

NANCY DREW MYSTERY STORIES®

*The Quest
of the
Missing Map*

BY CAROLYN KEENE

GROSSET & DUNLAP
Publishers • New York

A member of The Putnam & Grosset Group

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THE QUEST OF THE MISSING MAP

“No! No! I won’t go there!” seven-year-old Trixie Chatham cries out. “The Ship Cottage is haunted!”

Prompted by her concern for the frightened child, Nancy investigates the small studio on the Chatham estate. What the astute young detective discovers leads her to believe that there is a connection between the mysterious occurrences at Ship Cottage and her search for a treasure island.

With only a few slim clues to guide her—a half map and Tomlin Smith’s vague memories—Nancy sets out to find Mr. Smith’s long-lost twin brother, who possesses the rest of the map that will pinpoint the location of buried treasure willed to them by their father.

Constantly beset by danger and intrigue, Nancy counteously outwits her enemies and solves one of the most challenging cases in her career as a teen-age investigator.



“Leave here at once and never come back!” the stranger warned

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Acknowledgement is made to Mildred Wirt Benson, who under the pen name
Carolyn Keene, wrote the original NANCY DREW books

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Putnam & Grosset Group,

New York. Published simultaneously in Canada. S.A.

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eISBN : 978-1-101-07720-7

<http://us.penguin.com>

CHAPTER I

The Haunted House

HER golden red hair flying in the wind, Nancy Drew ran up the porch steps and opened the front door of her home.

She could hear Hannah Gruen, the Drews' housekeeper, saying to someone in the living room, "Why don't you tell your mysterious story to Nancy? She's a really clever young detective."

The mere mention of a mystery quickened the pulse of eighteen-year-old Nancy. She dropped her art books and portfolio on the hall table and glanced into the living room.

"Come in, dear," said Mrs. Gruen. "You're home early."

"Art school was dismissed at two-thirty today," Nancy replied.

Seated on a couch beside Mrs. Gruen was an attractive, dark-haired girl about twenty.

"Nancy, I'd like you to meet Ellen Smith," the middle-aged, kindly housekeeper said. "You've frequently heard me speak of her."

The girls greeted each other, then Ellen said, "I was hoping Mrs. Gruen might accompany me to Rocky Edge this afternoon. I just dread going alone." She glanced at Hannah.

"Rocky Edge?" Nancy asked. "Isn't that the estate along the river?"

"Yes, it is," Hannah Gruen replied. "Ellen says she has been offered a summer position there with the owner. If she takes it, the salary will help tremendously toward her tuition at Blackstone College of Music."

Ellen added, "My parents have suffered some serious financial reverses. They can't afford to send me and recently my father was injured in a car accident."

"I'm terribly sorry," Nancy said sympathetically. After a pause she asked, "Are you taking piano lessons?"

"No. I'm studying voice, but I do play the piano."

"Ellen has a lovely voice," Mrs. Gruen put in. "A few weeks ago she sang on TV, and her teacher is urging her to devote all her time to music and become a soloist."

"If only I could!" Ellen murmured wistfully. "But already I've borrowed a lot of money and I'm worried about how to pay it back. I want to take the position at Rocky Edge because it pays well, but the place and the people have an air of mystery about them that scares me. Besides, I'm afraid I won't be able to get along with Trixie."

"Who is she?" Nancy inquired.

"Trixie is Mrs. Chatham's seven-year-old daughter," Ellen explained. "I've never met her but

understand she's unruly."

"Your job would be to look after her?"

Ellen nodded. "Mrs. Chatham wants me to live there and give Trixie piano lessons. The mother is a strange person, a widow, and frustrating at times." Ellen turned to Hannah Gruen and said, "Won't you please go with me to see Mrs. Chatham and talk about the position?"

The housekeeper smiled. "Why not take Nancy? She's had a lot of experience meeting strange people. If Nancy thinks it's all right for you to accept the position, I'm sure it will be."

"I'll be glad to go," Nancy said.

She was eager to help Ellen, and curious about the wealthy and eccentric Mrs. Chatham.

"I don't like to put you to so much trouble," Ellen protested. "But I would appreciate having you with me."

"You're not afraid of Mrs. Chatham?"

"Not exactly, and I'd try to get along with her and Trixie. I love children and enjoy working with them. At Rocky Edge I'll have time to practice my vocal work. I was told there's a small studio on the estate."

As Ellen talked, Nancy could not help but wonder, "Is Ellen's decision difficult to make because of the mysterious story I heard Hannah mention? Is it connected with the position at Rocky Edge? Or some other, mystery haunting Ellen?"

As the two girls left the Drew house and walked toward the driveway, Nancy remarked to Ellen, "I heard Hannah say something about a mysterious story."

"It has to do with a map and a buried treasure," the other girl replied as they stepped into Nancy's car.

Nancy hoped to hear more about the buried treasure as they rode along, but Ellen turned the conversation toward the two girls' interest in art: one of them in music, the other in drawing and sketching.

"What are you specializing in?" she asked Nancy.

"Drawing figures and faces," Nancy replied.

"As a child I always filled in the capital o's in magazines and newspapers with eyes, nose, mouth, and ears, so I guess Dad thought it might be a good idea if I turned my doodling to good account!" She laughed.

Ellen said, "I hope to do the same with my music. When Hannah Gruen worked for my family years ago, she taught me lots of children's songs. Hannah was really wonderful to my family. I was always sorry she left, but when Mother and Dad returned from their trip around the world, Mother took charge of our home herself."

"My mother," said Nancy, "died when I was only three and Hannah Gruen has taken care of me ever since. She's like a member of the family."

Ellen nodded. "I know what you mean."

The car sped on past the outskirts of River Heights. Halfway to Wayland, Nancy turned into a shaded road and presently drew up near a sign which read Rocky Edge. She drove slowly up a curving tree-lined lane toward the house.

It was a large rambling structure, half hidden from the road by masses of high, overgrown shrubs. The driveway led to a pillared porch.

"It's creepy here, isn't it?" Ellen remarked nervously.

"Oh, not really," Nancy replied. "No trimming has been done on the grounds, but that gives the place atmosphere."

"I could do without it," Ellen said uneasily as they got out of the car.

She went ahead of Nancy and pressed the bell. Almost at once the door was flung open. The two callers found themselves facing a little girl.

"I don't know what you're selling!" the child cried out. "Whatever it is we don't want any! So go away!"

"Just a minute, please," Nancy said. "We came to talk with Mrs. Chatham about Miss Smith giving her daughter music lessons."

The little girl's dark eyes opened wide as she stared first at Nancy, then at Ellen. She wore her hair in two long braids, and her short dress made her thin legs look like toothpicks.

"I don't want anyone to teach me!" the child exclaimed. "There are too many now. If another one comes, I'll—I'll run away!"

"Trixie!"

Mrs. Chatham, a stout woman dressed in a bright-blue silk dress, had come to the door. Seizing the little girl by an arm, she pulled her away.

As Trixie began to cry, her mother said con-tritely, "I didn't mean to hurt you, dear, but sometimes you are impossible."

Ellen introduced Nancy to Mrs. Chatham. The woman invited the callers into a living room furnished with bizarre modern tables, chairs, and paintings. She began a lengthy account of her daughter's shortcomings, regardless of the fact that the child was listening to every word.

At the first opportunity Nancy rose from her chair and asked Trixie to show her the grounds. As they walked down a shady trail, Nancy smiled at the child, recited a funny limerick, and soon had the little girl laughing gaily.

"I wish you were going to be here instead of Miss Smith," Trixie remarked. "I like you."

"You'll like Ellen too," Nancy assured her. "And I'll come to see you sometimes."

"All right. But I hope she won't try to boss me like the others did. No one can tell me what to do!"

"I'm afraid you've heard your mother say that to you so often you believe it." Nancy laughed. "No, let's forget about being naughty. Suppose you show me the rest of the grounds. Shall we go first to that little house?"

Through the trees at a spot that overlooked the river, Nancy could see the red roof of what appeared

to be a tiny cottage. To her surprise Trixie held back.

“No! No! I won’t go there!” she cried out.

“Why not?”

“Because the place is haunted, that’s why!” The child’s freckled face was tense. “I wouldn’t go inside the Ship Cottage for anything!”

“The Ship Cottage?” Nancy repeated. “Is that its name?”

“It’s what I call it. Please, let’s go the other way.”

Trixie tugged at Nancy’s hand but could not make her turn in the opposite direction.

“I’m sure there’s no reason why you should be afraid,” Nancy said gently. “If you won’t come, then I’ll go alone. I’ll prove to you that the place is not haunted.”

“Please don’t go there,” the child pleaded frantically. “You’ll be sorry if you do.”

“What makes you so afraid of it?”

The little girl would not answer. Jerking free, she ran off in the opposite direction.

“Poor child,” Nancy thought, shrugging. “I do feel sorry for her.”

Nancy was sure that Trixie was watching her from a distance as she walked slowly down the path to the quaint little house. The door was unlocked and Nancy went inside. The one-room cottage was pleasant though dusty, and was lined with shelves of books. In the center of the floor stood a very old grand piano. The ivory keys had turned yellow and cobwebs festooned the mahogany case.

“It’s probably out of tune,” she mused.

Nancy crossed the room and ran her fingers over the bass keys. Not a sound came from the instrument. Nancy was bewildered, and played a series of chords. Although she depressed the keys again and again no notes came out.

“That’s strange!” she thought.

Nancy bent to examine the pedals to see if the piano had a spring lock that prevented the strings from being struck. There was none.

As she was about to lift up the lid of the piano Nancy noticed several ship models on the mantelpiece and others on tables.

“So that’s why Trixie calls this place Ship Cottage,” Nancy murmured, taking down one of the finer models from the mantel. “Undoubtedly this is the music studio Ellen mentioned.”



“I won’t go there! It’s haunted!” Trixie called out

After carefully replacing the small ship, Nancy heard a sound behind her. At the same moment she caught a reflection in the mirror above the fireplace. What she saw sent icy chills down her spine. The wall panel behind her had slid open. A bearded man with cruel, beady eyes was watching her every move.

“Leave here at once and never come back!” he warned in a rasping voice.

CHAPTER II

Curious Revelation

NANCY wheeled around and caught a fleeting glimpse of a long row of brass buttons down the front of the man's coat. The next instant the panel closed noiselessly.

As Nancy dashed toward the spot, one hand brushed the piano keys. A crash of chords broke the eerie stillness of the cottage.

Nancy tried to be calm but her heart was thumping madly. "I mustn't let myself be frightened," she told herself.

Deciding it might be dangerous to investigate the cottage further at this time, she hastily left. Once outside, she gazed about the grounds. No one was in sight.

"I'm glad Trixie didn't come with me," she said to herself. "I've never believed in ghosts and refuse to do so now. All the same, there's something very queer about this place."

Nancy had inherited an inquiring mind from her father, an eminent criminal lawyer, but she knew the wisdom of using caution in all investigations. Since solving *The Secret of the Old Clock*, Nancy had built an enviable reputation as an amateur sleuth.

Now, as she stood staring at Ship Cottage, Nancy wondered why the piano had made no sound when her fingers had moved over the keys the first time.

"It wasn't imagination," she reflected. Just then Nancy heard her name called. Turning, she saw Ellen motioning to her from far up the path.

"Coming!" Nancy answered.

"I'm ready to leave whenever you are," Ellen announced, joining her new friend. "What became of Trixie?"

"She ran off. You know, Ellen, I rather like her," Nancy declared with sincerity.

"Mrs. Chatham speaks so harshly to her daughter," Ellen remarked. "Then the next minute she's as sweet as honey. I can't understand her."

"You've decided not to take the position for the summer?"

"I told Mrs. Chatham I'd think it over."

Nancy said slowly, "There's something about Rocky Edge I don't quite like. Ellen, I wish you wouldn't come here—at least not until we've made a complete investigation of the place."

"Why, Nancy," Ellen exclaimed in astonishment, "have you learned something about Mr. Chatham?"

"Not a thing," Nancy answered. "It's mostly a feeling I have. I'll explain it later. When must you

give her your answer?"

"Mrs. Chatham didn't say, but I imagine she wants to know soon."

During the ride back to River Heights, Ellen sensed that Nancy was keeping something from her and asked if this was true. Smiling, Nancy refused to divulge what she had learned.

"I'll tell my secret when you tell yours," she joked. "But seriously, please don't accept Mrs. Chatham's offer until after I talk with my dad."

"All right, I won't," Ellen promised.

Nancy drove the girl to a bus which would take her back to Blackstone College, then went to her father's office. Nancy frequently asked his assistance in solving mysteries.

Although Mr. Drew was unusually busy, the tall, handsome man laid aside his papers, kissed his daughter affectionately, and listened attentively to her story about the mysterious Ship Cottage.

"You're certain you saw the open panel close again?" he asked when she had finished.

"Yes, Dad. Also, the piano was mute at first. Then later it played. How do you account for that?"

"I can't," the lawyer replied soberly. "However, I think it would be unwise for you to go there again."

"Oh, Dad!" Nancy protested in dismay. "How can I help Ellen if I don't?"

"Well, don't go alone," he amended, flashing her an understanding smile. "You're all I have, Nancy. You're very dear to me. Don't forget that."

She hugged him and promised, then asked, "Do you think it would be unwise for Ellen to accept Mrs. Chatham's offer?"

"I'd say it would be foolhardy until we've checked the place thoroughly."

"I had hoped you might be able to tell me something about Rocky Edge, Dad."

Mr. Drew gazed out the window for several seconds. Then he said slowly, "It seems to me I do recall some trouble a few years ago at Rocky Edge. But that would have been before the Chatham family bought it."

"Who owned it previously?" Nancy asked.

"I can't remember the name of the man," her father answered, "but I think he was an inventor and there was an unusual lawsuit against him, due to one of his gadgets. As soon as I can, I'll look into the matter for you."

"I wonder if there might be some connection between the gadgets and the strange things that happened today," Nancy remarked.

"I don't know. It seems to me Mr. Chatham was a friend of the owner and bought the place after the man died. Mr. Chatham himself passed away less than two years ago."

Nancy was silent a moment, then asked her father what she should tell Ellen.

"Advise her to stall," Carson Drew answered promptly.

Nancy decided that instead of telephoning Ellen, she would drive to Blackstone College the next

afternoon. Ellen was to be in a recital and Nancy was eager to hear her sing.

She invited her friends Bess Marvin and George Fayne to go with her and they accepted. The two girls, who were cousins, often shared Nancy's adventures. Bess, blond and slightly plump, was a bit more timid than slim, tomboyish George.

"Oh, oh," Bess remarked as the three entered the college auditorium. "Nearly all the seats are taken."

"We'll squeeze in somewhere," Nancy declared cheerfully. "I see two places down front where the performers are seated."

She suggested that Bess and George go forward and take them. "I'll sit somewhere else. Introduce yourselves to Ellen Smith after the recital and tell her I'm here. We'll meet in the lobby."

As Nancy looked for a seat, she saw Mrs. Chatham, half hidden beneath an enormous hat, near the rear of the auditorium. There was an empty chair beside the woman. Nancy made her way to it.

"Are you saving this seat, Mrs. Chatham?" she asked, smiling.

The woman shook her head. The next moment, recognizing the newcomer, she beamed at Nancy as if they were old friends. Thus encouraged, Nancy began a conversation which she adroitly steered to a discussion of Rocky Edge. The widow mentioned its previous owner, Silas Norse.

"He must have been an interesting person. We've found several ingenious gadgets of his in the house," she said lightly.

Nancy casually mentioned her visit to Ship Cottage but did not refer to the secret panel or the map she had seen. She merely inquired if Mr. Chatham had collected the ship models.

"Oh dear no! They belonged to my first husband," Mrs. Chatham said with a pensive sigh. "He was such a good, kind man. It made me so sad to see those darling little boats in the house that I asked Mr. Chatham to move them to the studio."

"Do you go out there frequently?" Nancy queried. "To the studio, I mean."

"Almost never."

"I suppose it was built by your late husband?"

"No," the widow replied. "It was on the property when we took over the place. I judge it has been there for some time."

Nancy would have asked additional questions but just then the orchestra began to play. For an hour and a half she enjoyed the recital and was proud of Ellen Smith, whose vocal solos were the best numbers on the program and received the most applause.

"Do come and see me some time," Mrs. Chatham invited Nancy as she rose to leave.

"I'd love to," Nancy answered. "I'll try to drive to Rocky Edge within the next few days."

Just then Bess, George, and Ellen came up the aisle of the auditorium.

"Oh, Nancy!" Ellen exclaimed. "We've been looking everywhere for you."

She paused, slightly embarrassed to find herself face to face with Mrs. Chatham.

“My dear, your singing was marvelous,” the widow gushed. “I had no idea you were so talented. I’d be happy to have you teach music to my Trixie. You *art* accepting the position?”

Ellen glanced at Nancy, seeking a cue to the proper response.

“I-I don’t know what to say,” she stammered nervously. “I want to think it over.”

“I must know at once!” Mrs. Chatham insisted.

CHAPTER III

Fantastic Story

NANCY was afraid that since Ellen needed the money so badly she would accept the position immediately. She was greatly relieved, therefore, when the girl replied:

“I’m sorry, Mrs. Chatham, but I can’t possibly give you my answer for at least a week!”

“Why, that’s ridiculous!” the widow protested haughtily. “You can’t expect me to keep the position open indefinitely.”

The situation had become an exceedingly awkward one. Nancy spoke up.

“Mrs. Chatham, don’t you think it would be difficult to find someone else who knows as much about music and who would be kind to Trixie?” she asked, hoping to gain time for Ellen.

Mrs. Chatham admitted that this might be true. She turned again to Ellen. “All right, I’ll wait a week, but no longer.”

“Thank you. I promise I’ll give you my answer by that time,” Ellen replied.

Without waiting to be introduced to Nancy’s other friends, the widow left the auditorium.

“She’s a pain,” George remarked with a grimace.

“I certainly wouldn’t want to work for her,” Bess stated.

As the girls were about to say good-bye to Ellen, she said, “Nancy, if you haven’t any special plans would you like to drive to my home and hear about the mysterious story Hannah Gruen spoke of? And I’d love to have Bess and George come too.”

Nothing could have pleased Nancy more, and the other girls accepted eagerly.

“You mean you’ll tell us on the way there?” Nancy asked.

“Not exactly. The secret really isn’t mine to tell. It’s my dad’s.”

Soon the group was on its way to the Smith home in Wayland. The three girls were very curious about the secret, but Ellen did not refer to the matter again.

“Do you commute to Blackstone College every day?” Bess asked Ellen presently.

“Oh, no,” she replied. “I board at Blackstone.”

When they reached Wayland, Ellen directed Nancy to the Smiths’ small, old-fashioned house. As the car slowed to a stop, the girls saw a heavy-set man in his thirties, wearing a brown suit, hurriedly leaving the dwelling. His jaw was set and his eyes blazed. Without looking to left or right he jumped into a blue sedan at the curb, slammed the door, and shot away.

Ellen frowned. “I—I hope nothing has happened,” she stammered, quickly getting out of the

convertible.

Nancy, Bess, and George watched the rapidly disappearing car. Then they followed Ellen into the house and met Mrs. Smith. She was a pretty, white-haired woman in her late fifties.

“Mother, who was that man?” Ellen asked.

“His name is Rorke,” Mrs. Smith replied, a note of suppressed excitement in her voice. “He came to see your father about a very important matter.”

“Not the map?”

“Yes, but ask your father about the visitor.”

The girls crossed the hall to a room which had been made into a combination studio and bedroom. Mr. Smith lay in bed, still recuperating from his accident. His eyes lighted with pleasure as Ellen introduced her friends.

“So glad to meet you all,” he said. “Please sit down.”

“What a charming room!” Bess exclaimed, her gaze wandering from the shelves of travel books to a large map of the world on one wall. “Are you interested in geography, Mr. Smith?”

“He’s interested in finding a treasure island!” Ellen answered eagerly. “Hannah Gruen thinks Nancy may be able to help us, Dad. She has solved lots of mysteries.”

“Are you an expert at finding lost maps, young lady?” Mr. Smith asked, a twinkle in his eyes.

“I’ve had some success with them,” Nancy answered, matching his teasing tone. “But I must say, all these hints of Ellen’s about a treasure are intriguing.”

“Do tell your story, Dad,” Ellen pleaded. The rugged-faced man brushed a strand of hair from his forehead, then began.

“First of all, I must tell you my true name. I’m known as Tomlin Smith, although Tomlin is really my last name. Years ago I added Smith, the name of the people who adopted me after my father’s death.

“My mother died when I was fourteen. Father was captain of an ocean-going freighter, the Sea Hawk. He had followed the sea his entire life, and his father had too. After Mother’s death he was determined to take care of my twin brother and me by himself, so he took the two of us aboard the freighter. We slept in his cabin and had the run of the ship.”

“You must have visited many interesting places,” George remarked.

“Only half a dozen ports,” Mr. Smith said.

“Except for a turn of luck, I’d have gone down to Davy Jones’s locker along with my father.”

“The ship sank?” Nancy asked, leaning forward in her chair.

“Yes, she went down in a hurricane. One of the worst on record. The seams of the old freighter cracked wide open. Every pump was manned by the crew but the ship was doomed. No one knew the sea better than my father.”

“What did you do then?” Bess queried. “Take to the lifeboats?”

“I’m coming to that part in a minute. When my father realized that the old ship wouldn’t hold together much longer, he called my twin brother John Abner and me into his cabin. Knowing he might never see his sons again, he told us our grandfather once had hidden a treasure on a small uncharted island in the Atlantic. He had left a map showing its location. My father tried to find it but never could.”

“He took a parchment map from the safe,” Mr. Smith went on, “but instead of giving it to either of us, he tore it diagonally from corner to corner into two pieces. ‘You’re to share the treasure equally,’ he said, ‘and to make sure of that I am dividing the map in such a way that no one can find the buried chest without both sections.’ ”

“Then what happened?” George asked as Mr. Smith paused.

“John Abner and I were put into separate lifeboats, and I never saw him again. A sudden explosion ripped the ship from bow to stern before Father was ready to leave. He went down with it.”

“Along with six sailors I landed on a small island. We lived there a year before we were picked up and brought to the United States. I tried without success to learn what had become of my brother, where any relatives were, and finally I was adopted by a family named Smith.”

“What became of your section of the map?” Nancy inquired. “Was it lost?”

“No,” replied Mr. Smith. “All these years I’ve kept it, always hoping to find my brother and hunt for the buried treasure. For a long time I had plenty of money and thought little about ever needing any. But now—”

The man looked wistfully from a window, while there was an awkward pause.

“Even if we should find the other half of the map,” Mrs. Smith said with a sigh, “we wouldn’t have any money to look for the treasure.”

“It would give me more satisfaction,” her husband remarked, “to learn what became of my twin brother. As for the treasure, he or his heirs would be entitled to half of it.”

“We won’t worry about them just yet,” said Ellen, trying to cheer her parents. “You see, Nancy, my father looked up every Tomlin he could find. Maybe his brother changed his name, and since he didn’t look like Dad, nobody would think of the two being related. The map would be the only clue.”

“May I see your half?” Nancy asked.

Mr. Smith requested his daughter to bring the paper from the top drawer of a desk on the second floor. Presently she returned with a piece of yellow parchment. Eagerly Nancy bent to examine the curious markings.

“Right here is our treasure island, as I call it,” Tomlin Smith indicated, “but as you see, the name has been torn off. All that appears on my half is ‘Im Island,’ which isn’t much help.”

Nancy studied the parchment half map for a few moments, then asked Mr. Smith, “Would you mind if I make a copy of it?”

“Not at all,” he answered. “Only I’m sure you can’t make much out of it. As I told Mr. Rorke today, it’s not worth a nickel without my brother’s half.”

“Was he the man who drove away in the blue car?” Nancy asked.

“Yes, he left the house just as you girls arrived.”

“Mother said he came to see you about the map,” Ellen declared. “How did he learn about it?”

“Mr. Rorke claimed he’d heard the story from the son of a man who was first mate on my father’s sunken freighter—an officer by the name of Tom Gambrell. Rorke offered to buy my section of the map. Said he wanted it as a souvenir.”

“You didn’t agree to sell your half?” Nancy asked, afraid the answer might be yes.

“No, I told Rorke I wouldn’t sell at any price,” Mr. Smith said. “Even if the parchment is worthless it was my father’s last gift. I’ll always keep it.”

“I’m glad,” Nancy said in relief. “Of course I know nothing about Mr. Rorke, but I didn’t like his looks. Also, since you changed your name, how did he find you?”

“That’s a good question,” said Ellen’s father. “I never thought to ask him. But he’ll probably be back and I’ll put that up to him.”

“Did you show him your piece of the map?” Nancy inquired.

“Yes, I had Mrs. Smith bring it downstairs,” Ellen’s father replied. “But Rorke saw it only for a second; not long enough to remember what was on it, if that’s what you’re afraid of.”

Nancy said no more and busied herself copying the torn map while the others talked about the recital. Bess and George spoke glowingly of Ellen’s singing and her parents smiled proudly. Presently Mrs. Smith appeared with a tray of refreshments.

Soon afterward the callers rose to leave. Nancy carefully folded the copy of the treasure map and put it into her purse.

She smiled at Mr. Smith. “I don’t promise to figure this out, but it will be good mental exercise and I’m eager to start working on some way to find your brother.”

The callers said good-bye and left. Nancy drove toward River Heights. Presently they stopped for a crossroads traffic light. Directly ahead, waiting at the same intersection, was a blue sedan.

“That looks like the car we saw at the Smith place!” George exclaimed.

“It is the same one! The driver is that Mr. Rorke!” Nancy cried.

The traffic light turned green, and the blue sedan was away in a flash. Nancy’s car was equally fast and kept directly behind Mr. Rorke.

“You’re going to follow him?” Bess asked nervously.

“I’d like to find out more about him,” Nancy replied. “It’s my hunch he has a special interest in the Smiths’ treasure map that he’s not telling.”

Bess and George were inclined to agree. As the man’s car raced ahead and turned corners recklessly it was very evident that he was trying to lose Nancy. Twice Rorke glanced uneasily over his shoulder.

“He’s knows we’re trailing him,” George commented. “But why should it worry him?”

“Nancy, do be careful,” Bess cautioned, gripping the edge of the seat. “We’re coming to a railroad crossing.”

Signals warned of an approaching train. Knowing that it would be dangerous to attempt a crossing, Nancy stopped. The blue sedan, however, shot ahead onto the track.

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