

The Kidnapped Actress

Tonight was the opening night. Janet Blake had been waiting for this day for a long time. This was her great chance. She had got the leading part in the new musical. She knew that there were many actresses who didn't like that. They wanted the part themselves. Four girls had been tested for the part. They were Sue Harryson, Liz Stewart, Audrey Smith and herself. All four girls had had to learn the part if anything should happen. It was six o'clock. Steven Pratt, the producer, was sitting talking to Sue, Liz and Audrey. The show was to begin at eight o'clock. Janet was not there and Mr Pratt was a bit nervous.

- Where is Janet? said Mr Pratt. She must come soon. The show begins at eight.
- Oh, she will be here in a minute, said Liz.
- Well, if anything has happened to her one of you must take her part, said Pratt.
- Oh, I'm sure she will soon be here, said Sue and Audrey.
- I hope so, said Pratt. You know, so many things can happen to a girl walking alone in a street nowadays.
- Yes, I know, said Audrey. Just after I got here I looked through a window upstairs and then I saw a boy attack a girl in the street. I think he tried to take her hand bag.

They sat talking for a while and Pratt was getting more and more nervous . When it was almost seven o'clock Pratt said he had to look around the theatre to see if everything else was in order. He told the girls to change. He also said he had to telephone Janet's home to find out what had happened. He phoned Janet's home but nobody answered. Then he was sure that something had happened to Janet. He walked upstairs to look at the rooms there. All rooms upstairs had windows but there was only one room facing the street. All the other rooms were facing the garden. Downstairs where Pratt had been sitting with the girls there were no windows at all. When Pratt was walking around upstairs he thought he heard something. He opened one door after another and when he opened the door to the room with the window facing the street he got a shock. On the floor under the window he saw Janet Blake. Her feet and her hands were tied up and she had a handkerchief in her mouth. Pratt helped her to get free and asked her who had done this to her. Janet said that she had not seen the person who had surprised her but she had felt it was a girl. Pratt thought for a moment and then he said:

- Janet, I think I know who did it and why.

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