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[Week Ending February 23rd, 1924.]



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THRILLS GALORE IN THIS GREAT STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



# Up Against The Head!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing  
in the "Popular.")

*Dr. Chisholm discovers that the Fourth  
Form Rebels mean business!*

## The 1st Chapter. Impertinent!

Dr. Chisholm started. He was astonished, and, to judge by the dark frown that settled upon his scholastic brow, he was wrathful. The Head of Rookwood had entered his study, not expecting to find anything out of the common there. And almost the first thing that caught his eye was an inscription on the glass doors of a bookcase. And it ran, in large letters:

"WE WANT DICKY!"

Dr. Chisholm blinked at that inscription, inscribed there by some lawless hand in his absence.

"Upon my word!" murmured the Head.

The letters were white, and for the moment the Head supposed that they had been chalked there. But on a closer inspection he found that they had been daubed in white paint. And as the paint was now dry, there was a laborious task ahead for somebody to get it off the bookcase. Most of the letters were on the glass panels, but here and there they sprawled over polished oak woodwork.

Dr. Chisholm looked round the study.

Save for the inscription on the bookcase, there was no sign that an intruder had been there. Whoever had left that message for the Head had been careful to leave no other trace behind.

The doctor's face darkened more and more as he gazed at that impertinent message from the Fourth Form.

He knew that it came from the Fourth; for "Dicky," evidently was a fancy name for Mr. Richard Dalton, the master of the Fourth, recently dismissed from Rookwood School.

The Fourth missed their popular master; the Head knew that, though he attributed no importance to it. It was very probable that they wanted Mr. Dalton back. In fact, the Head knew that they did. But the wishes of mere juniors of the Lower School passed by him like the idle wind, which he regarded not.

Who had done this?

A glint came into Dr. Chisholm's eyes. He touched the bell to summon Tupper, the page. Tupper's bullet head was inserted into the open doorway, and Tupper's eyes almost started from the said bullet head at the sight of the inscription on the bookcase. He stared at it.

"Tupper!" rumbled the Head.

"Oh, yessir!" gasped Tupper.

"Who has done this?" With a majestic wave of the hand, the Head indicated the inscription.

"I dunno, sir!"

"Do you mean that you do not know, Tupper?"

"Yessir!"

"Then kindly say what you mean, and do not make use of expressions that are unintelligible."

"Oh, yessir!" stuttered Tupper.

Tupper realised that the Head was in one of his "tantrums," and that it behoved him, Tupper, to be very wary.

"Have you seen any Fourth Form boy lurking about my study this morning?"

"No, sir: I've been in the boot-room and the kitchen, sir."

"You do not know who has been guilty of this act of impertinence?"

"Which, sir?" The Head made an impatient gesture.

"You are stupid, Tupper!"

"Yessir. Is that all, sir?"

"Do you know who has painted those words on my bookcase?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Kindly ask Bulkeley of the Sixth Form to step here."

"Yessir!"

Tupper gladly retreated from the study. When the Head was in one of his tantrums nobody liked catching his eye. Tupper was quite pleased to pass him on, as it were, to Bulkeley of the Sixth Form, the captain of Rookwood.

The Head sat with a grim face waiting for Bulkeley.

He was deeply annoyed.

The dismissal of Mr. Dalton had caused him a good deal of annoyance in one way or another. A new Form master had not yet arrived, and the Fourth were in an unruly state.

Jimmy Silver, head of the Fourth, might have been expected, as head boy, to give what assistance he could in keeping order. The Head, at least, expected it. Instead of which, the Head had discerned that Jimmy was the ringleader in this impertinent agitation for the return of the dismissed master.

That this agitation was impertinent the Head had no doubt. It was in opposition to his lofty will and pleasure. Therefore, it was impertinent.

Buzzzzzz!

The sudden buzzing of the telephone bell made the Head start. He turned with an irritated gesture and took up the receiver.

"Well?"

"Are you there?" came a voice over the wires—a voice the Head did not know.

"Yes."

"Is that Dr. Chisholm, headmaster of Rookwood School?"

"Dr. Chisholm is speaking."

"Good! We want Dicky!"

"Wha-a-at?" The Head almost dropped the receiver. "What did you say?"

"We want Dicky!"

"Bless my soul! Who—who—who is speaking?"

But there was no reply to that question. The unknown interlocutor had already rung off.

Dr. Chisholm replaced the receiver on the hooks, breathing hard. It was some fellow in the Fourth who had telephoned; he was certain of that. But the voice had been disguised—he did not recognise it.

"You sent for me, sir?"

George Bulkeley of the Sixth Form stepped into the study as the Head turned a flushed face from the telephone. Dr. Chisholm controlled his wrath, with an effort, and answered in quiet tones.

"Yes, Bulkeley! Do you know anything of this?" He waved his hand towards the bookcase.

"Certainly not, sir."

"It is the work of some Fourth Form boy."

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"I have just received a similar insolent message on the telephone, Bulkeley."

"Have you indeed, sir?" murmured Bulkeley.

"I am afraid that the Fourth Form are in a somewhat unruly state at present, Bulkeley—no doubt the result of Mr. Dalton's methods."

Bulkeley shifted uncomfortably. He liked Mr. Dalton, as everybody at Rookwood did. He had been sorry when the gates of the school had closed behind "Dicky" Dalton.

"Well, sir, the juniors miss him," said Bulkeley honestly. "They want him back, sir, and they make no secret of it. There was no trouble in the Fourth while Mr. Dalton was here, so far as I know, sir."



**A FRIGHT FOR MONSIEUR MONCEAU!** Monsieur Monceau suddenly lashed at Putty Grace with his cane. Whether the cane touched Putty or not the French master hardly knew—but the next moment there was a fearful yell from Teddy Grace, and he fell on the floor with a crash, and lay still. "He's dead!" "Mossos's killed him!" "Fetch the police!" The Fourth-Formers cried out in apparent alarm. Monsieur Monceau stood transfixed, staring down at the still form of Teddy Grace.

"Indeed!" said the Head, in freezing tones.

"I admit there's been plenty of trouble since he left, sir," said Bulkeley.

"Which must be put a stop to," said the Head icily. "I am making arrangements for a new master to take the Fourth; until then, I rely upon my prefects to keep order."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"As head prefect, Bulkeley, I leave it to you to discover who placed that insolent inscription in my study."

"I will do my best, sir."

"You will also ascertain what boy in the Fourth has been out of gates since morning classes. Some boy must have been out of gates to telephone. Bless my soul!"

Buzzzzzz!

The Head took up the receiver again.

"Hullo!"

"Is that Dr. Chisholm?"

"Yes!"

"We want Dicky!"

Dr. Chisholm jammed the receiver on the hooks, so violently that he very nearly sent the telephone spinning.

"That—that—that is the same insolent boy, Bulkeley!" he exclaimed.

"He must be still out of gates! Call the Fourth together at once, and ascertain what boy is missing!"

"Very well, sir."

And Bulkeley left the study, leaving the Head fuming.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### An Investigation under Difficulties.

Jimmy Silver of the Fourth Form stepped out of Mr. Dalton's old study, and glanced cautiously to right and left.

Then he scudded away. Lovell and Raby and Newcome were waiting for him at the foot of the big staircase.

"All serene?" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell, as the captain of the Fourth joined them.

"Right as rain," said Jimmy. "I got through twice to the Head's study, on Dicky's phone."

The chums of the Fourth chuckled. "There'll be a row!" remarked Raby.

"Let there be!" answered Jimmy Silver indifferently. "I fancy there'll be a good many rows until Dicky comes back."

"Yes, rather!" said Lovell emphatically. "Anyhow, the Head knows by this time that we want Dicky."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hullo, here comes Bulkeley!" murmured Newcome.

Bulkeley of the Sixth, with a very grave expression on his face, bore down on the Fistical Four. He scanned the four cheery heroes of the Fourth keenly.

"Oh! Not one of you, then!" he remarked.

"One of us!" repeated Jimmy.

The juniors grinned quietly at the prefect's puzzled face. There was no public telephone within half a mile of the school gates; anyone who had gone out to telephone could not have returned in time to obey the call to the Form-room. Yet all were there.

It dawned upon Bulkeley's mind that one of the school telephones must have been used.

He further remembered that there was a telephone in Mr. Dalton's study—a room unoccupied till the new master of the Fourth should arrive at Rookwood School.

Bulkeley compressed his lips.

"One of you young rascals has been using the telephone in Mr. Dalton's study!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, Bulkeley!"

"Was it you, Silver?"

"Was it you, Bulkeley?" retorted Jimmy.

"What?"

"Well, you asked me one question, so I asked you another," said Jimmy cheerfully. "One good turn deserves another, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth.

Bulkeley breathed hard. Under Mr. Dalton's rule, certainly, the Fourth never had ventured to talk to a prefect like this. But since Dicky had left Rookwood, disorder had been the order of the day. The Fourth were prepared to submit to authority as personified by Mr. Richard Dalton. Apparently they weren't prepared to submit to authority in any other shape or form.

"There is another matter that I have to look into," said Bulkeley, after a pause. "Some young sweep has been painting up an insolent message in the Head's study."

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In the Head's study!" exclaimed Putty of the Fourth, in tones of exaggerated horror. "Didn't the skies fall, Bulkeley?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" roared Bulkeley, his temper beginning to rise. "Look here, if you young sweeps are looking for trouble with the headmaster you'll get more than you bargain for. Someone went to the Head's study during the morning recess—it must have been done at that time—and painted up a cheeky message."

"What was the message, Bulkeley?" inquired Conroy, and the whole Form chuckled.

"Never mind that. I want to know who did it."

"He wants to know who did it!" said Mornington. "Did you do it, Rawson?"

"He wants to know who did it," said Rawson. "Did you do it, Towny?"

"He wants to know who did it," said Townsend. "Did you do it, Topsy, old bean?"

"He wants to know—" began Topham, amid roars of laughter.

"Silence!" shouted Bulkeley.

"He wants to know—"

"Silence! The Head has ordered me to inquire into this," said Bulkeley, breathing hard.

"The Head has ordered him to inquire into this, Silver!" said Mornington, taking up the "rag" again.

"The Head has ordered him to inquire into this, Lovell!" said Jimmy Silver, in his turn.

"The Head has ordered—" commenced Lovell.

"Will you keep quiet?" roared Bulkeley.

"Will you keep quiet, Erroll?" asked Mornington.

"Will you keep quiet, Conroy?" asked Erroll.

"Will you keep quiet, Pons?" asked Conroy.

Bulkeley of the Sixth stood by the Form master's desk, staring at the ragers. The Fourth Form were making open fun of him—him, head prefect of Rookwood, and captain of the school. It was almost incredible, but there it was. Evidently the Fourth Form were getting very much out of hand.

"Silver!" gasped Bulkeley, at last, as the hubbub of voices continued. "You are the ringleader in this! I shall cane you! Bend over!"

Bulkeley picked up a cane from the desk, and came towards Jimmy. Jimmy Silver faced him without flinching.

"Better cut it out, Bulkeley," he said.

"What?"

"We're not going to be caned," Arthur Edward Lovell explained. "We're jolly well going to rag any prefect that chips in. See?"

"Bend over, Silver!"

"Bend over, Bulkeley!" retorted Jimmy.

(Continued overleaf.)

Next Monday's great story of Rookwood School—"Sticking to Their Guns!" Don't miss it on any account!



# Up Against The Head!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "For the last time, Silver—"  
 roared Bulkeley.  
 "For the last time, Bulkeley—"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Bulkeley, quite losing his temper at this point, grabbed at Jimmy Silver's collar. The cane swished in the air. "Rescue!" roared Jimmy.  
 "Collar him!" yelled Lovell.  
 A dozen pairs of hands grasped Bulkeley at the same moment. He was a powerful fellow, but he had no chance in the grasp of a dozen excited juniors.

"Bump him!" roared Lovell.  
 "Oh, my hat! Let go! I—I—I'll—"  
 panted Bulkeley.  
 "Hold on!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Don't bump him! Bulkeley's a good sort! Walk him out!"  
 "Hear, hear!"  
 "You young sweeps—" gasped Bulkeley.

"Take him up tenderly, treat him with care!" sang Putty of the Fourth.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 And in the grasp of a crowd of juniors, Bulkeley of the Sixth was forcibly walked to the door of the Form-room, and pushed into the passage. There he was released, and he stood gasping for breath, and glaring at the juniors.

They crammed the doorway, laughing. Carthew, the bully of the Sixth, came along, and stopped to stare at the scene. There was a yell from Lovell.

"There's Carthew! Collar him!"  
 "Rag him!"

Carthew, Sixth-Former and prefect as he was, vanished round the nearest corner at top speed. He had no desire whatever to try conclusions with the rebellious Fourth. A howl of derisive laughter followed him.

"You—you—you—you young rotters!" gasped Bulkeley. "If I report this to the Head—"  
 "Report to the Head and be blown!" retorted Lovell.

"Tell the Head we want Dicky; and we won't be happy till we get him!" roared Mornington.

"Hear, hear!"  
 Bulkeley turned away and strode along the corridor. He repaired to his study to brush his hair and tie his tie before he returned to the Head. He reported to Dr. Chisholm that he had failed, so far, to discover which member of the Fourth, if any, had been guilty of those heinous acts of impertinence. He did not add any description of the scene in the Form-room. Bulkeley's view was that there was likely to be trouble enough between the Head and the mutinous Fourth, and he did not want to add fuel to the fire.

### The 3rd Chapter Something like a Rag!

"French this afternoon!" remarked Lovell.  
 Some the Fourth Form fellows laughed.

During the absence of a Form master for the Fourth, there had been necessary changes in the class work; the Fourth working sometimes with the Shell, sometimes under a prefect, and filling in time with extra French and mathematics. In the Shell-room they made Mr. Mooney yearn for the return of Dicky Dalton; and when they took extra French, Monsieur Monceau felt that his few remaining locks were growing greyer minute by minute.

A whole afternoon at French would have been a bore, at the best of times. But a whole afternoon at French because the Head had dismissed Mr. Dalton—unjustifiably, in the opinion of the Fourth—was really too much to stand.

The mutinous Fourth had no intention of standing it. French that afternoon was to be a long-continued rag.

The state of affairs in the Fourth

threw extra work on some of the masters. The Head did not appear to think that that mattered in any way. But in masters' Common-room there were subdued remarks on the subject that would have made Dr. Chisholm's hair curl, almost, had he overheard them.

Monsieur Monceau came into the Form-room almost in fear and trembling.

The juniors did not dislike Mossoo; in fact, they liked him, and they respected him as a member of a great Allied nation. But Mossoo was taking them instead of their own Form master, now dismissed, and that was a cause of war. The hapless Mossoo had to answer for the lofty methods of the Head.

Monsieur Monceau gave the class his graceful little Parisian bow, and hoped for the best—with a misgiving that it was the worst that was going to happen. Before he had a fair chance of starting on French irregular verbs, Mornington rose to his feet.

"Excuse me, sir—"  
 "Vat is it, Mornington?"  
 "We want Dicky, sir!"  
 "Comment!"

"I'm sure you'll excuse my mentionin', sir, that we want Dicky," said Mornington, so gravely and respectfully that Monsieur Monceau stared at him in perplexity.

"Mon Dieu!" said Monsieur Monceau. "But zis Dicky, as you shall call Monsieur Dalton, he is parti—he is gone! It is viz me zat you shall take ze lesson zis after-midday, Mornington."

"Perhaps, sir, you would prefer to dismiss the class!" suggested Mornington. "We should be willin' to play football instead of doing French."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Lovell. Monsieur Monceau looked bewildered.

"Mais, Mornington, zat is not permit," he said. "It is ze ordair of ze headmaster zat I give you French instruction."

"Very well, sir; it's your look-out," said Mornington, and he sat down.

"Mes garçons—"  
 "We want Dicky, sir!" said several voices.

"Taisez-vous!" exclaimed Monsieur Monceau. "You must not speak of zis Dicky in class. Maintenant—"

"Nous voulons avoir le Dicky!" said Lovell, putting it into French—Fourth Form French.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Tais-toi!" snapped Monsieur Monceau, showing signs of excitement.

"It needs to keep ordair in zis class. Ciel! Who is zat zat stamp ze pieds?"

Stamp! Stamp! Stamp! Stamp!  
 From the back of the class came a rhythmical sound of stamping feet on the floor. It was steady, it was continuous, and it made instruction in the beautiful language of la belle France impossible.

"Silence!" shouted Mossoo.  
 Stamp! Stamp! Stamp!  
 Putty of the Fourth produced a mouth-organ. Almost under the nose of the French master, he proceeded to produce fearsome music from it.

Monsieur Monceau began to gesticulate. Rags were far from uncommon in the French class; but these proceedings were beyond the limits of a rag.

"You, Grace!" Mossoo shouted at Putty. "You put him away, isn't it!"

Putty continued to blow fearsome blasts. A tin whistle, somewhere at the back of the Form, added to the musical honours.

Stamp! Stamp! Stamp!  
 Monsieur Monceau began to tear his hair. It was a rash proceeding, for he had very little to spare.

"Vill you be silent!" he roared. "Vill you keep ordair, or is it zat I comes to you viz cane?"

"We want Dicky!"  
 "Go home, Mossoo!"  
 "Bonjour, et partez vite!" howled Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Monsieur Monceau grabbed a cane. He advanced upon his class, cane in hand, and the juniors all jumped up. From somewhere a jet of ink came

from a jerked inkpot, and it missed Mossoo by half an inch. He jumped back in a hurry.

Every fellow in the Form was raging, and Mossoo, cane in hand, glared at them, uncertain which to begin upon. He could not very well cane the whole Form; and he was aware, too, that the Fourth would not allow him to proceed to that length.

"Grace!" he shouted at Putty. "Put zat zing away viz you."

A blast from the mouth-organ answered.

"Stand out before ze class, zen."  
 The mouth-organ hooted defiance.

Mossoo made a jump at Putty of the Fourth. With Mossoo's grab on his collar Teddy Grace came out before the class, sprawling. Then the cane whacked.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Putty.  
 He tore himself away from Mossoo, and dodged behind the Form master's desk. Mossoo rushed after him.

"Go it, Putty!" yelled the Fourth.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Stop!" shrieked Monsieur Monceau. "Grace, if you do not stop viz you, I punishes you severely."

"Bow-wow!"  
 "Oh, mon Dieu!"  
 Monsieur Monceau chased round the desk after Putty.

"Here we go round the mulberry-bush!" roared Lovell.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Crash!

Finding that he could not catch the elusive Putty, Monsieur Monceau, in a state of great excitement now, lashed at him across the desk. The cane landed on the desk with a force that nearly cracked it. Whether the cane touched Putty or not Mossoo

"But zat was ze cane zat strike ze desk, I zink."

"You can tell the coroner that, sir!" said Mornington encouragingly. "Of course, we shall be bound to say what we know at the inquest."

"Ze coroner! Ze inquest!" said Mossoo dazedly. "Oh, ciel! Oh, non, non, non!"

"Shall I go and telephone to the police-station, sir?" asked Jimmy Silver respectfully.

"Ze police-station?"  
 "I suppose you're going to give yourself up, sir?"

"Mon Dieu!"  
 "No good hooking it, sir," said Lovell. "You see, as the matter stands it's only manslaughter!"

"Ciel!"  
 "But if you hooked it, it would look like murder!"

Monsieur Monceau gave a howl of desolation. He pushed his way through the juniors, dropped on his knees beside the motionless, if not lifeless, form of Teddy Grace.

There was no movement from Putty of the Fourth. His eyes were closed, his features still; not a muscle twitched. The crimson stream on his face was dripping to the floor.

"Helas! It cannot be!" moaned Monsieur Monceau. He felt over Putty's chest. "Ciel! Ze heart he beat!"

"Really, sir—" murmured Raby.  
 "He is alive!" exclaimed Monsieur Monceau joyfully. "Grace! My poor boy, pauvre garçon—ouvres les yeux!"

Putty's eyes opened.  
 "Where am I?" he murmured feebly.

There was a gasping sound from

"Run for it!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

Whack! Putty ran for it, but the cane found him as he ran. It came across his shoulders with a terrific smite, and Putty yelled.

"Whoooooop!"  
 Whack, whack, whack!

Putty of the Fourth dodged among the desks, and after him went the exasperated French master, whacking away with the cane as if he were beating carpet.

Putty's yells rang through the Form-room and down the corridor without. The whole Fourth were yelling, too, with laughter; but there was no merriment in Putty's yells. The matter had suddenly become a very serious one for Putty.

Fortunately, Peele put a foot in Mossoo's way at last, and Mossoo sat down among the desks with a bump.

"Ink him!" shouted Mornington.  
 "Oh, mon Dieu! Helas! Ciel!"

A dozen inkpots swooped their contents on Mossoo as he scrambled among the desks.  
 The hapless gentleman scrambled to his feet. He was dazed and bewildered, and streaming with ink. He glared round at the Fourth-Formers, still grasping the cane. From all sides jets of ink came at him.

"Zat you stop it!" shrieked Mossoo, almost beside himself. "I goes to ze Head—I fetch ze Head to you—Mon Dieu!"

Monsieur Monceau fairly raced for the door. He tore it open, and rushed into the corridor. At top speed, scattering ink-drops as he ran, Mossoo fled for the Sixth Form room.  
 "He's gone for the Head!"  
 "Phew!"

Sudden seriousness fell on the Fourth Form rebels. They were "up against" the Head; but the Head of Rookwood was a terrifying personage to Lower boys.

"I—I say, you fellows will remember that I hadn't anything to do with it, you know!" gasped Tubby Muffin.  
 "What?" roared Lovell.

"I—I—I—" stuttered Tubby. "I hadn't—I didn't—I—I wasn't—Yoooooopp!"

Tubby yelled as Lovell up-ended him, and sat him on the floor with a heavy bump.

"Anybody else didn't have anything to do with it?" roared Lovell, glaring round.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Look here, the Head's coming," said Conroy. "It's up to you, Jimmy—what's the game when the Head butts in?"

"Clear!" said Jimmy.  
 "Good! I'd rather not see the Head just now," chuckled Conroy.

All the Fourth agreed with Conroy on that point. The juniors swarmed out of the Form-room. Jimmy Silver lingered a moment, to put the key on the outside of the door. Then he vanished after his Form-fellows.

### The 5th Chapter. Locked In!

"Regardez donc!"  
 Dr. Chisholm fairly spun round and glared. The Sixth-Formers stared and grinned.

"Regardez donc!" shrieked Monsieur Monceau.

Everyone in the Sixth Form room "regarded" him; there was no mistake about that. In his present state, Mossoo would have been the cynosure of all eyes, anywhere. Streaming with ink, dusty and dishevelled, he presented a really startling aspect.

"What—what—what—" stuttered the Head. "Who—who—is that you, Monsieur Monceau?"

"C'est moi! Regardez donc!" yelled Monsieur Monceau. "Is it zat I am treat in zis manner? Is it to endure zis? Regardez l'enere—viz iuk I am smother! I take zat Form no more! I am assault—I am batter—I am keel! Mon Dieu!"  
 "Calm yourself, Monsieur Monceau!"

"Mais regardez!" shrieked Mossoo.

"Do you mean to tell me that the Fourth Form boys have treated you in this manner, Monsieur Monceau?"

"Mais, certainement! Zey tell me zat zey want Deekey—and moi, mon Dieu, I wish nozzing better—I wish zey had zair Deekey. Moi, I take zem no more! It is ze life of one dog."

"That will do, Monsieur Monceau! I will inquire into this matter," said the Head coldly.

He rustled past the agitated French master, and swept down the corridor. The wrath in his face was terrible. The most reckless fellow in the Fourth Form might have shrunk from facing the Head at that moment.

Dr. Chisholm arrived at the door of the Fourth Form room. He hurled it open, and strode in.

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hardly knew, but the next moment there was a fearful yell from Teddy Grace, and he fell on the floor with a crash and lay still.

### The 4th Chapter. Rough on Mossoo.

"He's dead!"  
 "Mossoo's killed him!"  
 "Fetch the police!"

Monsieur Monceau stood transfixed, staring down at the still form of Teddy Grace.

Putty lay motionless on his back, and there was a stream of crimson on his face. To the horrified eyes of Monsieur Monceau it seemed that blood was streaming from some terrible wound in the unfortunate junior's head.

"Mon Dieu!" stuttered the hapless French master. "Boy! Garçon! Mon cher! Zat you get up!"

The juniors crowded out from the forms. They gathered round Putty with exclamations of horror.

Jimmy Silver knelt by Putty's side, and felt over his chest. Mossoo gazed at him, dumbfounded.

"He is not keel!" gasped Mossoo at last. "It is not possible. Zat is too terrible!"

"I cannot feel his heart beat, sir!" said Jimmy Silver, in a subdued voice. That was perfectly true, as Jimmy had his hand on Putty's shoulder, where Putty's heart certainly could not be expected to beat.

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Lovell.  
 "He's dead!"  
 "Poor old Putty!"

"Helas!" wailed Monsieur Monceau. "But it is pas possible! I do not strike him so hard as zat."

"You see, you struck a fearful blow, sir," said Mornington. "We all heard it."

"It fairly rang through the room sir," said Peele.

the Fourth-Formers who crowded round. Perhaps it indicated grief and sympathy. But it sounded more like suppressed laughter.

Monsieur Monceau stared round.  
 "Gower, you laff!"  
 "I, sir!" exclaimed Gower.

"You laff viz you. Is zis a laffing mattair?" exclaimed the French master. "Tais-toi, for shame, you heartless boy!"

"Oh, my aunt!" gasped Gower.  
 "Where am I?" moaned Putty.

"Pauvre garçon! Is it zat you souffair mooch?" asked Monsieur Monceau tenderly. "I am sorry that I strike you so hard viz cane. I am enrage—zat is, I have been enrage! C'est terrible! I am sorry. But—"

Monsieur Monceau broke off suddenly, and an extraordinary expression came over his face.

He had made a startling discovery.

The crimson fluid that gave Putty's face so ghastly an aspect was not, as he had supposed, blood. It was red ink! On a close inspection it was undoubtedly red ink!

For a moment or two Monsieur Monceau was transfixed. Then he jumped to his feet, his face crimson with wrath.

"L'encre!" he gasped. "Ze ink—ze ink rouge! Zis is one trick! Zis is one choke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Fourth.  
 "Vere is zat cane?"

Monsieur Monceau glared round for the cane. All his sympathetic concern for Putty vanished at once when he discovered that the supposed stream of blood was harmless red ink, and realised that the whole affair was a jape, planned from the beginning by the humorous Putty.

"Look out, Putty!" yelled Lovell.

Putty of the Fourth was looking out. He leaped to his feet as the French master rushed at him, brandishing the cane.

"Boys!" he exclaimed, in a thunderous voice.

Then he blinked round him. The Form-room was empty. Two or three forms were overturned, a cane lay on the floor, with a dozen inkpots and many scattered papers. There were all the traces of a scene of wild disorder. But there was not a junior to be seen.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head. "Where—?" Slam!

The Form-room door, pulled from without by an unseen hand, suddenly closed.

Dr. Chisholm spun round towards it.

Click! The key turned in the lock. For a moment Dr. Chisholm gazed blankly at the locked door. He could hardly realise that he had been locked in the Form-room, in spite of the evidence of his senses.

He breathed hard and deep as he strode to the door, and grasped the knob, and pulled.

The door did not open. Outside, there was a sound of hurriedly retreating feet. Whoever had locked the door on the Head was departing hurriedly.

With deep and concentrated wrath in his face, the Head of Rookwood tugged at the door. But it did not open. Obviously, it was locked. Amazing, incredible as it was, one of the Fourth had locked the headmaster in the room.

Dr. Chisholm struck on the panels with his hand.

"Open this door at once!" he thundered.

There was no reply. If the junior was within hearing, he took care not to heed.

"Boy! Do you hear me?" No reply.

The Head breathed hard and deep! This was rebellion, with a vengeance—he realised that! He had "sacked" Richard Dalton on the ground that Mr. Dalton did not enforce due discipline in his Form. But nothing like this, assuredly, had ever occurred at Rookwood while "Dicky" was in charge of the Fourth.

Twice again the Head struck on the door with his knuckles, and then he ceased. He crossed over to the windows, and looked out. In the distance, in the quadrangle, he could see a good many of the Fourth. They were punting a football, and seemingly enjoying their unaccustomed holiday.

"Upon my word!" murmured the Head.

The stately old gentleman stood nonplussed. He was quite at a loss. His word was law at Rookwood School; but a locked door would not open at his bidding. He was a prisoner in the Fourth Form room—a prisoner, until someone should arrive and release him. All the same, the Sixth would be waiting for him, wondering why he did not return.

A quarter of an hour passed. It was immensely below the dignity of the headmaster to hammer on the door and attract attention that way. He could imagine the look of Tupper, or any of the servants, who came up and found him locked in the room.

But after a quarter of an hour had elapsed, dignity seemed a slighter consideration to the Head. He had to get out of the room somehow. And it was really impossible for the Head to climb down from a high window like a venturesome fag.

He took up the cane, and knocked on the door, steadily and loudly. Knock, knock, knock!

Mr. Bohun, the master of the Third Form, though busy with the fags, became conscious, after a time, of a sound of steady knocking in the distance. Mr. Bohun noticed it at first with surprise, then with annoyance, and then with growing exasperation. His room was not very far from the Fourth Form room, and so he had most of the benefit of that continuous hammering sound. The Third Form fags wondered what the matter was, and grinned at one another as they noted the deepening frown on the brow of Mr. Bohun.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Bohun, at last. "This is really intensely annoying. Most irritating, in fact."

He opened the door of his Form-room, and looked out into the corridor.

A little gentleman came down the passage, with a pale, agitated face. It was Monsieur Monceau, fresh from a bath-room. He had left the dust and the ink behind, but his agitation was still with him.

"Monsieur Monceau! You are not with the Fourth!" exclaimed Mr. Bohun. "I understood—"

Mossou gesticulated wildly. "I am not viz zem! I am finish—"

done! I r-r-refuse to have something more to do viz zem, mon Dieu!"

"Then the boys are left to themselves—"

"Je ne sais pas—I know not, care not! It is to finish!"

"There seems to be some sort of disturbance going on in the Fourth Form room—"

"Ciel! Zat is not to surprise me! I hear him, and he is very noisy," said Monsieur Monceau. "Somevun bang viz himself on ze door, isn't it? Laissez faire—I know not and care not! I am finish viz zem—I, moi qui vous parle, monsieur!"

And Monsieur Monceau walked on, waving his hands in excited gesticulations as if he were actually washing his hands of the Fourth Form.

Knock, knock, knock, knock! came from the Fourth Form room. Mr. Bohun breathed hard. Mr. Mooney, the master of the Shell, joined him in the passage.

"This is most disturbing, Mr. Bohun," he remarked.

"Extremely so, Mr. Mooney. Monsieur Monceau seems to have deserted his class, and some sort of a riot is going on in the room."

"Perhaps one should call the Head—"

"Hem!"

The two junior masters exchanged

stuttered. How the headmaster came to be locked in the Form-room was a deep mystery to them. But there was no mistaking his voice. It was the Head! It was the Head, and he was wrathful!

His voice came through the door in a tone of thunder.

"Who is that? Who is speaking? How dare you—"

"I—I—I— Oh dear!"

"Really, sir— Oh dear!"

"Let me out of this room at once!" roared the Head. "I am locked in! Some young rascal has locked the door on me!"

"Is it possible?" gasped Mr. Bohun. "I—I—I imagined that some—some noisy junior was making all this noise!"

"Pooh!"

"I assure you, sir—really, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Hem! I—"

"Unlock this door, Mr. Bohun!" shouted the Head. "Are you aware that you are wasting my time? Are you aware that your headmaster's time is of value?"

"I—I—I—"

"Will you unlock this door, Mr. Bohun, or will you not unlock this door?" demanded the Head, in concentrated tones.

"Really, sir, I—I cannot—"

Mooney caught his smile, and smiled, too. Possibly both the junior masters found something entertaining, even solacing, in this blow to the dignity of their autocratic headmaster.

"Upon my word! The young rascal must have taken away the key when he locked the door! Find him at once!"

"Who was it, sir?"

"How should I know?" snapped the Head. "He did not allow me to see him, whoever he was!"

"No doubt, sir; but without knowing who has the key, sir, how am I to find him?" asked Mr. Bohun.

"It is some boy in the Fourth Form. They are all in the quadrangle. Obtain the key at once!" fumed the Head.

"Oh, very well, sir! Have I your permission to leave my Form unattended?"

"Eh? Yes! Of course! Do not be absurd!"

"Very good, sir!"

Mr. Bohun walked away to the quad; Mr. Mooney, smiling, returned to the Shell room. In the Fourth room the Head walked up and down and fumed, as he waited for the key and rescue. Mr. Bohun did not hurry himself. He had been far from approving of the dismissal of Mr. Dalton; and he did not see why the

"Indeed, sir!" said Jimmy innocently.

"Dr. Chisholm has asked me to obtain the key, to release him, Silver."

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy.

"Doubtless the key is in your possession, Silver," hinted Mr. Bohun. "If so, please hand it over to me."

"The key is not in my possession, sir," said Jimmy Silver demurely. He did not add that the Form-room key was reposing in the fountain in the quad. There was no need to tell Mr. Bohun that.

"The key is required at once," said Mr. Bohun. "Has any boy present the key in his possession?"

"No, sir!"

"Not at all, sir."

Mr. Bohun looked at the juniors, and the juniors looked at Mr. Bohun, smiling.

"The Head cannot remain in the Form-room, Silver," said the Third Form master at last. "The Sixth are waiting for him, too, I suppose."

"Dear me!" said Jimmy sympathetically. "That's hard on the Sixth, isn't it, sir?"

Mr. Bohun coughed.

"Perhaps you could find the key, Silver."

"Perhaps, sir."

"Will you kindly endeavour to do so, Silver?"

"I will look for it if you like, sir," said Jimmy.

"Thank you, Silver!"

"Not at all, sir," said the captain of the Fourth politely. "Only too happy to oblige you, sir."

Mr. Bohun coughed again, and walked back to the School House. Jimmy Silver was as good as his word. He looked for the key. As he did not look in the fountain, however, naturally he did not see it.

The Third Form master had no expectation of the key being delivered up. He went back to the Form-room, within which the Head was pacing to and fro like a caged lion. He tapped discreetly on the door.

"Dr. Chisholm—"

"Have you the key?"

"No, sir!"

"Why not?" articulated the Head.

"The juniors deny that it is in their possession, sir—"

"Which means that they have thrown it away, that is all!" exclaimed the Head.

"Very possibly, sir! Do you wish me to search for the key, which they have doubtless thrown away, or shall I resume lessons in my Form-room, sir?" asked Mr. Bohun politely.

Dr. Chisholm breathed hard. To search for a key within the extensive precincts of Rookwood School, was a search resembling that for a needle in a stack of hay. Certainly the Head did not wish to remain a prisoner in the Form-room during so extensive and prolonged a quest.

"Kindly call the sergeant, Mr. Bohun, and request him to bring tools to force the door!" gasped the Head at last.

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Bohun walked away, and walked across the quad to Sergeant Kettle's house. Dr. Chisholm, white with anger, resumed his hurried pacing of the Form-room. A scraping sound at the door drew his attention; his glance fell on a slip of paper that was pushed into the room under the door. In great surprise the Head picked up the slip of paper. A message was inscribed on it in capital letters:

"WE WANT DICKY!"

Dr. Chisholm stared at that message, and then, with an enraged gesture, crumpled the paper in his hand.

Five minutes later heavy footsteps without announced the arrival of Sergeant Kettle. Ten minutes more, and the Form-room door was opened, and the prisoner was free.

Dr. Chisholm, his face set and his eyes glinting, rustled away. Lovell, from a corner of the corridor, spotted him, and scudded away with the news to his comrades in the quad.

"The Head's out!"

"And now," said Mornington, with a grin, "look out for trouble."

And the trouble was not long in coming.

THE END.

(Lively times at Rookwood! Don't miss "Sticking to Their Guns!"—next Monday's great story of the Fourth Form Rebels. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and avoid disappointment!)



BULKELEY HAS TO GO! "Hold on!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Don't bump him! Bulkeley's a good sort! Walk him out." In the grasp of the juniors Bulkeley of the Sixth was forcibly walked to the door of the Form-room and pushed into the passage.

dubious looks. Neither wished to seek the Head in the Sixth Form room—bearding the lion in his den, as it were.

"Possibly a word from us would restore order!" suggested Mr. Mooney, as a second thought.

"Possibly."

"Let us try, at least! This din is most—most unnerving."

The two masters walked along to the Fourth Form room, little dreaming that the Fourth were absent there, and the Head present. They were to discover that.

Mr. Mooney tried the handle of the door. It did not, of course, open.

"Locked?" said Mr. Bohun.

"Yes!"

"Dear me!"

Knock, knock, knock! Crash! Mr. Bohun tapped on the door.

"Cease that noise immediately!" he shouted.

The knocking stopped as if by magic. Encouraged by that instant obedience, Mr. Bohun pursued:

"You noisy rascal—"

"Wha-a-a-t!" came a gasping voice.

"You insubordinate rascal, keep silent!" exclaimed Mr. Mooney, following his colleague's lead. "If there is any more of this disturbance I shall chastise you!"

"Bless my soul!"

Two masters gave a simultaneous jump, in utter horror, as they recognised the voice of the Head of Rookwood!

The 6th Chapter. No Key!

"Dr. Chisholm!"

"The Head!"

Mr. Bohun and Mr. Mooney fairly

"Stuff! Nonsense! Turn the key!"

"But there is no key in the lock!"

"What?"

"There is no key, sir! Is not the key inside?" gasped Mr. Mooney.

"Do you suppose, sir, that I should have remained a prisoner in this Form-room, sir, if there had been a key in the lock, sir, on this side of the door, sir?" asked the Head, in a formidable voice.

"Oh! Ah! No! Certainly not, sir!" stuttered Mr. Mooney.

"Then kindly do not talk nonsense!"

"Oh! Ah! Yes!"

"Is there no key on the outside of the door, Mr. Bohun?"

"None, sir," answered Mr. Bohun, venturing to smile, with a thick oak door between him and the Head, Mr.

consequences of that dismissal should fall upon him. Certainly if the juniors refused to give up the key, Mr. Bohun had no intention of entering into a contest with them. The Head had chosen to dismiss Mr. Dalton, in his high-handed way; and the Head could see the matter through. That was how the Third Form master looked at it.

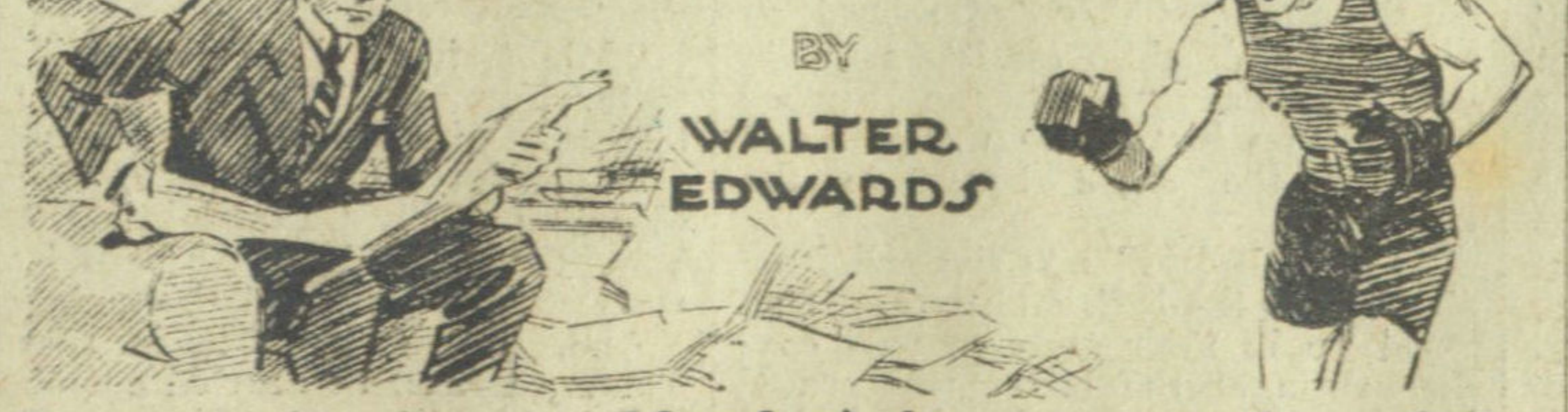
He found a crowd of the Fourth in the quadrangle, and noted that they grinned at one another as he came up.

"Silver!" called out Mr. Bohun, and he spoke quite civilly. He did not want any of Monsieur Monceau's experiences for himself.

"Yes, sir," said the captain of the Fourth.

"Someone has locked the headmaster in your Form-room."

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