Betty for the most part worked at her lessons, with pleasant Saturday afternoons, sometimes with the girls, sometimes on expeditions with the family. Her father was greatly absorbed in business affairs, but as spring approached he often drove his family to find the first spring flowers at some spot outside of the city, or to observe the coming of bud and blossom.

On one warm April day, rather in advance of the season, they thought, Mr. Lee and Betty were alone and the machine was parked by the roadside near a little stream where some violets were growing. As the ground was dry upon the sloping bank, Betty sat down with her bunch of violets in her hand and her father decided to join her. "What do you think of this place, Betty? You'd hardly expect it so near the city, would you?"

"No, but there are lots of places in this town that are what you might call unexpected, because there are the hills and ravines, you know."

"Yes, that is so."

"Father," Betty spoke again after a pause during which she picked a flower within reach. "Father, don't you think that a girl ought to take advantage of her opportunities?"

"Seems to me I've heard something like that, Betty."

"Well, I'm serious, Father."

"To just what advantages do you refer?"

"I'm thinking about school, you know, and it does seem as if there are so many things to do in these high school years, especially here in the city, that you'll never have a chance to do again!"

"Things that you are not doing now, you mean?"

"Yes, Father. Unless you see it, you can't realize what lovely things go on at school and you can't help wanting to be in them!"

"What, for instance?"

"Well, there's the music for one thing. If you get your lessons, you haven't so much time for other things, but to be trained right here, where there's a Symphony Orchestra and everybody knowing the best music and singing and playing it—it doesn't seem right not to do it if you have any music in you at all. Ted Dorrance was talking about it the other day. He's a junior this year, you know. He

was with some of the girls and boys in a bunch of us, talking after school.

“I imagine that Ted gets his lessons, for he’s smart looking. I heard him talking to a boy the very first day I was in school, standing in line to sign up. He said he didn’t know what he was going to do, not much athletics only ‘swimming, of course.’ You ought to see Ted swim at a swimming meet. And dive! He can turn a somersault backwards and everything.

“He said that his mother wanted him to be in the orchestra and sure enough he is. Father, he plays the violin and he’s the very first violin in the orchestra, the one that does little solo parts sometimes, or whatever they do.”

“And do you want to be in the orchestra, too?”

“Mer cee, no! What would I play? But I’d like to go on with my piano lessons, and at the Conservatory, too, and then I’d like to be in the Glee Club. Carolyn says she’s going to try to be in it next year. But you see all the practice takes a lot of time.”

“I see. Anything else, little daughter?”

Betty laughed. Father was so nice to talk to. “Yes, a lot of things, but I like the athletics, gym, you know, and swimming. I think maybe I’ll get honors in swimming. Some of the girls are more than half afraid of the water, but I feel—I feel just like a fish!”

It was Mr. Lee’s turn to laugh. “I used to feel that way, too, Betty, and I had a lake to swim in from the time I was knee-high to a duck.”

“Then I suppose I inherit it from you,” Betty declared. “I’m much obliged for the trick of it! But that’s another thing, Father. If you do a thing, you like to do it well and I suppose it’s Louise Madison, who is president of the G. A. A., that has made me so crazy about athletics. Why, they even have riding horseback, beside tennis and everything you can think of.”

“And everything you can’t think of, I suppose.”

“Aren’t you funny—who’d ever say that but you?”

“Have you thought out, Betty, just what you’d like to take up?”

“No, Father, not exactly. I’m just—ruminating, and trying to think it out.”

“Then I’m glad you are willing to do it with me, Betty. Perhaps we can come to some conclusion.”

“Perhaps. I’m sure I need help. It’s just this way. I hate to miss it all, but I can never get my lessons and do too much. Would you care awfully, Father, if I didn’t stand at the head of my class? I did at home, I mean where we did live, but I don’t believe a body ever could even know who is the head in the big high schools. I guess it’s only in some line or other that they get prizes and things.

“And then, Father, I believe that it’s better not to be so—keyed up, as Mother says, and wanting to beat.”

“The habit of success is a good thing, Betty.”

Betty pondered a moment. “I see what you mean. It’s only too easy to let down.”

“Yes, and when one studies a subject there is more satisfaction in really covering the ground, being accurate, I mean, not just having a sort of hazy idea.”

“Father, there’s too much! You just can’t get it all.”

“You have done pretty well so far, my child. I am satisfied with your grades. Isn’t there always an honor roll?”

“Yes, and I’m on it, so far.”

“Then that is enough. You need not try to beat anybody. Wasn’t that the trouble with your friend that copied your answers?”

“Yes. I wouldn’t do that, of course, but there is a sort of nervousness about reciting well and making an impression on the teacher, whether you have your lesson or haven’t had a chance to

get it real well. And sometimes you recite when you don't know much."

"I see. It is a problem, Betty. I see nothing for it but to make a good general plan, not including too much, then work it out every day the best you can. But it's the little decisions every day that count in anything. I have it in business too. And I wouldn't let down altogether in the ideals of hard work and getting lessons. It's chiefly in putting your mind on it when you are working, isn't it?"

"A good deal."

"You would really like to be in that orchestra, wouldn't you, Betty?"

Betty looked up at the smiling face of her father, who wasn't so very old, after all. He had a fellow feeling!

"Didn't you take a few violin lessons once?"

"Yes, when that college girl taught a class for a while, but I can't play, Father. They wouldn't look at me for the orchestra!"

"Probably not now; but if you took more lessons, and of a proper teacher this summer—how about it?"

"I might," said Betty, dropping her flowers in her lap to clap her hands. "Would you let me?"

"Would you like it as much as that?"

"I'd love it!"

"Then we shall see about it at once. I'm going to send your Mother and Amy Lou to your grandmother's this summer, but not all of you could go there. Dick and Doris might take turns. And how would you like to keep house for me, practice violin, and get taken on rides to give you an occasional breath of the country?"

"That would be great. I'm not a good housekeeper, though."

"We'll never tell anybody how we keep house, Betty, and I'll be 'boss.' We'll drive over to the Conservatory, Saturday, sign you up

for violin with somebody—come on child. Gather up your flowers. We must go home.”

Mr. Lee sprang to his feet, gave a hand to Betty, who did not need it, but accepted it.

“But Father, I don’t know how good the old violin is and the bow is terrible. It never did do what it ought to! How can I begin?”

“The trouble with the ‘old violin’ is not that it is ‘old,’ Betty,” laughed Mr. Lee, as Betty ran after him on his way to the car. “It simply isn’t much good at all. You shall have a better one. You used to play some sweet little tunes. Here’s for a Stradivarius or ‘whatever it is,’ as you say. And you shall see how I keep you at hard work this summer! We’ll have some of the school extras or perish in the attempt.”

Betty chuckled as she climbed into the car. “All right, my dear Daddy. The neighbors will hate me, but I’ll practice, and it can’t be any worse than that horn across the street. How did you read my mind and know that I’d rather be in an orchestra than take piano lessons?”

“It was just instinct, Betty,” replied Mr. Lee, as he started the car, “with perhaps a few deductions and putting two and two together.”

“Really, Father, can you afford to get me a good violin and let me take lessons?”

“Yes. It is necessary to do things when they ought to be done, and we shall do this. But I’m counting on my girl to make good.”

“Oh, I will try! But you know me!”

“I’m not expecting too much, Betty, only the same effort that you always make in everything. I shall watch to keep you well and safe. Perhaps the athletics that you like so much will help to keep you well. But don’t get reckless in ‘gym.’ We’ll see about the riding some other year, perhaps.”

CHAPTER XVII—SPRING AT LYON HIGH

If the autumn, with its excitement of football and the starting of school activities, was thrilling to Betty Lee, what should be said of the springtime, with those same activities matured and new interests of the season? It was baseball among the boys now. Seniors were thinking of their graduation. Freshmen had nearly completed their first year of high school and had changed by contact with the older classes and with their own new ambitions.

Betty could not keep up with it all, nor attend all of the entertainments offered by the different organizations. In some of them she had a part, as when the Girl Reserves did something special with a good program, or when the swimming contests took place, for then not alone the best swimmers took part, but those of modest attainments. In this Betty had occasion to take a little pride in winning points.

Her mother accompanied her to attend the great musical affair of the year, when all the musical organizations, orchestra and glee clubs, combined to show their parents what they could do. Mrs. Lee exclaimed over the ability of the orchestra and Betty explained. "In the first place, Mother, they have a wonderful leader. He's a foreigner and hasn't much patience with anybody, Ted says, but it isn't a bad thing for the way things turn out, you see. Then the boys and girls are used to hearing good music."

"They hear some very terrible jazz, too," remarked Mrs. Lee.

"I'll have to admit it," laughed Betty, "but not in school, except, perhaps, at the minstrel show they had. I wasn't there, so I can't state."

The school grounds were more attractive than in the fall. The garden club worked under the direction of the botany teacher. First came the forsythia, in welcome yellow delicacy all over the city, and here and there about the grounds. Then other flowers came on, with magnolia and Japanese cherry trees in blossom, and in their

time gay tulips, and purple iris lining some of the walks. With the windows of class rooms, study halls and library open, the pupils and teachers could hear the songs of birds, more free than they were, to be sure, but with their daily bread and nesting entailing much hunting and work on the part of the little creatures. Betty never failed to visit a part of the grounds devoted to wild flowers, including May-apples and jack-in-the-pulpit.

She was occasionally out at the Gwynne place, when Carolyn carried her off in a car which sometimes came for her, or accompanied her as far as the street car went, to take the rest of the way in a strolling hike, enlivened with much discourse, after the manner of girls. They saw very little of the boys, by the way, for baseball and other active, outdoor affairs engaged their attention; but the girls, with so many of their own, did not notice it. Of these girl activities, Color Day, the annual track meet of the girls was of importance.

This was held on the last of April in the stadium and the competition was between classes. The freshmen girls were quite excited over it, for they had some very athletic girls in their various teams this year, and while they did not expect to win the meet they expected to make a good showing. Both Betty and Carolyn were in this, though Betty was not allowed to do competitive running. But there was the throwing, baseball and hurl-ball, and some other events. Numbers told for your class, it seemed. And when it finally came off it was great fun, Betty reported.

“You ought to have been there, Mother!” she cried when she came home. “You simply must come more next year. We’ll get somebody to stay with Amy Lou, though she would think anything like this just wonderful, wouldn’t you, Amy Lou?”

“Yes, Betty. Why can’t I go?”

“You can next time. You ought to have seen the girls run and jump over the hurdles and everything! We had a tug of war and the freshmen won that. Then one of our freshman girls made a brand-

new record in the sixty-yard hurdles. I've forgotten just what it was, but it beat last year's record just a little bit.

"I didn't do so badly in the throwing, Mother, but I didn't take first place by any means; and the relay in overhead basketball was great!"

"It seems to me that you make work of your playing, Betty."

"Yes, I suppose we do. But isn't it better to have athletics watched over and amounting to something?"

"I suppose it is, unless you push it too far for your health."

"Well, I suppose it does hurt some of the boys and girls once in a while, when they get reckless and try more than they ought to do; but they are all examined, you know, and they have rules. The seniors beat, by the way, so I suppose they're satisfied. It would be hard to be beaten when it was your last year. And, Mother, may I go to the G. A. A. banquet with Carolyn? And, won't you think twice about going yourself? Carolyn says that her mother is going and wants to entertain you and me. I suppose we couldn't get Father there, could we?"

"Oh, no, Betty. He is too busy to take time now for a girls' affair. Perhaps I can go another year, but not now."

"Mrs. Gwynne was going to call you up, or come to see you if she could."

"That will be very kind," said Mrs. Lee. "You may go, Betty, but I think that you'd better pay for your own ticket. We shall see what seems polite to do."

"You see, Mother, honors are distributed that night and we find out who the honor girl is and get whatever we do get for our points."

This was one of the last events before the "finals" and Commencement. Betty, in her "partiest frock," came home full of enthusiasm to report that the mystery was a mystery no longer and

that Louise Madison “got the honor ring.” That was the crowning honor and the last thing given.

For the “first time in history” the freshmen received the baseball chevrons. Betty declared that she wasn’t ashamed of being a freshman, but oh, to think that her first year was nearly over! The banquet was simply great, everything so good; and then after it came the speeches and the presenting of awards, while the girls that had done things were “all excited inside,” and the seniors, of course, all wondering which of them would get the great honor.

“I’ve decided that I’m going to ride in order to get one of those ducky pins, a silver pin with a tiny black horse and rider, a girl, too, jumping over a bar!”

“Now, isn’t that just like a girl!” exclaimed Dick, who was listening while some of this was being told at the breakfast table.

“It ought to take a very strong motive, Dicky,” mischievously replied his sister, “to induce one to make an art of riding! Still, I can stick on a horse out at Grandma’s, can’t I?”

“Yes—and how?” asked Dick scornfully.

Examination week to some seemed long, indeed, with the longer time allowed for the real tests that had so much to do with passing for those who were obliged to take them. Fortunately, Betty had none to take, but it seemed odd, indeed, to wait for grades during examination time and the time given the teachers to correct the important papers. The weather was hot, but it was a good opportunity for last visits or picnics.

Peggy Pollard had one of these at her home, a pretty place in the same suburb which boasted the Gwynne place, but Peggy’s home was closer in toward town and not so large as that of the Gwynnes. The house was a simple building, modern, set back among a few handsome trees in a large lot. There was a pool on whose circular cement wall, Betty, Peggy and their friends sat like so many mermaids one hot afternoon. Bathing suits were

the appropriate costume for this picnic, Peggy had said. In consequence, the girls came in simple frocks, as cool as they could muster, and brought their bathing suits, caps, slippers and all.

The pool was retired, among the trees and thick bushes where it was cool with shadows, and it was well known and favored among Peggy's friends. Betty's eyes opened wide when she saw it. Good friends as they had been, this was the first time that Peggy had entertained her.

"How did you happen to have such a big one, Peggy?" one of the girls asked, voicing Betty's thought.

"Why, there were so many boys and they wanted it big enough for real diving and swimming a bit; so, as they made it themselves, they had it that way. This is fresh water, girls, just put in it. Betty, you haven't been here before, though I've tried to find a good chance to have folks before this. Mother's been in the hospital, as I guess I told you.

"Why, Betty, I'm the last chick of a big family, or almost the last chick. Jack is in the University still, my big brother, but the rest are all married or away, six brothers—what do you think of that?"

"How nice! Any sisters? but you practically told me you hadn't any. And here I've known you all year and never knew a word about your family."

"Life is like that, Betty," laughed Peggy. "I guess we never told each other our life history. I know your family because I've been at your house and I saw them."

"I've known Peggy all my life," said Mary Emma, "and I never knew she had six brothers. Are you sure, Peggy?" Mary Emma was grinning as she touched the water with her toes. Then she slipped into it and lay back, floating a little.

It was the signal for a general descent into the pool whose waters, cooler than the air, were so refreshing. Nobody seemed to care about diving, but they swam a little, had mild races which, no one

cared much about beating, and sat on the steps that led down into the water or perched again on the upper rim of cement. “What makes us so doleful?” lazily asked Carolyn.

“Oh, it’s the weather, and school’s being ’most out,” returned Kathryn Allen, who looked like a little red gypsy in her scarlet bathing suit and cap. “I feel just like splashing around and doing nothing unless to keep from being drowned.”

“I have enough energy for that,” said Betty, swimming off.

“What do you suppose we’ll be doing this time next year?” asked Carolyn.

“My, you’re looking ahead, Carolyn! By that time we’ll be through being sophomores, or almost.”

Betty curved around and drew herself up on the steps where Carolyn and Kathryn were. “I’ve decided, to do something different every year,” she said. “I can’t do it all all the time, you see. I’ll keep up swimming, and some music, and then one year I’ll take riding, and another year something else—I think I will, anyhow.”

“What are you going to do this summer, Betty?” Carolyn asked.

“We’re going away for July and August, I think I told you.”

“Yes. I heard you speak of it. It will be wonderful to be on the ocean beach, Carolyn. But we’re going to have Mother go to my grandmother’s on a big farm, where they have tenants to do the work, mostly. It will be good for Amy Lou, whose been ‘peaked’ lately, since it grew so warm. Dick and Doris are to take turns going, I think, and I’m to keep house for Father. But that will mean lots of picnics and little trips out places for our dinner and then something is to happen for me, he said, when Mother comes back. But they won’t tell me what it is. So I have a nice mystery to look forward to, or try to discover.”

“Do you mean that either your brother or sister will stay with you?”

“I think they’re going to try that, though they are twins and like to be at least in the same town. But no telling. In our family we try experiments and if they don’t work we do something else. Nobody carries out anything just for meanness, or because they said they were going to.”

“I’ll tell that to Chauncey,” said Kathryn. “Chauncey hates to acknowledge that anything’s wrong he starts, and blazes ahead no matter what happens. You must have a nice family. I imagine you have a good time with your father and mother.”

“Oh, we do,” laughed Betty. “But we children do what they say—only we’re ‘reasoned with’,” and Betty pursed up her mouth.

“Probably they think you have some brains,” said Kathryn. “I’m not sure that my Dad thinks I have any. I’d better make a few more prominent, don’t you think so, Carolyn?”

“It wouldn’t hurt any.”

The afternoon was going on wings, Peggy said, as some one from the house looked out and Peggy called to ask the time. “That was only to know about refreshments,” she explained. “Will the mermaids now turn themselves into summer girls again and get their frocks on? We’ll go up the back way to the bath room and take turns at the shower. Then we’ll dress where we undressed, and have lunch in the arbor.”

That was a pleasing outlook. The mermaids followed directions and presently a cool arbor back of the pool was the scene of light refreshments being served to the group of Peggy Pollard’s friends. Peggy herself ladled out the iced lemonade from the punch bowl. “Please drink all that you want, girls; I can’t seem to get enough myself.”

A wood thrush sang from the thicket near them, and they heard a meadow lark from out toward Carolyn’s. “Can you realize, girls, that tomorrow we get our grade cards and won’t be freshmen any longer?” Kathryn waved her pretty glass of lemonade as she spoke.

“That is so,” said Betty. “I’ll not be Betty Lee, freshman, but Betty Lee, SOPHOMORE! I presume that I will receive a card since I escaped examinations!”

“It must be so,” dramatically cried Mary Emma in an exaggerated style, reminiscent of a ridiculous skit made up by the Girl Reserves, almost impromptu, when necessity called for a longer program. “Hail to the Sophomores! I will meet you at the witching hour of school time, tomorrow morning!”

“Come down from the high horse, Mary Emma, dear,” said Peggy, “and accept this plate of fudge.”

“Thank you,” said Mary Emma, putting the plate down beside her as if she thought it all for her. But she selected a piece and passed on the plate. They must really start pretty soon, yet it was such fun to be together.

“Peggy, I’ve had a glorious time and I’m sorry that it’s over. See you tomorrow morning at school. ’Bye, Peggy.”

“’Bye, Betty.”

“’Bye little Betty, don’t you cry,
You’ll be a Soph’more by and by!”

So sang Kathryn, who followed Betty in farewells, and made room for several others not quite so intimate with Peggy. “There is your car, Betty,” she said a little later. “I’m going to be home a good deal this summer. Let’s try to see each other.”

“Let’s,” warmly returned Betty, as she prepared to catch the car. “We can manage it, I’m sure. Goodbye, Kathryn, till I see you in the morning.”

THE END

[The end of _Betty Lee, Freshman_ by Harriet Pyne Grove]