

Answer THE OTHER question from the elective you have studied on pages 14–24

08

Question Number

Write the question number in the space provided.

A guide does her duty, and does not question politics

It was a cold January evening, and a thin layer of snow covered the ground and crunched like autumn leaves under Sally White's feet. She pulled her thin coat a little more tightly around her thin frame, and hurried forward, determined to reach the hall before the ~~snowfall~~ fresh snowfall that the weather man on the radio had promised, began to fall. Most of the shops on Bond Street were ~~the~~ dark, but the cafe Angelique was lit up with a cold, white light. As Sally approached it, she saw that the cafe was indeed closed, but yet a man was sitting ~~by~~ at a table by the door, calmly eating what looked to be a pie, and reading the newspaper. ~~He~~ 'perhaps it is the owner,' Sally thought. More curiously, a man stood just outside the ~~the~~ cafe, holding a brief case. As Sally trudged past, she caught ~~by~~ a glimpse of the face behind the down-turned hat. The man was ordinary, he could have been a ~~banker~~ banker, ~~an~~ office man or a parliament man. His face was unextraordinary, and Sally forgot it even as she looked away. Another face was forming in her mind. One she had not thought of for years. He had been a government man, very important she had

supposed, although he gave no name. He too was an ordinary looking man, and he had asked the girls to call him 'The General', although with his ~~own~~ well-fitted suit and trimmed whiskers, he looked nothing of the sort. And he had had a job for them, the five hand-picked girls from her guide unit, a job the scouts had been no good at, a job, he had ensured them, that could save Britain...

Sally sighed, she had not thought of those days in years, not since the end of the Second World War. And here she was, ten years later, with another war looming. Perhaps it was the man outside the old cafe who had ~~be~~ pushed such memories into her mind, for there was something about his dress, his stance, that reminded her of the men she and four others had been charged to ~~do~~ deliver messages to. He was ordinary, there was no doubt about it, but he was too ordinary, too put together in a way that made him fade from your mind. Spies, her brother's mind had been full of them, but and Sally longed to boast to him. As it was, she hid her fifty pence ~~pieces~~ ^{pieces} under her mattress, ~~aware~~ ^{aware} that they must be hidden until she could come up with a reasonable excuse for having earned them. 'It's a secret' were words

She ^{had} heard often that year. And she was proud to have such a secret, to be able to do something that Jack, as a ^{boy} Scout could not do. And why shouldn't the girls have been chosen, she thought, the girl guides were more quiet for one, more trustworthy. And they had been busy too, knitting socks for the soldiers, giving out plasters about air raids, folding bandages... for even Mr Churchill had taken his hat off as the guides had ~~walked~~ marched past at the Lord Mayor's ~~show~~ ^{show} of 1942. And that was before they ~~had~~ ^{had} begun their 'night work' as it was so called.

Ahead, Sally saw the welcoming lights of the hall, and she quickened her pace. She mustn't keep the girls waiting. For now she was a leader, the Brown Owl of the ~~patrol~~ ^{patrol} unit. It was she who supervised the girls as they built bomb shelters, tied knots and learnt first aid. For another war was surely on the horizon, all the newspapers said it. Not with Germany, for two lost wars had tried her out, but with Russia, the ~~twice~~ ally turned communist. England could not sit out a war like this, not with Russia so close. So much closer than to America, the other main contender. Yet if America went to war, so would Britain, and not just for the sake of survival. For this would surely be a war like no other. Sally hoped, for she could only hope that another war would not reach England's shores, but everyone said it that

her was eminent. A super-sized war, like the last one, but so much larger. Perhaps then... perhaps her girls would be asked to deliver messages as she herself had been asked, years ago. Surely they would be, for the world was once again amash with talk of spies and silent battles. Young boys ~~disgr~~ disregarded super heroes for new heroes. Surely then, she must do her duty and prepare the girls, secretly of course, for more than just the coming war, for a job that could win or lose it.

"Tonight girls" Sally announced, having raised the flag and said the guide promise, "we shall split off into patrols to learn a new game. Kim's game. It was invented by a spy," she ventured and the girls sat up straighter, looking more interested. And she taught them how to play, first she showed them a tray filled with strange things, a cigarette box, a guide badge, a thimble... then once all the girls had taken a look she covered the tray and held them list all ~~twenty~~ ^{twenty} seven items. Soon the girls became competitive, and split off into three patrols, determined to remember more ~~things~~ items than the other patrols. Sally smiled to herself, for next she might teach them scout's pace, a method of alternated running and walking, used by those who needed to deliver a message quickly, but yet still have enough breath to speak it. She looked around, the girls were

Sheikking with laughter as they tried to remember all the items on the tray. This was what guides were supposed to be, it was fun. But yet it was work too, even if the girls didn't know it yet. Just last week ^{they} had built a bomb shelter, and learnt ways to keep peoples spirits up in case of a drill. She had been ~~as~~ specifically asked to teach the girls this, although she would have done it anyway. Building bomb shelters was a common practice nowadays, the government had ordered all schools, guide and scout units, work places, to build one. 'Just in case'. That was all politics seemed to be these days, an invisible face saying 'just in case' as if it were reasoning, meanwhile the radio announcers were growing more fearful every day.

"Brawn out?", ~~to~~ a young guide, Jenima, had left the gate to approach Sally, "are there guides in the East?" Sally froze, "yes Jenima," she said slowly, "I believe there are!" Jenima nodded, "that what I thought, but my teacher told the class today that Russians are dogs, and are not to be trusted. I told her the guide law of 'a guide is friendly and a sister to all other guides' and she said he he he." Sally sat and collected her thoughts before speaking. ^{to the eggy young girl before her}

"There are guide units everywhere Jenima, all around the world, and the guide law does say that. But... well, you must also remember the guide promise, which is much

peace to our hearts, 'I promise that I will serve the queen and my country', and at the moment we are not on the best terms with Russia." He deliberately didn't mention the part about keeping the guide law. "It is unlikely that you will ever meet a guide from Russia in any case; are you done with the game?" Jimmy shook her head, and, ~~thanking~~ with a ~~Brown owl~~, she "thank you, Brown owl", she ran off to join the blue bell patrol. Is this really what Lord Baden Powell had in mind? Sally thought, was he thinking of political segregation when he chose the girls to form a unit as the boys had, at the crystal palace rally all those years ago...

Sally's thoughts were interrupted by a piercing siren that split the air. A bomb drill. "All right girls", she called out calmly, as the guides froze like rabbits in a spotlight, "It's just a drill, but we need to do it correctly so that we can know what to do in the future. Everyone outside, let's sit in the shelter."

As the scared girls meekly walked into the shelter dug into the ground, Sally could see helicopters flying with a hush, and her mind was brought back to 1944, when such occurrences had things occurred nightly. Her parents, she knew, had done much the same thing when they were young, during the first world war. So many wars, so many governments who couldn't get along. Shaking her head,

She shut the door to the shelter and sat in the dark with
the girls. She thought about the man outside the alcove, had
he gotten his message? Was that even the reason he was
there?

Trying to sound cheery, Sally spoke into the gloom, "All right,
how about ~~the~~ tell me the seventh guideline? The girls
spoke as one, "a guide has courage and is cheerful in all
difficulties." Dora spoke up, "We aren't scared, Brown owl,
should we sing a song?" And they did. In the under ground room,
the young voices ~~stuffed~~ ^{swelled}, trying, but not quite managing
to, drown out the sirens that split the winter air, pulsing
into the night.