

MISS VEE THROWS THE DARE 311

my report. "Brought home a steamer friend, did she? Who did you say it was?"

"Well, between you and me," says I, "it's Vee. You remember—the one at the girls' boardin' school tea party when——"

"Eh?" says he. "Ah, that one? Then it wasn't—er—exactly a hardship for you to meet this particular steamer, eh, Torchy?"

"Do I look it?" says I.

And Mr. Robert he winks back; for, as I happen to know, he's been there himself. It's that friendly wink though, that makes me remember puttin' up that game on him with the fake message, and somehow I felt cheap and mean. Here he was, treatin' me white and square, and I'd been handin' him a piece of fresh bunk.

"Mr. Robert," says I, standin' pigeontoed and flushin' up some, "you remember that message from the bridge people—Trimble, it was signed?"

"Oh, yes," says he. "He came, all right, about a quarter to three."

"Gee!" says I, and walks out.

For when things start comin' your way in clusters like that, what's the use tryin' to duck?