

A young girl with dark hair is sitting cross-legged, reading an open book. She is wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus pink fabric. The lighting is warm and natural, highlighting the texture of the book and the girl's concentration.

**ANGELA
BRAZIL**

**AN EXCITING
TERM**

Angela Brazil

An Exciting Term

EAN 8596547187653

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

A Dead Secret

2

A Birthday.

3

Aunt Maggie

4

An Entrance Exam

5

The College

6

A Musical Club

7

Bicycles

8

Rags

9

A School Palaver

10

An Adventure Party.

11

Half Term

12

Trouble in IVB

13

Speech Day.

14

The Jokers

15

'Special Merits'

16

A Good Stunt

17

The Ice Rink

18

An Exhibition

19

'Merrie England'

20

Christmas



Table of Contents

A Dead Secret

Table of Contents

"Only one week left of the jolly old hols," said Meg, sitting on the top rail of the garden fence, and throwing paper pellets at Molly, who squatted on a log below. "Just one precious week, and then the merry old grind begins again. I wonder if we shall have Madame Mottier for Maths this term? Julie said she was afraid we should, and that she's an absolute terror! Molly, you're not listening!"

"Yes, I am, I hear you all right."

"I believe you like Maths!"

"Indeed I don't!"

"Well, why don't you grouse too?"

"What's the use? My motto's 'don't trouble trouble till trouble troubles you'. Perhaps we shan't have Madame Mottier after all, and anyway, let's enjoy our last week of hols without bothering to think of school. It's my birthday tomorrow!"

"You won't let us forget that!"

"Well, you didn't let us forget yours. What fun we had up at Glion. I'm going to ask Dad to take us to Champéry for my birthday treat."

"Oh no, let's go round the lake on the steamer; it would be far nicer."

"It's *my* birthday!"

"Yes, but wouldn't you like to be unselfish and do what I want?"

"That's one way of looking at it," laughed Molly, picking up the paper pellets and throwing them back at Meg.

The two girls were sitting in the garden of a little villa on a hillside that overlooked the town of Montreux and the lake of Geneva. Below them stretched terraces of vines, groves of trees and shrubs, white houses, and the gleaming lake, with its background of tall mountain peaks, all shimmering in the soft light of an early September afternoon. It was a glorious view, and one which they had grown to love, both in its winter dress of snow and in its summer robe of green, each so different and so perfect in its own way.

Meg and Molly Campbell were first cousins, and had been brought up almost as sisters. Meg, the elder by a month, had lost father and mother when she was three years old, and had lived ever since with her uncle, Mr. Donald Campbell, sharing everything alike with his daughter Molly. Mr. Campbell was a scientist, who had been a professor in a university in Canada until rather more than a year ago. Then, on the sudden death of his wife, he had resigned his appointment and had come to Switzerland, to join a colleague, Monsieur Henrich, in some important scientific research work. He shared Monsieur Henrich's laboratory and also his villa, and Madame Henrich looked after the two girls, who attended a day school in Montreux.

It had been a great change for Meg and Molly to leave Canada, where they had both been born, and to settle in Switzerland. At first they had disliked the Swiss school, where all the lessons were in French and seemed so difficult. They had grown accustomed to the language now, and classes were comparatively easy, though they always spoke to one another in English out of school.

Madame Henrich was quite kind to them, and they were tolerably fond of her one little girl Greta, a child of seven. After the sad loss of Mrs. Campbell, who had seemed a mother to Meg as well as to Molly, it was perhaps wise for the Campbells to come to Europe to make a fresh start. Mr. Campbell was absorbed in his scientific work. With Monsieur Henrich he spent most of his time in the laboratory, and had small leisure for other pursuits. Sometimes he would take the girls for a mountain walk, but as a rule they were left to the society of Madame Henrich, Greta and Marie, the Swiss maid.

Molly adored her father. The few golden occasions when they could have a ramble together were red-letter days in her calendar. She was looking forward now to her thirteenth birthday, and had secured a promise that she might choose an excursion to celebrate the fête. That it fell on 3rd September, and therefore in the holidays, she regarded as a particular piece of good luck.

By a family coincidence the girls had been christened the one Margaret, the other Margaret Mary. As their fathers were brothers they bore the same surname. Yet they were not in any respect alike. Meg with her blue eyes, auburn hair and brilliant complexion was much the handsomer of the pair, and always interested strangers, who hardly glanced at Molly's little freckled face, though a few noticed her grey eyes and dark lashes.

"She is intelligent—that one," said Madame Henrich to her husband. "She is also ready to help. Now Meg is full only of promises. When she ought to be making her bed she is looking into the mirror. Yes, so I have seen her."

The two girls, however, got on extremely well together and were excellent friends. Molly was shy, and allowed Meg to take the lead in public, but could hold her own in private. If they occasionally quarrelled between themselves at home, they invariably supported one another at school and were ready to fight each other's battles. Their classmates had nicknamed them "les jumelles" (the twins).

The Villa "Mon Désir" was a small detached house on the outskirts of Montreux. In the upper portion of it there was a large laboratory. Here the girls were never allowed to penetrate. Since their arrival they had not even had a peep inside. The door was always kept locked, and if they had to take a message or summon Mr. Campbell or Monsieur Henrich to a meal, it was only opened about an inch, not wide enough to afford them any view of the interior. What was happening within in the way of research they could merely guess. The two scientists preserved the utmost secrecy about their work. The girls had been strictly warned not to mention it or the existence of the laboratory to their schoolfellows or to anybody, as the success of the experiments would depend upon the privacy in which they were conducted. Meg and Molly had been perfectly loyal in the matter, and never referred to Mr. Campbell's occupation when they were outside the villa, but they were intensely curious about the laboratory, and often discussed between themselves what it could possibly contain.

On this particular afternoon the room was empty, and as usual locked. Monsieur Henrich was spending a few days in Paris, and Mr. Campbell had gone in the morning to Geneva and was not expected back till evening. After an early lunch

Madame Henrich had started off for Vevey to visit her sister, and Greta was at school, as she attended a small Preparatory, ten minutes' walk from the villa, and her term had already begun.

No sooner was Madame Henrich out of the way than Marie, the maid, informed the girls that some things required for dinner that night had not been sent, and that she must go to fetch them. She asked them to look after the house and answer the door during her absence, and set off carrying a basket. So Meg and Molly happened to be left in sole charge of "Mon Désir".

"I believe Marie invented that errand!" said Molly. "She has her best hat on!"

"Yes, there's a fair down in Montreux," laughed Meg. "We shan't see her back for ages in my opinion."

"Well, I don't care. It's rather fun having the place to ourselves for once."

"What shall we do?"

"We can't do anything much. If Marie had been here we might have gone into Montreux."

"We can't leave the house."

"No, of course not."

"I wish we could peep into the lab."

"You know the door's locked."

"It is, but I'd like to look through the window."

"That's not possible."

"Isn't it? I've an idea in my head. A jolly good one too."

"What?"

"Well, some men have been painting a house down the lane there, and they've left a ladder in the road just outside

our garden. I expect they've scooted off to the fair. Nearly everyone has, this afternoon. Let's fetch the ladder, put it up to the window of the lab, and peep in. The blind isn't down. We should see something."

"Oh, Meg! Dare we?"

"Why not? We shouldn't do any harm."

"Wouldn't Dad be angry?"

"He won't let us go in through the door but he never told us we mightn't peep through the window."

"Suppose someone saw us?"

"There's nobody about. Come along! Be a sport!"

It was certainly a very tempting proposition. Meg had jumped down from the fence and was running across the garden. When Meg led Molly invariably followed. The ladder had been left in the most handy place outside the gate. It was not too heavy to lift, and they easily carried it over the small grass plot and tilted it against the side of the house. It reached right to the laboratory window-sill. It was Meg, of course, who went up first. Standing near the top, she could look through the glass and see a table with bottles and retorts. Then she made a further discovery. The window was not absolutely shut. By pulling it with her fingers she swung one side open. The next moment she had climbed over the sill into the room.

"Come along, Molly! Let's explore!" she called.

Molly could not resist it. She scrambled up after Meg.

There was nothing in the room that looked particularly interesting. It was rather like the chemical laboratory at school. There were various kinds of apparatus, the use of which they could not guess, bottles and test tubes, and an

untidy litter in the corners. On the whole it was distinctly disappointing.

Hardly worth the trouble they had taken. They were walking round the table when they heard a slight noise at the window, and turning hastily saw the impish face of Greta, followed by her body as she scrambled from the ladder.

"Greta! What are you doing here?" asked Molly, aghast. "You naughty girl!"

Greta grinned cheerfully. She understood English very well, and could speak it after a fashion.

"I come because you come," she replied.

"But why aren't you at school?"

"Maman is at Vevey, so—I not go to school this afternoon."

"Then you're playing truant."

"Is that how you call it—'playing truant'? But yes. I stay in the wood shed till Marie has gone out. I see you bring the ladder, and I am here. Now I shall look."

"You mustn't touch anything," warned Meg.

"We can't have this kid here. We'd better be going," said Molly, walking back to the window. "Come along, Greta!"

Greta by that time was at the other side of the table, hidden by some apparatus. Among the bottles and tubes lay a small card, rather smaller than a post card. It happened to be exactly the size that she required for a purpose of her own. Unobserved by the elder girls, she slipped it into the pocket of her jersey.

"Come, Greta! Be quick!" urged Molly.

Meg hurried round the table, seized the child by the arm, and hustled her to the window.

"Now you go down first!" she commanded.

Molly followed next, and then Meg, standing on the ladder, carefully closed the window again and descended. The two girls carried the ladder back to its place in the road, closed the gate and returned to the garden. Greta stood watching them with her finger in her mouth.

"Your Daddy would be very angry if he found out you had been climbing into his lab," said Meg severely.

Greta removed the finger from her mouth and pointed it accusingly at the two elder girls.

"Papa would be also more angry with you for you went first," she remarked.

It was such a self-evident proposition that Meg and Molly stared at one another guiltily.

"Look here!" said Meg. "We must all three keep this a dead secret and promise not to tell. We didn't do any harm, we only walked round the room and never touched anything. If you were to tell, Greta, they'd find out you played truant from school! You'd get into a jolly scrape about that."

"Oh, I shall not tell."

"Then let's all three join hands and promise."

The compact was made and Meg, who felt responsible for suggesting the whole affair, heaved a sigh of relief.

"Now you go back to school at once!" she said.

But Greta shook her head.

"No, I cannot return to school to-day. I stayed here to occupy myself. To-morrow is the fête of Mademoiselle Molly.

I go now to my room. Do not ask me why."

She ran away hastily into the house, and the girls did not follow her. Birthday secrets were a matter of privilege.

"You think she'll keep this dark?" queried Molly.

"Yes, she won't want to get herself into trouble. She's quite safe, I'm sure," replied Meg.

They had only taken the ladder back just in time.

A few minutes later the workmen returned and carried it away. The girls watched them from the shelter of the garden.

Greta meantime had sought sanctuary in her own small bedroom. She was fond of Molly, and she wished to give her a birthday present. She intended to make a needlebook for her. She took out her workbox and some pieces of silk. The card which she had found in the laboratory was exactly what she needed for the purpose. Certainly there was some queer writing and a few figures on it, but that did not matter, for the silk would cover them up. She was rather clever at sewing, and in course of time produced quite a creditable little needlebook, in blue figured silk, with a piece of flannel inside to hold the needles, and blue ribbons to tie it together. When it was finished nobody could have guessed that the foundation was a card on which were written unintelligible hieroglyphs. She was sure Molly would be pleased, and that she would not criticize the size of the stitches. She wrapped it in a piece of tissue paper and placed it in an envelope, on which she wrote in a neat French hand "A ma chère amie Molly". Then she put it away in a drawer and joined the others in the garden. Marie, the maid, had not yet returned. As the girls were left in charge

of the house they could not go for a walk, so played "darts" on the grassplot. There was a target, and they each threw six darts in turns, scoring according to the rings which they hit. Greta was quite a good shot and had the luck to make a bull's-eye. She was clapping her hands in much triumph when they heard footsteps on the pathway and a ring at the electric bell.

"Somebody at the front door! Marie's not in! You go, Molly," said Meg, picking up the darts, for her turn came next.

Molly ran in through the kitchen and along the passage and opened the front door. A stranger stood there, a tall man with a pointed black beard. He spoke in French, with a rather guttural accent, and asked for Monsieur Campbell or Monsieur Henrich.

Molly replied that her father was in Geneva and Monsieur Henrich was in Paris.

"Is Madame Henrich at home?" he inquired.

"No, she is at Vevey this afternoon."

"Perhaps she may return soon? Will you kindly allow me to come in and wait for her? It is important."

Molly hesitated. She wished Marie was there.

The stranger seemed to take it for granted. He walked into the hall, and seeing the door of the salon open he entered and seated himself on a chair.

"I will remain here until Madame arrives," he announced, and drawing a newspaper from his pocket he began to read.

Rather uneasy, but not knowing what to do, Molly returned to the garden and communicated the news to Meg.

"I suppose it's all right?" she queried.

"Well, I hope so. Marie ought to be back soon. How long will your maman be in Vevey, Greta?"

"I don't know. She has gone to see Tante Lulu, and sometimes she stay long there."

"Well, I suppose he'll go when he gets tired of waiting," said Molly. "It's my turn now. What's your last score, Meg?"

The girls went on with their game, and in the course of about half an hour Marie put in an appearance, making excuses for her long absence on the ground that the shops had been full, and she had been obliged to wait before being served.

"There's a man in the salon," volunteered Molly. "He wants to see Madame. He said it was important."

Marie hurried indoors, but returned almost directly with the information that there was nobody in the house.

"He must have gone, then," said Meg.

"I hope he took nothing with him," said Marie.

She ran back, followed by the girls, and examined the rooms in much agitation. Everything, however, was as usual. The silver cups won by Monsieur Henrich at various skating contests were in their places on the sideboard. Nothing seemed missing. Evidently the stranger was not a burglar. Whatever his important business might have been he had not cared to wait, nor had he left his card or any message. He must have heard the voices of the girls in the garden and could easily have sought them out had he wished. Instead he had just mysteriously vanished.

"I expect he had to catch a train," suggested Molly.

"Well, never mind, so long as he wasn't a burglar it's all right," said Meg.

Madame Henrich returned about six o'clock, so full of her visit to her sister that she made no inquiries about the events of the afternoon, assuming that all had gone well in her absence. Mr. Campbell arrived soon afterwards, and the family sat down to their evening meal. When it was finished Meg and Greta ran back into the garden to fetch the target and darts, but Molly lingered behind. From the hall she could hear her father speaking to Madame Henrich in the salon.

"I expect your husband will be returning by the night train from Paris," he was saying. "I sent him a telegram from Geneva this morning. I have some most important and splendid news for him."

Madame replied in an undertone which Molly could not catch, and afterwards Mr. Campbell went upstairs to the laboratory. He ran down again in a few minutes looking extremely agitated.

"Has anybody been in the house while I was out?" he inquired. "There is something missing from the laboratory! The door is locked as usual. Is it possible it can have been tampered with? Who has been here to-day?"

Madame Henrich, equally disturbed, summoned Marie, who was obliged to confess that she had gone to Montreux and left the house in charge of the children. Meg and Molly were called, and reported the visit of the stranger who had waited some time in the salon for Madame and then taken his departure.

Mr. Campbell was furiously angry; he scolded everybody, blaming Madame, Marie and the girls for their culpable carelessness. What exactly was the matter Meg and Molly could not tell, but they gathered he suspected the visitor of

having been into the laboratory. Things were so unpleasant that they were glad to retire to bed.

"Ought we to tell Dad we went up the ladder?" asked Molly, when they were upstairs.

"No! We only walked round the lab, and we none of us touched a single thing. That I could swear to."

"Perhaps he ought to know."

"There's no need. He's angry enough as it is. Why should we get into a worse scrape?"

"I just thought—perhaps——"

"Well, don't think! You promised faithfully you wouldn't tell. And it isn't as if we'd had anything to do with it. You know we touched nothing."

"Perhaps he'll find whatever he's lost when he looks again, but I wish it hadn't happened," said Molly, as she jumped into bed.

2

[Table of Contents](#)

A Birthday

Table of Contents

The household at the Villa Mon Désir always rose early. Schools in Switzerland began work at eight o'clock instead of at nine as in England, so the family breakfasted punctually at seven. On the following morning Greta indeed woke the girls at six by bursting into their room to offer her birthday present. Molly, still rather sleepy, sat up in bed to examine the needlebook and to express admiration and thanks and due astonishment.

"I made it myself. No one helped me. You did not know I was making for you a surprise?" said Greta, jumping on to the bed.

"No, indeed, I never guessed. It's very kind of you. But you needn't sit on my feet, please! You're heavy."

"You like it?" asked Greta, dancing round the room.

"Very much."

"You shall put it inside—but no, I must not yet tell you! Maman, she also has a present for you. She is already downstairs. I hear her. Do you not wish to get up?"

Fully awake by now, the girls dressed leisurely and were in the salon before the coffee was ready. On the table Molly found a lovely interesting bouquet of flowers and several parcels. There was a workbag from Madame Henrich, in blue silk, a paintbox from her father, a carved Swiss pencilbox from Meg, and a small package with an English stamp on it, that the postman had just delivered. This contained a green necklace and a letter from her Aunt Maggie in England.

"Are you not lucky?" said Greta, who watched the opening of the parcels with intense interest. "Now you can put my needlebook inside Maman's workbag. How happy it is to have a birthday!"

"I like the necklace," said Meg. "What a good thing you wrote to Aunt Maggie at Christmas and gave her our address in Switzerland. She forgot you last year. I wish she'd remembered *my* birthday."

"Well, you see, she's *my* aunt, not yours."

"Great-aunt!" corrected Meg.

"Great-aunt or little-aunt, what does it matter?"

"Well, she knows we live together, so I wish she would remember *me* too."

"She does. Here's her letter. She says:

"Heath House, Park Road,
Rillington.

My Dear Margaret,

I send you this necklace with my love and best wishes for your birthday. It is many years since I was in Switzerland, and I fear I shall not get so far again as Montreux, for travelling does not suit me nowadays. I hope, however, that you and your cousin will come sometime and pay me a visit in England. I should like to see you, as I was so fond of your mother. Tell your father he must try and arrange it.

Your affectionate aunt,
Margaret Norton."

"Oh!" exclaimed Meg. "That *would* be jolly! We've never been in England. Tell her we'd love to come."

"I shall. I'll write and thank her for her present, and say we're 'looking forward to accepting her kind invitation'. Is that the way to put it?"

"Yes, give her my love as well as yours. She sounds rather an old dear."

The early part of the morning passed happily. Mr. Campbell came down to breakfast, kissed Molly and heartily congratulated her upon having entered her teens. He did not refer to the trouble of the previous evening.

"Will you take us for an excursion, Daddy?" asked Molly hopefully. "Can we go for the whole day?"

"Impossible. I'm too busy," he replied, hastily finishing his coffee and going upstairs to his laboratory.

"Perhaps he will in the afternoon," whispered Meg, as Molly's face registered disappointment.

Greta was being packed off to school, with her books in her satchel, and shortly after she had left the house Monsieur Henrich arrived, having travelled by the night train from Paris. He drank a cup of coffee, then went to join Mr. Campbell in the laboratory. About ten minutes later, the girls were making their beds—a daily duty which Madame required them to perform—when they heard an unusual commotion upstairs. Loud and angry voices issued from the laboratory, as if a violent quarrel were in progress. Monsieur Henrich came out on to the landing, shouting at the pitch of his lungs, the door banged, he clattered downstairs, and called excitedly for Madame.

Meg and Molly looked at one another in consternation. Evidently something very unpleasant was happening. Mr. Campbell and Monsieur Henrich had always been on such

friendly terms it seemed unthinkable to imagine any altercation between them. What could possibly be the matter?

"I vote we go for a walk!" suggested Meg.

"I agree with you!" said Molly, putting on her hat. The girls hurried away, glad to get out of the house. Squabbles between themselves were bad enough, but quarrels between grown-ups were serious. They went for a long ramble, in search of flowers, and did not return to the villa until lunch time. Monsieur Henrich was not present at table, and both Madame Henrich and Mr. Campbell were very quiet and scarcely spoke to one another. Greta chattered as usual, but Meg and Molly felt the atmosphere was uncomfortable.

When the meal was over Molly made another appeal to her father.

"Daddy! It's my birthday! Can you take us somewhere this afternoon? You promised!"

At first he shook his head, then, seeing her eyes swimming with tears, he relented.

"Be ready by half-past three, and I'll take you to have tea at the Casino," he said.

This, though not the kind of excursion for which she had hoped, was much better than nothing. She ran to tell the good news to Meg.

"The music's jolly and there are always delicious little cakes," commented Meg. "I wish we could have gone on the steamer."

"Well, if we can't we can't!"

"Perhaps we may do the lake trip another day."

"Yes, if there's time before the hols end."

"We've nearly a week left. School doesn't begin till the 9th."

The girls were ready and waiting by half-past three, and soon afterwards Mr. Campbell joined them in the hall. They caught a motor-bus at the end of the road, which took them to Montreux and put them down close to the Casino. The concert had already begun when they arrived. The orchestra was playing a "Danse Espagnole" by Sarasate. The large hall was fairly well filled with visitors, both below and in the surrounding gallery. A table close to the foot of the great staircase was vacant, so they seated themselves there, and Mr. Campbell beckoned to a waitress and ordered tea. It was really very festive. They were in a little alcove, banked on one side by pots of tall flowers, and commanding a good view of the orchestra and also of the hall. Tourists of all nations were sitting listening to the music and having refreshments.

"Don't you feel as if you were in the wide world?" said Meg, with a sigh of satisfaction.

She settled herself comfortably in her seat, looking round at the other visitors. Meg was fond of society and enjoyed the atmosphere of a crowd.

"Rather different from school, I must say," replied Molly, who was equally delighted.

"Yes, we don't get much fun at school."

"That's Marie Chenier over there!"

"So it is!"

"And her mother with her."

"Do they see us?"

"Yes, she's smiling."

"I'm glad for Marie to see *us* here!"

"She often goes to the Casino."

"The Cheniers are rather fashionable."

"I like Madame's hat."

"So do I."

It was undoubtedly an opportunity for seeing French fashions. Certain of the ladies were gowned in the latest creations from Paris. Some had pretty children with them. There was a general appearance of gaiety. In the intervals between the pieces on the programme everybody seemed to chatter.

Molly began to feel that at last she was having something in the way of a birthday fête. The cakes were particularly nice, and they were allowed to have ices afterwards. The first part of the concert was over, and there was a long interval before the second part of the programme would begin. The musicians had left the platform, and were possibly fortifying themselves with coffee behind the scenes.

"Isn't it all jolly?" murmured Meg, leaning back luxuriously in her cushioned corner.

"Simply marvellous," said Molly, finishing the last spoonful of her vanilla ice.

"Enjoying yourselves?" asked Mr. Campbell.

"Rather, Dad!"

"Would you like any more cakes?"

"No, thanks!"

"Another ice?"

"Really not, thanks!"

"Slimming?"

"No, Dad! I'm not fat enough to go in for that."

"I thought perhaps you wanted to cultivate a willowy figure like the lady over there."

"She's very elegant, but she's eaten nothing. I watched her."

"Those German children at the next table have had three platefuls of cakes," remarked Meg.

"Well, I hope they'll be none the worse for it. Germans generally have excellent digestions."

They were sitting in their alcove, chatting thus, and quite jolly and amused, when a sudden interruption occurred. Monsieur Henrich and two other gentlemen walked into the hall, looked round the tables, located the Campbells, and came and sat down with them, ordering black coffee. Their appearance was not at all welcome to the birthday party. Molly wondered why they had intruded. She glanced at her father, but his face was non-committal.

The men began to speak in low tones in French, but Mr. Campbell, with a meaning glance at the girls, changed the conversation into German, a language which most Swiss people speak fluently but which Meg and Molly did not understand. What they were saying seemed to be of an unpleasant character. Mr. Campbell first flushed, and then went very white. He appeared to be making a most indignant denial. Monsieur Henrich turned to the two strangers, who nodded emphatically, and murmured something. Mr. Campbell rose, and spoke hurriedly to the girls.

"You two had better go home! Take the bus. Here's a franc for your fares. Run along now!"

Thus unexpectedly and peremptorily dismissed, Molly and Meg got up and walked to the door. They turned there to see Mr. Campbell still standing, evidently watching their exit. He sat down again as they passed through the barrier.

"What's the matter?" asked Meg, when they found themselves in the road.

"I can't imagine. Only that Dad and Monsieur Henrich have quarrelled. It's simply horrible."

"It's spoilt your birthday."

"It has."

"What have they quarrelled about?"

"I'm sure I can't tell."

"Those other men looked very angry too."

"Yes. Oh, there's the bus! If we run we shall just catch it."

When the girls arrived at the villa they found Madame Henrich and Greta had gone out. They were rather glad, as there was now no need to explain why they had returned so soon. Feeling very depressed, they wandered about the house for a while, not quite knowing what to do with themselves.

"I think I shall write a letter to Aunt Maggie to thank her for my necklace," said Molly, opening the bureau in the salon, and finding a sheet of notepaper.

"Very well. I'll go and read in the garden," replied Meg.

Molly was not a remarkably good correspondent. It needed much thinking to compose a suitable reply of thanks to a great-aunt whom she had never yet seen. And when she was half-way through she made such a frightful blot that she felt obliged to write it all over again. She had just finished and was directing the envelope when Mr. Campbell