

**THE OUTDOOR GIRLS AT
THE HOSTESS
HOUSE; OR DOING THEIR
BEST FOR THE SOLDIERS**

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The outdoor girls at the Hostess House; or Doing their best for the soldiers by Laura Lee Hope

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LAURA LEE HOPE

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MOLLY SOUGHT THE HELP OF THE YOUNG SOLDIER.
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The Outdoor Girls
at the
Hostess House

OR
DOING THEIR BEST FOR
THE SOLDIERS

BY
LAURA LEE HOPE

AUTHOR OF "THE OUTDOOR GIRLS OF DEEPPDALE," "THE
MOVING PICTURE GIRLS," "THE BOBBSEY TWINS,"
"BUNNY BROWN AND HIS SISTER SUE," "SIX
LITTLE BUNKERS AT GRANDMA BELL'S," ETC.

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CHAPTER I

HERO WORSHIP

"Oh, Mollie, please be careful!"

The big car skidded perilously around a sharp curve and chug-chugged merrily down the road.

"Goodness, I've been careful so long I'm afraid it will grow on me," Mollie Billette, sometimes known as "Billy," retorted, a determined set to her pretty chin. "Someway, I've got to get it out of my system."

The automobile, a big seven-passenger car, belonged to Mollie, and the four Outdoor Girls, having secured a half-holiday from their work at the Hostess House, were out for recreation.

As may have been gathered, Mollie was driving. Amy Blackwell, fearful of an accident, was in the seat beside her, while Grace Ford and Betty Nelson, their beloved Little Captain, occupied the tonneau and amused themselves by laughing at Amy's fears.

"Well, but you needn't take it out on us," Amy said in reply to Mollie's assertion. "If you're going to take many more of those two-wheel turns, I'm going to get out and walk. Oh, Mol-lie!" The speech ended in a wail, as Mollie wickedly rounded another curve, jolting Amy half out of her seat.

"I don't know but what I agree with Amy," drawled Grace, from the tonneau, helping herself to a chocolate, upon which Betty's eye had just rested longingly. "I've been bumped around so much I can't tell whether I'm a girl or a scrambled egg. Now, look what you did!" A sudden lurch of the big car had sent the box of chocolates to the floor, where its contents rolled about aggravatingly at their feet. "Come back here, Mollie Billette, and pick them up. That's the least——"

The rest of the sentence was never uttered, for Mollie brought the car to so sudden a stop that Grace and Betty both lurched forward and narrowly escaped bumping their noses on the back of the seat in front of them.

"Sure," said the reckless driver, turning her bright black eyes expectantly upon them. "Will you promise to give me all I pick up?"

"All you——" Grace was beginning, striving desperately to recover her breath and her dignity at the same time, the accomplishment of which

feat was decidedly retarded by growing indignation. "Goodness, I never heard such a——"

"Very well," returned Mollie, and, without deigning to parley further, turned determinedly to the wheel. "That's all I wanted to know——"

"Just a minute, Mollie, dearest," Betty's laughing voice broke in. "You know I'm not worrying about the chocolates at all, but I'm not particularly anxious to spoil my perfectly good shoes with crushed chocolate or, on the other hand, bump my perfectly good nose in a vain attempt to pick them——"

"Which, candy or shoes?" Mollie broke in impishly.

"Candy," answered Betty soberly. "As I was saying, neither of these alternatives appeal to me, so, with your kind permission, I would beg you to hold your horses——"

"As the vulgar herd would say," again murmured Mollie.

"Exactly—as the vulgar herd would say," agreed Betty, dimpling adorably, "—until we have a chance to collect the scattered sweets."

"You win," Mollie capitulated, speaking in a tone reserved for the "Little Captain." "Only please make Grace hurry or the afternoon will be over before she begins."

"Goodness, listen to it——" Grace was begin-

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ning, straightening indignantly from her stooping posture and preparing once more to enter the fray. "When it's all her fault, anyway——" But Betty upset both speech and dignity by unceremoniously pulling her down again.

"Come on! Hurry, Gracie!" she commanded. "And don't overlook any, because there's nothing so messy as a chocolate——"

"As if there were any chance of Grace's overlooking a chocolate!" scoffed Mollie. "Why, all she has to do is whistle to 'em and they come rolling up obediently."

"Goodness, who'd want them anyway, after they've rolled around and picked up all the dust and millions of germs from the bottom of the car?" grumbled Grace, cross at having to exert herself to even so small an extent. Grace, as my old readers doubtless remember, had been born with an ease-loving disposition that not even close association with the other Outdoor Girls had served to change. Perhaps, as Mollie had once remarked, that was why the girls were so fond of her—because she was "so different."

"Well, if you don't want 'em," Mollie replied practically, "why didn't you agree to my proposition? I promised to eat them for you, germs and all, and all I got for my sacrifice was one withering glance——"