

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving
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The Camp Fire Girls at Long Lake Bessie King in Summer Camp

Jane L. Stewart

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CAMP FIRE GIRLS SERIES, VOLUME III

The Camp Fire Girls at Long Lake

or

**Bessie King
in Summer Camp**

by

JANE L. STEWART

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The Camp Fire Girls at Long Lake

CHAPTER I

A GROUNDLESS JEALOUSY

"I told you we were going to be happy here, didn't I, Zara?"

The speaker was Dolly Ransom, a black-haired, mischievous Wood Gatherer of the Camp Fire Girls, a member of the Manasquan Camp Fire, the Guardian of which was Miss Eleanor Mercer, or Wanaka, as she was known in the ceremonial camp fires that were held each month. The girls were staying with her at her father's farm, and only a few days before Zara, who had enemies determined to keep her from her friends of the Camp Fire, had been restored to them, through the shrewd suspicions that a faithless friend had aroused in Bessie King, Zara's best chum.

Zara and Dolly were on top of a big wagon, half filled with new-mown hay, the sweet smell of which delighted Dolly, although Zara, who had lived in the country, knew it too well to become wildly enthusiastic over anything that was so commonplace to her. Below them, on the ground, two other Camp Fire Girls in the regular working costume of the Camp Fire—middy blouses and wide blue bloomers—were tossing up the hay, under the amused direction of Walter Stubbs, one of the boys who worked on the farm.

"I'm awfully glad to be here with the girls again, Dolly," said Zara. "No, that's not the way! Here, use your rake like this. The way you're doing it the wagon won't hold half as much hay as it should."

"Is Bessie acting as if she was your teacher, Margery?" Dolly called down laughingly to Margery Burton, who, because she was always laughing, was called Minnehaha by the Camp Fire Girls. "Zara acts just as if we were in school, and she's as superior and tiresome as she can be."

"She's a regular farm girl, that Zara," said Walt, with a grin. "Knows as much about packin' hay as I do—'most. Bessie, thought you'd lived on a farm all yer life. Zara there can beat yer all hollow

at this. You're only gettin' half a pickful every time you toss the hay up. Here—let me show you!"

"I'd be a pretty good teacher if I tried to show Margery, Dolly," laughed Bessie King. "You hear how Walter is scolding me!"

"He's quite right, too," said Dolly, with a little pout. "You know too much, Bessie—I'm glad to find there's something you don't do right. You must be stupid about some things, just like the rest of us, if you lived on a farm and don't know how to pitch hay properly after all these years!"

Bessie laughed. Dolly's smile was ample proof that there was nothing ill-natured about her little gibe.

"Girls on farms in this country don't work in the fields—the men wouldn't let them," said Bessie. "They'd rather have them stay in a hot kitchen all day, cooking and washing dishes. And when they want a change, the men let them chop wood, and fetch water, and run around to collect the eggs, and milk the cows, and churn butter and fix the garden truck! Oh, it's easy for girls and women on a farm—all they have to do is a few little things like that. The men do all the hard work. You wouldn't let your wife do more than that, would you, Walter?"

The boy flushed.

"When I get married, I'm aimin' to have a hired gal to do all them chores," he said. "They's some farmers seem to think when they marry they're just gettin' an extra lot of hired help they don't have to pay fer, but we don't figger that way in these parts. No, ma'am."

He looked shyly at Dolly as he spoke, and Dolly, who was an accomplished little flirt, saw the look and understood it very well. She tossed her pretty head.

"You needn't look at me that way, Walt Stubbs," she said. "I'm never going to marry any farmer—so there! I'm going to marry a rich man, and live in the city, and have my own automobile and all the servants I want, and never do anything at all unless I like. So you needn't waste your breath telling me what a good time your wife is going to have."

Walter, already as brown as a berry from the hot sun under which he worked every day, turned redder than he had been before, if that was possible. But, wisely, he made no attempt to answer Dolly. He had already been inveigled into two or three arguments with the sharp witted girl from the city, and he had no mind for any more of the cutting sarcasm with which she had withered him up each time just as he thought he had got the best of her.

Still, in spite of her sharp tongue and her fondness for teasing him, Walt liked Dolly better than any of the girls from the city who were staying on the farm, and he was always glad to welcome her when she appeared where he was working, even though she interrupted his work, and made it necessary for him to stick to his job after the others were through in order to make up for lost time. But Dolly had little use for him, in spite of his obvious devotion, which all the other girls had noticed. And this time his silence didn't save him from another sharp thrust.

"Goin' to that ice-cream festival over to the Methodist Church at Deer Crossin' to-night?" she asked him, trying to imitate his peculiar country accent.

"I'm aimin' to," he said uncomfortably. "You said you was goin' to let me take you. Isn't that so?"

"Oh, yes—I suppose so," she said, tossing her head again. "But I never said I'd let you bring me home, did I? Maybe I'll find some one over there I like better to come home with."

Walter didn't answer, which proved that, young as he was, and inexperienced in the ways of city girls like Dolly, he was learning fast. But just then a bell sounded from the farm, and the girls dropped their pitchforks quickly.

"Dinner time!" cried Margery Burton, happily. "Come on down, you two, and we'll go over to that big tree and eat our dinner in the shade. Walter, if you'll go and fetch us a pail of water from the spring, we'll have dinner ready when you get back. And I bet you'll be surprised when you see what we've got, too—something awfully good. We got Mrs. Farnham to let us put up the best lunch you ever saw!"

"Yes you did!" gibed Walter. He wasn't half as much afraid of Margery and the other girls who never teased him, as he was of Dolly Ransom, and he didn't like them as well, either. Perhaps it was just because Dolly made a point of teasing him that he was so fond of her. But he picked up the pail, obediently enough, and went off. When he was out of hearing Bessie shook her finger reproachfully at Dolly.

"I thought you were going to be good and not tease Walter any more!" she said, half smiling.

"Oh, he's so stupid—it's just fun to tease him, and he's so easy that I just can't help it," said Dolly.

"I don't think he's stupid—I think he's a very nice boy," said Bessie. "Don't you, Margery!"

"I certainly do, Bessie—much too nice for a little flirt like Dolly to torment him the way she does."

"Well, if you two like him so much you can have him, and welcome!" cried Dolly, tossing her head. "I'm sure I don't want him tagging around after me all the time the way he does."

"Better be careful, Dolly," advised Margery, who knew her of old. "They say pride goes before a fall, and if you're not nice to him you may have to come home from the festival tonight without a beau—and you know you wouldn't like that."

"I'd just as soon not have a beau at all as have some of these boys around here," declared Dolly, pugnaciously. "I like the country, but I don't see why the people have to be so stupid. They're not half as bright as the ones we know in the city."

"I don't know about that, Dolly. Bessie's from the country, but I think she's as bright as most of the people in the city. They haven't been able to fool her very much since she left Hedgeville, you know."

"Oh, I didn't mean Bessie!" cried Dolly, throwing her arms around Bessie's neck affectionately. "You know I didn't, don't you, dear? And I'm only joking about half the time anyhow, when I say things like that."

"Here comes Walter now—we'll see whether he doesn't admit that this is the best dinner he ever ate in the fields!" said Margery.

It was, too. There was no doubt at all about that. There were cold chicken, and rolls, and plenty of fresh butter, and new milk, and hard boiled eggs, that the girls had stuffed, and a luscious blueberry pie that Bessie herself had been allowed to bake in the big farm kitchen. They made a great dinner of it, and Walter was loud in his praises.

"That certainly beats what we have out here most days!" he said. "We have plenty—but it's just bread and cold meat and water, as a rule, and no dessert. It's better than they get at most farms, though, at that."

When the meal was finished the girls quickly made neat parcels of the dishes that were to be taken back, and all the litter that remained under the tree was gathered up into a neat heap and burned.

"My, but you're neat!" exclaimed Walter, as he watched them.

"It's one of our Camp Fire rules," explained Margery. "We're used to camping out and eating in the open air, you know, and it isn't fair to leave a place so that the next people who camp out there have to do a lot of work to clean up after you before they can begin having a good time themselves. We wouldn't like it if we had to do it after others, so we try always to leave things just as we'd like to find them ourselves. And it wouldn't be good for the Camp Fire Girls if people thought we were careless and untidy."

Then they got back to work again, and the long summer afternoon passed happily, with all four of the girls doing their share of the work. The sun was still high when they had finished their work, and Walter gave the word to stop happily, since he wanted time to put on his best clothes for the trip to Deer Crossing, where the ice-cream festival was to be held. Such festivities were rare enough in the country to be made mightily welcome when they came, especially when the date chosen was a Saturday, since on Sunday those who worked in the fields every other day of the week could take things easily and lie abed late.

"Well, I'll see all you girls again to-night," he said. "I'll be along after supper, Dolly—don't forget. We're goin' to ride over together in the first wagon."

"All right," said Dolly, smiling at him, and winking shamelessly at Bessie. "Don't forget to put on that new blue necktie and to wear those pink socks, Walter."

"I sure won't," he said, not having seen her wink, and, as he turned away, Dolly looked at Bessie with a gesture of comic despair.

"I think it's very mean to laugh at Walter's clothes, Dolly," said Bessie. "They're not a bit sillier than some of the things the boys in the city wear, are they, Margery?"

"I should say not—not half as foolish. I've seen some of your pet boys wearing the sort of clothes one would expect men at the race-track to wear, and nobody else, Dolly. You want to get over thinking you're so much better than everyone else—if you don't, it's going to make; you unhappy."

Once they were at the ice-cream festival, where all the girls and young fellows from miles around seemed to have gathered, Dolly seemed prepared to have a very good time, however. She entered into the spirit of the occasion, and, though she, like Bessie and most of the Camp Fire Girls, would not take part in the kissing games that were popular, she wasn't a bit stiff or superior.

"I wonder where that nice boy that thrashed Jake Hoover is?" she asked Bessie, after they had been there for a while.

"Oh, that's whom you're looking for!" exclaimed Bessie, with a laugh. "Will Burns, you mean? That's so, Dolly—he said he was coming here, didn't he?"

"He certainly did. I'd like to see him again, Bessie. He wasn't as stupid as most of country boys."

"He was splendid," said Bessie, warmly. "If it hadn't been for him, I might not be here now, Dolly. Jake would have got me back into the other state—he was strong enough to make me go where he wanted. And if I'd been caught there, they'd have made me stay."

"There he is now!" exclaimed Dolly, as a tall, sunburned boy appeared in the doorway. "I was beginning to be afraid he wasn't coming at all."

Will Burns, who was a cousin of Walter Stubbs, seemed to be well known to the young people of the neighborhood, though his home was near Jericho, some twenty miles away. He was greeted on all sides as he made his way through the Sunday School room, where the festival was being held, and it was some minutes before the girls from the farm saw that he was nearing them.

"Well – well, so you got home all right?" he said, smiling at Bessie. "I thought you wouldn't have any more trouble, once you got on the train. I'm glad to see you again."

And then Dolly's vanity got a rude shock. For Will Burns began to devote himself at once, after he had greeted Dolly and been introduced to Zara and some of the other girls, to Bessie. Everyone in the room soon noticed this, and since most of the girls there had tried to make him pay attention to them, at one time or another, his evident fondness for Bessie caused a little sensation. Dolly, so surprised to find a boy she fancied willing to talk to anyone else that she didn't know what to do, stood it as long as she could, and then went in search of Walter Stubbs, whom she had snubbed unmercifully all evening.

But Walter had at last plucked up courage enough to resent the way she treated him, and she found that he had bought two plates of ice-cream for Margery Burton and himself, and that they were sitting in a corner, eating their ice-cream, and talking away as merrily as if they had known one another all their lives!

Eleanor Mercer, who had come over to have an eye on the girls, saw the little comedy. She was sorry for Dolly, who was sensitive, but she knew that the lesson would be a wholesome one for the little flirt, who had been flattered so much by the boys in the city that she had come to believe that she could make any boy do just what she desired. So she said nothing, even when Dolly, without a single boy to keep her in countenance, was reduced to sitting with one or two other girls who were in the same predicament, since there were more girls there than boys.

Walter did not even come to get her to ride home with him. Instead, he found a place with Margery Burton, and Dolly had to climb into her wagon alone. There she found Bessie.

"You're a mean old thing, Bessie King!" she said, half crying.

CHAPTER II

GOOD-BYE TO THE FARM

Dolly had spoken in a low tone, her sobs seeming to strangle her speech, and only Bessie, who was amazed by this outburst, heard her. Grieved and astonished, she put her arm about Dolly, but the other girl threw it off, roughly.

"Don't you pretend you love me—I know the mean sort of a cat you are now!" she said bitterly.

"Why, Dolly! Whatever *is* the matter with, you? What have I done to make you angry?"

"If you were so mad at me the other day getting you into that automobile ride with Mr. Holmes you might have said so—instead of tending that you'd forgiven me, and then turning around and making everyone laugh at me to-night! You're prettier than I—and clever—but I think it's pretty mean to make that Burns boy spend the whole evening with you!"

Gradually, and very faintly, Bessie began to have a glimmering of what was wrong with her friend. She found it hard work not to smile, or even to laugh outright, but she resisted the temptation nobly, for she knew only too well that to Dolly, sensitive and nervous, laughter would be just the one thing needed to make it harder than ever to patch up this senseless and silly quarrel, which, so far, was only one sided.

To Bessie, who thought little of boys, and to whom jealousy was alien, the idea that Dolly was really jealous of her seemed absurd, since she knew how little cause there was for such a feeling. But, very wisely, she determined to proceed slowly, and not to do anything that could possibly give Dolly any fresh cause of offence.

"Dolly," she said, "you mustn't feel that way. Really, dear, I didn't do that at all. I talked to him when he came to sit down by me, but that was all. I couldn't very well tell him to go away, or not answer him when he spoke to me, could I?"

"Oh, I know what you're going to say—that it was all his fault. But if you hadn't tried to make him come he wouldn't have done it."

"I didn't try to make him come. Did you?"

Dolly stared at her a moment. The question seemed to force her to give attention to a new idea, to something she had not thought of before. But when she spoke her voice was still defiant.

"Suppose I did!" she said angrily. "I wanted to have a good time—and he was the nicest boy there—"

"Maybe he saw that you were waiting for him too plainly, Dolly. Maybe he wanted to pick out someone for himself—and if you'd pretended that you didn't care whether he talked to you or not he would have been more anxious to be with you."

Dolly blushed slightly at that, though it was too dark for Bessie to see the color in her cheeks. She knew very well that Bessie was right, but she wondered how Bessie knew it. That feigned indifference had brought her the attentions of more than one boy who had boasted that he was not going to pay any attention to her just because everyone else did.

But the gradually dawning suspicion that she might, after all, have only herself to blame for the spoiling of her evening's fun, and that she had acted in rather a silly fashion, didn't soften Dolly particularly. Very few people are able to recover a lost temper just because they find out, at the height of their anger, that they are themselves to blame for what made them angry, and Dolly was not yet one of them.

"I suppose you'll tell all the other girls about this," she said. She wasn't crying any more, but her voice was as hard as ever. "I think you're horrid—and I thought I was going to like you so much. I think I'll ask Miss Eleanor to let me share a room with someone else."

Bessie didn't answer, though Dolly waited while the wagon drove on for quite a hundred yards. Bessie was thinking hard. She liked Dolly; she was sure that this was only a show of Dolly's temper, which, despite the restrictions that surrounded her in her home, and

had a good deal to do with her mischievous ways, had never been properly curbed.

But, though Bessie was not angry in her turn, she understood thoroughly that if she and Dolly were to continue the friendship that had begun so promisingly, this trouble between them must be settled, and settled in the proper fashion. If Dolly were allowed to sleep on her anger, it would be infinitely harder to restore their relations to a friendly basis.

"I suppose you don't care!" said Dolly, finally, when she decided that Bessie was not going to answer her.

And now Bessie decided on a change of tactics. She had tried arguing with Dolly, and it had seemed to do no good at all. It was time to see if a little ridicule would not be more useful.

"I didn't say so, Dolly," she answered, very quietly. And she smiled at her friend. "What's the use of my saying anything? I told you the truth about what happened this evening, and you didn't believe me. So there's not much use talking, is there?"

"You know I'm right, or you'd have plenty to talk about," said Dolly, unhappily. "Oh, I wish we'd never seen Will Burns!"

"I wish we hadn't seen him until to-night, Dolly," said Bessie, gravely. "You know, that trip in the automobile with Mr. Holmes the other day wasn't very nice for me, Dolly. If they had caught me, as Mr. Holmes had planned to do, I'd have been taken back to Hedgeville, and bound over to Farmer Weeks—and he's a miser, who hates me, and would have been as mean to me as he could possibly be. That's how we met Will Burns, you know—because you insisted on going with Mr. Holmes in his car to get an ice-cream soda."

"That's just what I said—you pretended to forgive me for that, and you haven't at all—you're still angry, and you humiliated me before all those people just to get even! I didn't think you were like that, Bessie—I thought you were nicer than I. But—"

"Dolly, stop talking a little, and just think it over. You say you didn't have a good time, and you mean that you didn't have a boy waiting around to do what you told him all evening. Isn't that so?"

"All the other girls had boys around them all the time—"

"You went with Walter Stubbs, didn't you? And you told him that maybe you'd come home with him and maybe you wouldn't—and that if anyone you liked better came along you were going to stay with them. You didn't know Will Burns was coming, did you?"

"No, but—I thought if he did come—"

"That's just it. You didn't think about Walter at all, did you. You wanted to have a good time yourself—and you didn't care what sort of a time he had! You just thought that if Will Burns did come he was sure to want to be with you, and so, as soon as you saw him come in you sent Walter off. Oh, you were silly, Dolly—and it was all your own fault. Don't you think it's rather mean to blame me? We were together when Will Burns was coming toward us, and I wanted to go away and let you stay there—but you said I must stay. Don't you remember that?"

Dolly, as a matter of fact, had quite forgotten it. But she remembered well enough, now that Bessie had reminded her of it. And, though she had a hot temper, and was fond of mischief, Dolly was not sly. She admitted it at once.

"I do remember it now, Bessie."

"Well, don't you see how absurd it is to say that I took Will away from you? We were both there together—I couldn't tell when we saw him coming that he was going to talk to me, could I? And listen, Dolly—he asked me to go home with him in his buggy, and I said I wouldn't."

With some girls that would have made the chance of mending things very remote. But Dolly, although her jealousy had been so quickly aroused, was not the sort to get still angrier at this fresh proof that she had been mistaken in thinking that Will Burns had liked her better than Bessie.

"Why, Bessie—why did you do that?"

Bessie laughed.

"We're not going to be here very much longer, are we, Dolly?" she said. "Well—if we're not going to be here, we're not going to see much of Will Burns. You're not the only girl who—was—who

thought that he ought to be paying more attention to her than to me. There was a pretty girl from Jericho, and he's known her a long time. Walter told me about them.

"And I could see that she wanted him to drive her home, so I asked him why he didn't do it. And he got very much confused, but he went over to her, finally, and she looked just as happy as she could be when he handed her up into his buggy, and they all went off along the road together, Will and she and two or three other fellows who had driven over together from Jericho."

Dolly's expression had changed two or three times, very swiftly, as she listened. Now she sighed, and her hand crept out to find Bessie's.

"Oh, Bessie," she said, softly, "won't you forgive me, dear? I've made a fool of myself again—I'm always doing that, it seems to me. And every time I promise myself or you or someone not to do it again. But the trouble is there are so many different ways of being foolish. I seem to find new ones all the time, and every one is so different from the others that I never know about it until it's too late."

"It's never too late to find out one's been in the wrong, Dolly, if one admits it. There aren't many girls like you, who are ready to say they've been wrong, no matter how well they know it. I haven't anything to forgive you for—so don't let's talk any more about that. Everyone makes mistakes. If I thought anyone had treated me as you thought I had treated you to-night I'd have been angry, too."

Poor Dolly sighed disconsolately.

"You're the best friend I ever had, Bessie," she said. "I make everyone angry with me, and when I say I'm sorry, they pretend that they've forgiven me, but they haven't, really, at all. That's why I said that about your still being angry with me. I thought you must be. I really am going to try to be more sensible."

And so the little misunderstanding, which might easily, had Bessie been less patient and tactful, have grown into a quarrel that would have ended their friendship before it was well begun, was smoothed over, and Dolly and Bessie, tired but happy, went up-

stairs to their room together, and were asleep so quickly that they didn't even take the time to talk matters over.

Eleanor Mercer, standing in the big hall of the farm house as the girls went upstairs, smiled after Dolly and Bessie.

"I think you thought I was foolish to put those two in a room together," she said to Mrs. Farnham, the motherly housekeeper, whom Eleanor had known since, as a little girl, she had played about the farm.

"I wouldn't say that, Miss Eleanor," said Mrs. Farnham. "I didn't see how they were going to get along together, because they were so different. But it's not for me to say that you're foolish, no matter what you do."

"Oh, yes, it is," laughed Eleanor. "You used to have to tell me I was foolish in the old days, when I wanted to eat green apples, and all sorts of other things that would have made me sick, and just because I'm grown up doesn't keep me from wanting to do lots of things that are just as foolish now. But I do think I was right in that"

"They do seem to get on well," agreed Mrs. Farnham.

"It's just because they are so different," said Eleanor. "Dolly does everything on impulse—she doesn't stop to think. With Bessie it's just the opposite. She's almost too old—she isn't impulsive enough. And I think each of them will work a little on the other, so that they'll both benefit by being together. Bessie likes looking after people, and she may make Dolly think a little more.

"There isn't a nicer, sweeter girl in the whole Camp Fire than Dolly, but lots of people don't like her, because they don't understand her. Oh, I'm sure it's going to be splendid for both of them. Dolly was awfully angry at Bessie before they started from the church—but you saw how they were when they got here to-night?"

"I did, indeed, Miss Eleanor. And I'd say; Dolly has a high temper, too, just to look at her."

"Oh, she has—and Bessie never seems to get; angry. I don't understand that—it's my worst fault, I think. Losing my temper, I mean. Though I'm better than I used to be. Well—good-night."