

Chapter

7

SURPRISE

WHEN the dust cleared, Polly and Dennis were still alive. But it had been a near thing.

"Best stay in bed today," Doctor Simpson said after he'd examined them. "You've had a lucky escape."

"The plane crash-landed in a field," Mr Jenkins told them. "We've got the army out looking for the pilot."

Doctor Simpson gave Amy a note for some medicine. Norman ran off to the village to get it. As soon as he got there, he saw what he'd been waiting for. Grainger and Vivienne Belling were talking together in the churchyard. Norman followed them to Grainger's car and saw Grainger give Belling a package.

Norman rushed back to tell Polly and Dennis what he'd seen. They were very excited. They were certain that Grainger and Vivienne Belling were spies. But they still needed proof. A spy had to have a wireless to send secret messages. If they could find Grainger's wireless, that would prove he was a spy.

Finding the wireless was a job for Mary. But she could only do it when Millington and Grainger were out.



The next morning, Norman was up bright and early. "Any post, Auntie Amy?" he asked.

"Not yet," said Amy. "Are you expecting something?"

Norman was expecting something but he wouldn't say what. The next moment, there was a knock on the door.

"Special parcel for young Norman," said Mr Jenkins when Amy answered the door. A young woman stepped inside. It was Norman's mother.

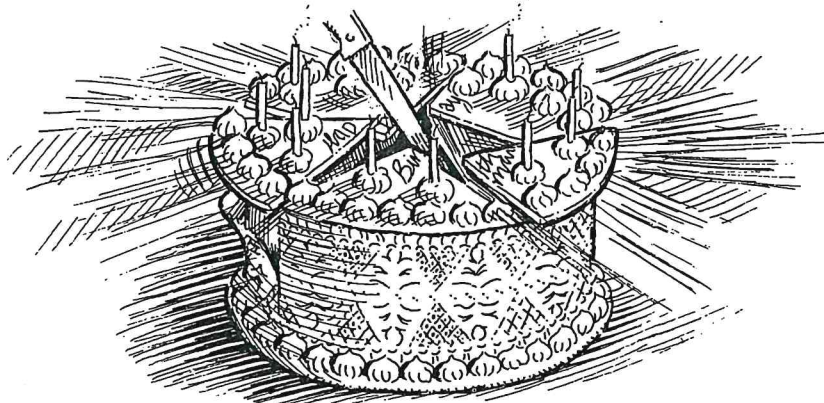
Mrs Starkey had made the surprise trip for a very special reason. "Happy Birthday, Norman," she smiled.

Norman had expected a birthday card but not this. It was a wonderful surprise. His mother had brought him presents and a huge birthday cake with candles.

Norman blew out the candles in one breath.

"Who's for a piece of cake?" asked Amy.

Before Mrs Starkey could stop her, Amy had stuck a knife into the cake. The cake split open. It wasn't real. Just a round hat box made to look like a cake.



Mrs Starkey was almost in tears. "You just can't get the ingredients any more," she told everybody.

"Don't worry," said Amy. "I'll make him a proper cake."

At Westbourne Hall, Mary searched Grainger's bedroom for the wireless. All she found was a suitcase containing nylon stockings and cigarettes.

It had been a wonderful birthday but it was time for Mrs Starkey to go home. Norman ran upstairs to bed. He was heart-broken.

By the next afternoon, he was feeling better again. He had saved some birthday cake for Mary. Polly, Norman and Dennis ran over to Westbourne Hall to give it to her.

They raced towards the greenhouse and burst in through the door. Then they stopped. The German pilot was inside. He was pointing a gun straight at them.

Chapter

8

THE PILOT

JUST stay still," a voice said. It was Mary. She was sitting down on the floor. The pilot signalled for Norman, Polly and Dennis to sit next to her.

As they got closer, they could see that the pilot was badly injured. His uniform was soaked in blood and his arm was broken. He was very tired. He propped himself up so that the gun was pointing at the children. But he couldn't stay awake. His eyes started to close.

Mary inched forward to grab the gun. She reached out. Her hand was almost on it when the pilot's eyes opened again. The gun was pointing straight at Mary. But the pilot had given up. He let Mary take the gun away.

"Get him some water," said Mary.

Polly got water for the pilot to drink, and Norman gave him the last piece of birthday cake. But the pilot was still very weak. Without a doctor, he would die. What should they do? If they fetched help, Grainger would find out that they had been in the greenhouse. Then there would be trouble. Especially for Mary.

"You'd better go back to the Hall," Norman told her. "Then Polly can get help."



After Mary and Polly had gone, Norman and Dennis waited with the pilot. Suddenly, the door flew open and Grainger burst in. He was pointing a shotgun at them.

"What's all this then?" he shouted.

"Don't shoot him!" Norman shouted.

"What makes you think it's him I'm going to shoot?" said Grainger.



The pilot was carried from the greenhouse to the front of Westbourne Hall. Mr Jenkins was there with his car. So was Vivienne Belling. Polly, Norman and Dennis stood nearby as the pilot was put into the back of Jenkins' car. They heard Belling talk to the pilot. She was speaking in German.

"That proves she's a spy," said Polly.

The pilot was driven off to hospital.

"You three keep off my land or next time I'll be pointing my gun at you!" Grainger shouted at them. They ran back to Wells Farm as fast as they could.

When they got back, there was more bad news. Private Wilson had arrived to collect Luigi. "He won't be coming here again," he told Amy. "He's being moved to another farm."

"Where?" Amy asked.

"Westbourne Hall!"

It was Grainger. He had got the Italian moved so that Luigi couldn't help Amy any more. Luigi gave Amy a cross he had carved. He was very upset. He wanted to stay at Wells Farm, but he had to go where he was told.

Norman, Polly and Dennis felt like giving up. They couldn't think what to do to stop Grainger. But Mary hadn't given in. That night, when Grainger slipped off into the darkness, Mary followed him. She was on his trail.