MALORY TOWERS MYSTERY CLUB



MALORY TOWERS MYSTERY CLUB

KIDNAP AT MIDNIGHT



FLEUR HITCHCOCK

Inspired by Enid Blyton

Blyton BOOKS

BLYTON BOOKS

First published in Great Britain in 2026 by Blyton Books

Text © Fleur Hitchcock, 2026
Illustrations by Hannah Peck © Hodder & Stoughton Limited, 2026

The right of Fleur Hitchcock to be identified as the author
of this work has been asserted in accordance
with the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved.

Enid Blyton® and Enid Blyton's signature are registered
trade marks of Hodder & Stoughton Limited.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without
the prior permission in writing of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated
in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published
and without a similar condition including this condition being
imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 444 98533 7

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Typeset in 12.5/20.5pt Adobe Garamond Pro by Six Red Marbles UK, Thetford, Norfolk

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.



Blyton Books
An imprint of Hachette Children's Group
Part of Hodder & Stoughton Limited
Carmelite House
50 Victoria Embankment
London EC4Y 0DZ

The authorised representative in the EEA is Hachette Ireland,
8 Castlecourt Centre, Dublin 15, D15 XTP3, Ireland (email: info@hbgi.ie)

An Hachette UK Company
www.hachette.co.uk

www.hachettechildrens.co.uk



Contents

Chapter 1	1
Chapter 2	9
Chapter 3	20
Chapter 4	29
Chapter 5	36
Chapter 6	41
Chapter 7	46
Chapter 8	52
Chapter 9	55
Chapter 10	60
Chapter 11	67
Chapter 12	73
Chapter 13	82
Chapter 14	90
Chapter 15	96
Chapter 16	103
Chapter 17	112
Chapter 18	120
Chapter 19	127

Chapter 20 133
Chapter 21 140
Chapter 22 148
Chapter 23 155
Chapter 24 157
Chapter 25 163
Chapter 26 171
Chapter 27 184

Acknowledgements 195

North Tower

First-year dormy

Emma can't wait to make friends and explore Malory Towers after hearing about her mother's adventures there

Sheila adores horses, especially her palomino pony – Cloud – who has come to school with her

Marie is a real bookworm and is very good at noticing clues

Nancy and **Judith** are identical twins from Singapore who love playing pranks on each other

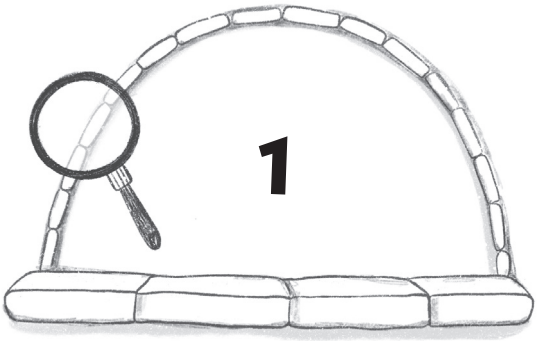
Margaret is tall and quiet, and used to go to school in London

Angela comes from Brighton and is a very good pianist

Paloma brought lots of delicious treats with her from her home in Spain

Deirdre is shy and nervous around the other girls

Jacqueline comes all the way from Australia and is an excellent swimmer



1

'Not far now,' said Emma's father, glancing over his shoulder to where his daughter sat in the back seat watching the high hedges of Cornwall cluster in on either side of the car.

'I love this back way; avoids all the crowds,' said her mother. 'Now, we've just the village to go and we'll be at the school in no time. Gosh, this is all quite unchanged – I remember cycling all these lanes when I was in the sixth. OH! That lorry! No!'

In the millisecond before it all went wrong, Emma saw the lorry: its red front, its wooden sides, its huge tyres. Then she heard the squealing of brakes and felt the car veer. She glimpsed the road, then the hedge,

then the side of the lorry, and then the world turned upside down.

As if in slow motion, the big map book from the back seat flew through the air and smacked her on the side of her face. The scream of metal on tarmac and the shattering of glass all happened at once. And then as the car slowed, bounced and lurched towards a ditch, her mother's handbag shot out of her hands and across the car, showering Emma with compacts and lipsticks before landing on the back shelf.

Sideways up, the car juddered to a halt. The engine growled even though the wheels were going nowhere, until her father turned off the ignition and the silence was huge.

Emma slowly uncurled. She was in the back of the car, still strapped in, but hanging in mid-air. As she regained her breath, a lone fish-paste sandwich fell out of the open picnic box and splatted on to the window below.

'Mum? Dad?' Emma asked, her voice trembling. 'Are you . . . ?'

From the front seats of the car came rustling and coughing and a slight moan.

And then to Emma's relief, she heard her father clear his throat. 'I'm fine,' he said. 'But what the—' His hat was gone, and the roof of the car was oddly close to the top of his head. He turned to Emma's mother. 'Joyce? Are you hurt?'

'I think I'm in one piece . . . I've bashed my ribs, but never mind me – are *you* all right, poppet?' asked her mother, dabbing a tissue to her nose and craning round to look at Emma. She too was hanging suspended by her seat belt. 'Thank goodness for safety belts. I think really I'm just a little shocked. I've never been in anything like this before.'

'That lorry,' said her father. 'He forced me right off the road. He would have hit us head on – I couldn't do anything about it!'

'I saw,' said her mother. 'Awful. They could have killed us.'

'They very nearly did,' said her father.

'Did you get the number plate?' asked her mother, reaching up to the door above her head.

Her father shook his head gingerly. 'Not the faintest chance, I was just trying to keep on the road.'

'I remember the first bit,' said Emma. 'It began nine-four something . . .'

'That's useful. Well done, Emma darling,' said her father. 'We can give that to the police.'

'And I think I can reach my door,' said Emma, pulling the leather strap on the inside that released the lock. 'But I don't know if I can get it open.' She tried shoving at the door, but it was very heavy.

'Hang on a mo,' said her father, carefully unstrapping himself and sliding cautiously into the back of the car. 'Let me see if I can . . . There, get yourself through that, Emma, if you can!'

He'd opened the door a little way, and by clambering on to her father's shoulders, Emma managed to slither through the opening until the top of her body was out and resting across the side of the car. 'Just a second,' she said, and she heaved herself up until she could get her legs underneath her. Then it was easy to reach the ground. Which turned out to be oddly wet. She stood back for a second, staring at the car. It was a shocking

sight. The front bumper was missing, and the roof was all crumpled and scraped. The once-black car was now mostly grey and the windscreen and side windows were broken. In fact, everything was broken.

And then she took in the smell of petrol. That was what the puddle on the road was. Petrol. Oh, no! The car was lying in a pool of the stuff.

Trying hard not to panic, she climbed back on to the top of the car and pulled at the passenger door. It opened, and she reached down to grasp her mother's hand. 'Come on, Mum,' she said breezily. 'It's nicer out here!'

With Emma's help, it only took her mother a minute to worm her way out of the sideways car. She too sniffed the air, and said nothing, but reached back inside and, together with Emma, reached for her husband's outstretched arms. Seconds later, Emma's father had made his way on to the lane, and all three stood safely at a distance, holding each other, saying nothing, staring at the car lying broken in the growing pool of petrol.

* * *

A while later, things were looking up. A tractor stopped, and before long the car was righted and towed to the small village of Billington where a garage mechanic looked in dismay at the beautiful family car, now much more like a sardine can than a mode of transport.

'Well!' he remarked. 'You were lucky to survive that! Amazed it didn't catch light.'

Emma blinked back a tear. She had been trying not to think about it, but now they were safe the whole ordeal seemed more terrifying.

'Quite,' said Emma's mother in her most cheerful voice, while reaching into the back of the car for the contents of her handbag. 'We were *very* lucky, and thank you so much for sorting us out, but do you think anyone could take us to the school?'

Emma knew her mother was being extra jolly, for her sake, and she was grateful.

'Malory Towers?' asked the man.

Her father nodded. 'Yes.' He glanced at his watch, which had survived the crash unscathed. 'It's her first day, and she should have been there an hour ago.'

‘Is there a taxi in the village that might take us?’ asked Emma’s mother.

The garage mechanic laughed. ‘Not so as you’d notice, but I’ll call my pa-in-law, he’ll take you – he’s a gardener up at the school. Now, let’s get your things out of this car.’

And so it was that long after she should have arrived, Emma found herself sitting on her trunk in the back of a gardener’s van watching clouds racing over the distant sea.



'Girls have been arriving all day,' said their driver, a grizzled man who Emma thought was probably old enough to be her grandfather. 'Lots of new ones, from all over the world.' He chattered away as the van drove through the tall gates. They passed a sign that read *Malory Towers* and, quite suddenly, she felt sick. This was not how she had anticipated arriving at the school. She hated being late; she was always early for things if she could be. Now the others would all know each other and she would be the odd one out.

She gripped the lid of her trunk and tried to relax, listening to her mother chatting happily about her own time at the school. 'There was Miss Parker; Matron, who was scary but fair; Miss Grayling . . .'

'Oh, yes, they're all still part of the staff. Now, here we are,' announced their driver, bringing the van to a halt. 'Malory Towers, one of the finest schools on the planet. I'll get your trunk upstairs and send down Miss Potts. She'll be the one we need.' He turned to Emma's parents. 'When you're done I'll run you back to the village.'