

**THE GIRL SCOUTS SERIES:
THE GIRL SCOUTS IN
BEECHWOOD FOREST**

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The Girl Scouts Series: The Girl Scouts in Beechwood Forest by Margaret Vandercook

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MARGARET VANDERCOOK

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**The Girl Scouts in
Beechwood Forest**



SHE ARRANGED TWO SUCH SMOKE COLUMNS

THE GIRL SCOUTS SERIES

The Girl Scouts in Beechwood Forest

By

MARGARET VANDERCOOK

Author of "The Ranch Girls Series,"
"The Red Cross Girls Series," "Stories
About Camp Fire Girls," etc.

Illustrated

THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY

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PHILADELPHIA

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CHAPTER I

FLAME

THE flame ascended, ending in a little spiral of smoke curling upward in the night air.

Overhead the stars shone, the pine trees formed dark shadows.

Within the radius of the firelight a girl leaned forward, her eyes fastened upon a drawing she held in her lap. One could see only vague outlines. The light danced over the figure of the girl, her bright, reddish-gold hair, cut short and held in place with an amber comb, her slender shoulders, the unconsciously graceful poise of her body.

She turned to glance anxiously at another figure lying outstretched upon the ground only a few feet away.

This girl appeared to be sleeping. Her eyes were closed and she was breathing fitfully.

Suddenly she opened her eyes and smiled.

"Tory Drew, aren't you ever going to sleep?" she demanded. "Is it your intention to sit up all night and keep guard over me?"

I told you that I was not suffering in the least. My fall seems not to have injured me, only for some strange reason has made it difficult for me to walk. We have been longing to spend a night out of doors alone ever since we arrived at our camp in Beechwood Forest. This is an unexpected opportunity, yet you do not look grateful. Small wonder if you are never going to sleep! What time do you think it is?"

Victoria Drew leaned closer toward the fire and looked at her wrist watch.

"It is half-past twelve o'clock, Kara. The witching hour over and I have seen no woodland spirits come to haunt us, and no human beings. I am afraid my signals have failed to attract attention. The other girls at camp must have decided to give us up for lost and await our return in the morning; I am sorry for your sake. Are you sure you are not uncomfortable?"

Tory arose and bent over her companion, not so convinced that the entire absence from pain, which Kara insisted upon, was absolute proof that she was not seriously hurt.

In the firelight the other girl's face appeared white and unreal. To any one so impressionable as Tory the past few hours bore a semblance of unreality.