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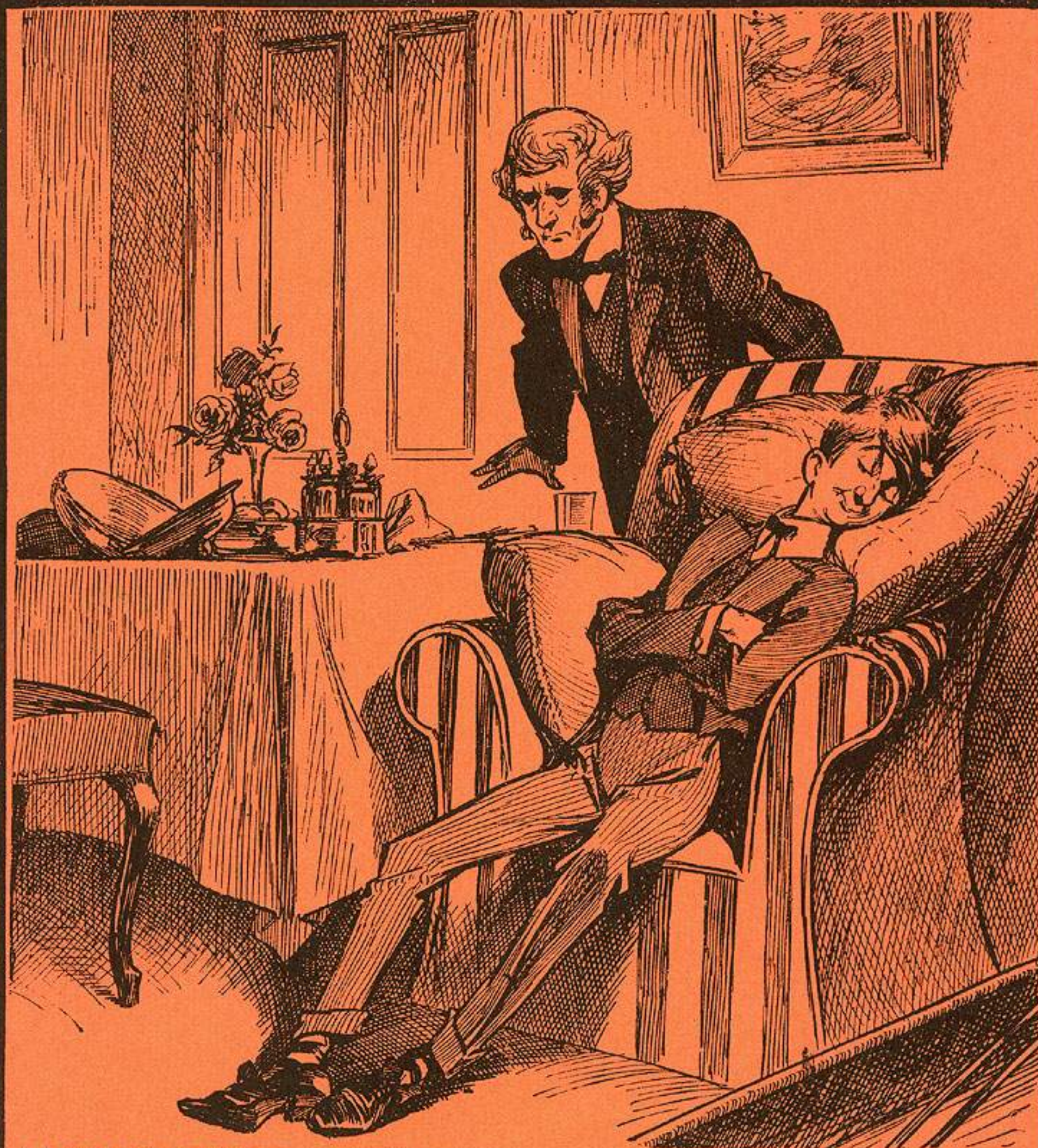
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No. 137 |

Grand, Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.

| Vol. 5.



**ALONZO TODD EATS THE HEAD-MASTER'S DINNER!**





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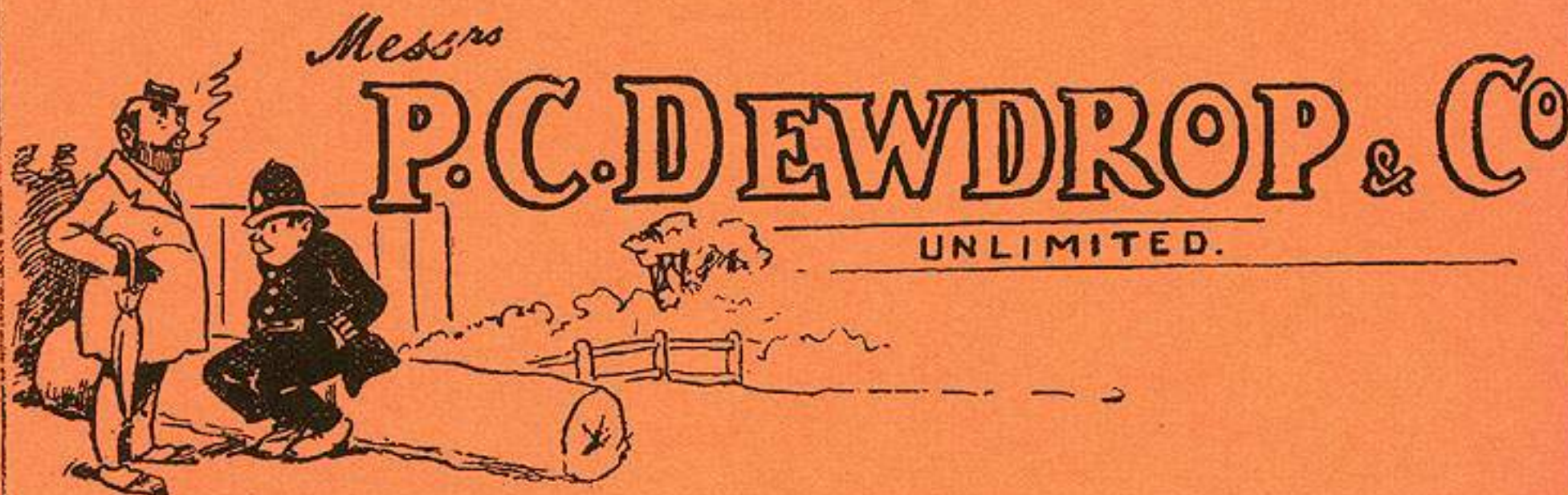
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# HA, HA, HA!



To be found on page 9 of this week's "EMPIRE."



This is the Title of the  
Story for next Tuesday:

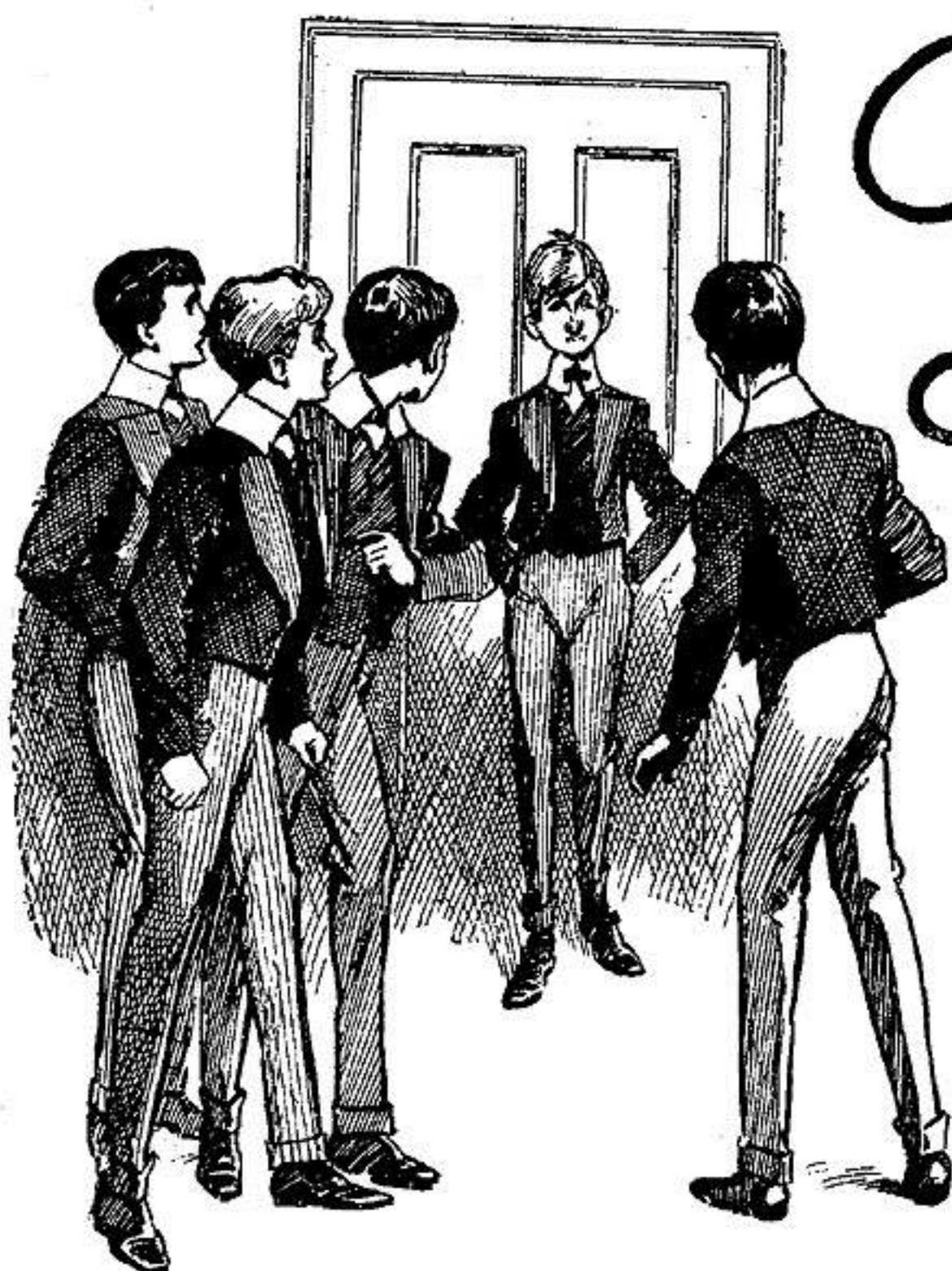


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# Only Alonzo!

A Splendid,  
Long, Complete School  
Tale of  
Harry Wharton & Co.  
and Alonzo Todd at  
Greyfriars.

By  
**FRANK RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Alonzo Misses His Dinner.

"WHERE is Todd?"

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove at Greyfriars, glanced down the long table as he asked the question. One place was empty in the ranks of the Remove. Alonzo Todd was absent.

Dinner was a meal the juniors were never allowed to miss. Tea they could have in their own studies if they liked; supper they need not have at all unless they chose. They

generally did choose. But at dinner they had to turn up in the long dining-room of Greyfriars; that was a law as immutable as those of the Medes and Persians.

Mr. Quelch frowned.

Among so many boys—for the Remove, or Lower Fourth, was a numerous Form—some masters might have failed to note a single absentee. Not so Mr. Quelch. Mr. Quelch's eyes had been compared to gimlets by the boys of his Form. And certainly they were very keen and very penetrating. Nothing ever escaped Mr. Quelch's glance. He could see



whether a fellow at the end of the table had a soiled collar, and whether his hands needed washing. If a junior failed to turn up at the right moment, there was not the slightest chance that Mr. Quelch would omit to notice it.

"Where is Todd?"

Mr. Quelch repeated the question.

Harry Wharton, as captain of the Remove, took it upon himself to reply. Mr. Quelch's glance seemed to single him out.

"I don't know, sir."

"Why is he not here?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Is he ill?"

"I think not, sir."

Mr. Quelch frowned again.

"Does any boy know where Todd is?" he asked.

No answer.

"Does any boy know why he is not here?"

Silence.

"Very well," said the Form-master, sitting down, "I shall look into this. You may proceed."

And the Remove proceeded.

"The young ass!" murmured Frank Nugent into Wharton's ear. "What has he cut dinner for, I wonder?"

"Oh, he's always looking for trouble."

"And generally finding it," grinned Bob Cherry.

"The findfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur.

Mr. Quelch glanced down the table, and the murmur died away. The Remove-master was not in a good temper. The juniors felt that things would be bad for Alonzo when he came in. Alonzo was generally in trouble, frequently through his desire to make himself useful and obliging. It was quite probable that the Duffer of Greyfriars was making himself useful to somebody now, and piling up trouble for himself at Greyfriars.

The Removites wondered where he was. Skinner remembered seeing him go out some time before, just after morning school was dismissed, but whether he had come in again he did not know.

He might have appeared at the door of the dining-room at any moment, and several times the fellows glanced round in expectation of seeing him. But the Duffer of Greyfriars did not put in an appearance.

Dinner was over at last, and Alonzo had not returned. The juniors were dismissed, and they marched out of the dining-room.

"Where the dickens is Alonzo?" said Frank Nugent, wrinkling his brow. "He won't get any dinner, even if he doesn't get a licking, now."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really—"

"Where can he be? I—"

"But really, you fellows, I was going to make a suggestion," said Billy Bunter, blinking at the chums of the Remove through his big spectacles. "It's awfully rough on Todd to have to go without his dinner."

"Yes, it's the kind of misfortune you would sympathise with, Billy."

The fat junior grunted.

"Well, it's hard cheese, I think. I was thinking that if you fellows felt inclined to stand Alonzo a lunch when he came in, I'd do the shopping for you. If you like to hand me the money, I'll get off to the tuckshop at once, and see about it."

The Removites laughed.

"I've no doubt you'd go to the tuckshop with the money, Billy," Harry Wharton remarked. "I've some big doubts whether we should see the grub, though."

"Oh, really—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Here's Alonzo!"

A dusty and tired-looking junior came in.

He blinked at the Removites as they crowded round him.

"Had dinner?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Oh, dear! I'm so sorry! I'm hungry."

"It's finished."

"What do you mean by missing your meals in this reckless manner?" demanded Bob Cherry. "What would your Uncle Benjamin say?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Cherry—"

"You've missed dinner, and Quelch has missed you," said Nugent.

"I'm so sorry! But I could not possibly come in before. I've been down to Friardale—"

"Well, that's no reason why you shouldn't come in to dinner."

"I have been delayed. My Uncle Benjamin has always

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WEEK:

"HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."

impressed upon me to help the poor and needy," said Todd. "I have been carrying out his extremely valuable precepts."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There is nothing whatever to laugh at. But I am very hungry. It is very unfortunate that I have missed dinner. I have hurried, too. However, I have no doubt I shall find something in my study."

And Alonzo Todd nodded to the juniors and went upstairs.

The chums of the Remove grinned.

Todd's great weakness was that he was afflicted with a desire to help others, and an unfortunate fate always made his efforts end in some kind of disaster.

"I wonder what the wheeze was this time?" Bob Cherry remarked. "I don't suppose it will satisfy Quelch when he hauls Todd over the coals."

"No fear!"

"It's rough missing his dinner," said Skinner, with a grin.

"The Head has gone to Friardale on business, and he's missed his lunch. I saw Susan laying a cold lunch for him in his study, ready for when he came back. What a chance for Todd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I noticed that lunch, too," said Bunter. "There was ham, and cold beef, and fried potatoes, and—"

"My hat! You ought to keep a hotel, Bunter!"

"Wouldn't I like to!" said Bunter. "I don't know whether I shall be a hotel-keeper or a confectioner when I grow up. There's a lot to be said for both."

Meanwhile, Alonzo Todd went up to his study, and brushed off some of the dust of the Friardale road. Then he looked in the cupboard for provisions. But someone had evidently been there before him. The cupboard, as in the case of Mrs. Hubbard when she wished to supply the wants of her canine companion, was bare.

"Oh, dear!" said Alonzo.

"Hungry, old man?" asked a voice at the door.

Alonzo looked round. Skinner and Bulstrode, of the Remove, were looking in at him. The Duffer of Greyfriars nodded.

"Yes," he said, "I am extremely hungry, and indeed feeling decidedly faint from want of the usual nourishment taken at this period of the day."

Alonzo Todd had had an old-fashioned bringing-up, and he talked in a language all his own. The two juniors grinned.

"Well, that's hard cheese," said Bulstrode. "Lucky for you you've got such a jolly good Form-master."

"Eh?"

"Mr. Quelch was very much concerned about your missing lunch."

"I trust he was not annoyed."

"Annoyed! Oh, no; only concerned. What was it he said, Skinner?"

Skinner appeared to reflect.

"Lemme see. He said, 'That dear boy will be ill if he misses his dinner. Whatever can have become of him?'"

Alonzo looked very pleased.

"That was exceedingly kind of Mr. Quelch," he remarked.

"Yes; wasn't it?"

"What did he say about laying a lunch for Todd, Skinner?"

Todd started.

"A lunch for me!" he exclaimed, rather eagerly.

"Yes," said Skinner. "He told the maid to lay a lunch for you, because you would be hungry when you came in."

"How very kind!"

"Yes, he's a kind old bird when you know him."

"I shall write to my Uncle Benjamin about this. He will be so pleased. But where was the lunch laid? In the dining-room?"

"Oh, no; the maids are clearing up there. As the Head is absent, it is laid in his study, for the sake of—of convenience," said Skinner unblushingly.

Alonzo Todd stared at him.

"In the Head's study?"

"Certainly!"

"I—I don't want to appear ungrateful, Skinner, but—but you have joked with me before," said Todd. "You are quite sure you are speaking the truth?"

Skinner coughed.

"You can believe me or not as you like," he said. "Go and look at the study, that's all, and see whether the lunch is there."

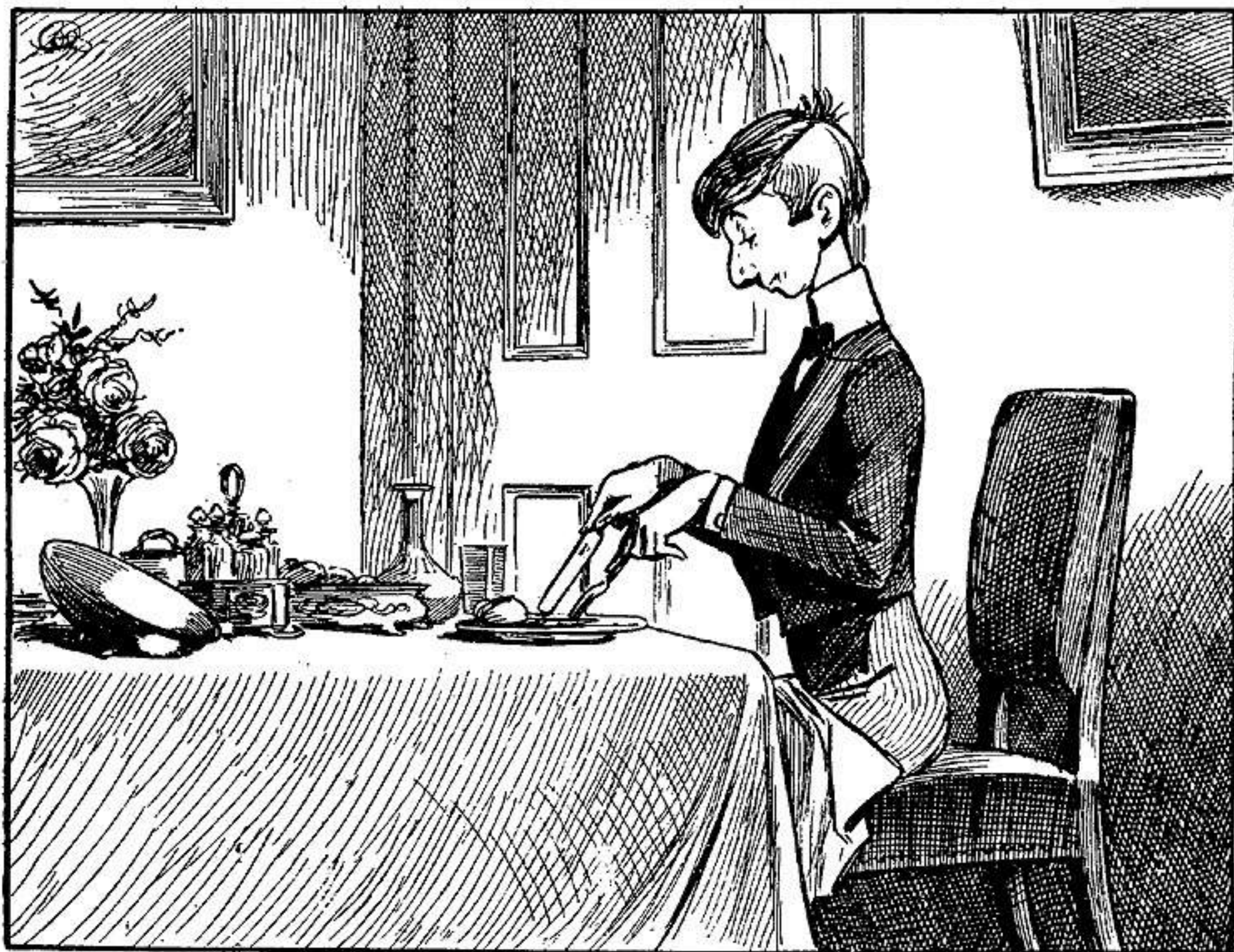
And Skinner walked away with Bulstrode.

"Dear me!" said Todd. "That is very kind of Mr. Quelch, and very, very thoughtful of him. It was also nice of Skinner to come and tell me. I will go and look at the study. If the Head is absent, and a lunch is laid there, that will prove that Skinner's statement is correct, and I shall beg his pardon for having doubted him."

And Alonzo Todd ambled away to the Head's study.

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton and Alonzo Todd. By FRANK RICHARDS.





'This is something like!' murmured Alonzo Todd, as he helped himself liberally to the Headmaster's lunch. (See below.)

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Lunch for Todd!

**T**AP!  
Alonzo Todd tapped gently at the Head's door. If the humorist of the Remove had been japing him, and getting him to go to the Head's study on a fool's errand, Alonzo had an excuse ready. He could explain to the Head why he had missed dinner.

But there was no reply to the tap.

Alonzo knocked again.

Still no reply. He was encouraged to open the study door and peep in. The room was empty. On the table, near the fire, a white cloth was laid, and the covers were upon the dishes on it.

Alonzo Todd's eyes brightened.

Skinner had evidently told him the truth, and the Duffor of Greyfriars felt ashamed of his doubts.

Todd stepped into the study, and closed the door behind him.

He lost no time in uncovering the dishes, and his face glowed with satisfaction. Todd was somewhat weedy physically, but he had a good appetite, and the sight of the excellent lunch was very pleasant to a junior who had had a long walk and had missed his dinner.

"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "This is really good."

He sat down.

In a few moments the doctor's serviette was across his knees, the doctor's knife and fork were in his hands, and he was going ahead.

Todd helped himself liberally. He helped himself again and again. If it had been Billy Bunter instead of Alonzo Todd, more havoc could hardly have been wrought with the Head's lunch.

"This is something like!" murmured Alonzo.

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He toyed with the dessert, as they say in the six-shilling novels, with a beatific smile upon his face.

He was very comfortable.

The study was cosy, and the fire was warm, and Alonzo was tired, and had eaten well. He pulled an armchair up to the hearthrug, and sat down in it, and rested, with the natural result that in a few moments he was asleep.

A little later the door of the study opened.

Dr. Locke stepped in.

"Lunch is laid, sir," said a voice in the passage.

"Thank you! Very well," said the Head.

He closed the study door. The high back of the chair near the fire concealed Alonzo, and the Head was quite unaware that there was anyone else in the study.

Dr. Locke came towards the table.

He had had to postpone his lunch by going to Friardale on business, and he had come home very sharp set. He was quite ready for lunch, but unfortunately lunch was not quite ready for him.

He came over to the table.

Then he stopped.

The wreck of the lunch was there, and Dr. Locke stood quite still, and adjusted his glasses, and looked again.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated.

Then he said:

"Extraordinary!"

Then he stepped to the bell and pressed it hard.

The maid who had laid the lunch appeared at the door.

Dr. Locke pointed majestically to the table.

"Is this my lunch, Susan?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Ah! Did you lay it in this state?"

"Yes, sir!"

"What! Susan! Look at it!"

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Susan looked at it, then she uttered a cry.

"Oh, dear! Somebody have been and eaten it."

"Ah! You did not leave it in that state, then?"

"No, sir, of course not," said Susan. "Somebody have been in and eaten it, sir."

"You do not know whom it might be?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Very good, Susan. You may prepare me another lunch."

"Yes, sir!"

Susan, looking very red and flurried, hurried away. Dr. Locke breathed hard through his nose. He was very hungry, and it was not pleasant to have to wait for his lunch. But that was not all that troubled him. The impertinence of anybody coming into his study and devouring his lunch! It seemed incredible!

"Extraordinary!" said the Head. "It must be a prank of one of the boys. Dear me! I shall discover that boy, and make him very sorry for playing a joke of this kind upon his head-master! Dear me!"

The Head started.

In the silence of the study, a sudden sound had made itself audible.

It was a snore!

"Dear me!" muttered Dr. Locke, looking round in astonishment.

Sn-r-r-r-r!

There was no mistaking it!

It was a snore!

Someone was asleep in the study!

The Head's eyes gleamed.

Was it possible that the marauder, after devouring the lunch, had actually fallen asleep in the study? It seemed incredible; but who else could it be?

Dr. Locke stepped towards the armchair, from which the sound proceeded, and looked over the back of it.

Alonzo Todd was revealed to his astonished gaze.

The Head stared blankly at the junior.

Todd's head had fallen a little to one side, and his mouth was open, and in that somewhat uncomfortable position he had begun to snore.

"Extraordinary!" murmured the Head.

He selected a cane from the table, and then shook Todd by the shoulder.

"Groo!"

"Wake up, boy!" said the Head, shaking him again.

Todd started, and awoke.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Oh, dear! I must have fallen asleep!"

The Head smiled grimly.

"I think you must have," he said. "Is it you who have devoured the lunch laid on my table here, Todd?"

Todd blinked at him.

"Yes, sir!"

Dr. Locke almost staggered.

He had felt pretty certain that Todd was the culprit, but he had not expected a frank and matter-of-fact admission like this.

"Todd! It was you!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Why did you do it?"

"I was hungry, sir."

"Hungry!" murmured the Head dazedly.

"Yes, sir. I came in late for dinner, and missed it. It was really fortunate, sir, that this lunch was laid here. I should have felt very bad this afternoon, otherwise."

"Todd!" thundered the Head.

Alonzo quaked. For the first time he perceived that the Head was angry, and he wondered what was the cause. He jumped up.

"Ye-e-es, sir!" he stammered.

"You have eaten my lunch!"

"Eh?"

"You have had the extraordinary, the unheard-of impudence to come here and eat my lunch!" exclaimed the Head.

"Y-y-your lunch, sir?"

"Yes, sir! My lunch!"

"B-b-b-but, sir—"

"I know you are a foolish boy, Todd. But this is rank impudence. I cannot let this gross disrespect pass unpunished. Hold out your hand!"

"M-y-y hand, sir?"

"Yes, and at once."

"At once, sir?" stammered Todd, beginning to repeat what was said to him in a curious parrot-like way, as he always did when he was frightened and confused.

"Obey me, boy!"

"Obey you, sir?"

"Your hand!" thundered Dr. Locke.

"Hand, sir?"

The doctor breathed hard.

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"I—I— If you please, sir, I—I didn't know it was your lunch!" Todd stammered, in dismay. "You—you see, sir, I thought Mr. Quelch had had the lunch laid specially for me, as I had missed my dinner—"

"What!"

"And I—I'm so sorry, sir, if there was a mistake—"

The Head gasped.

"You thought Mr. Quelch had had a lunch laid for you in my study!" he ejaculated.

"Well, sir, they told me so, and—"

"Oh! Who told you so?"

Todd was silent now. He realised that he had been, as usual, the victim of a jape, and he did not want to betray those who had japed him. Duffer as he was, Todd had a very strong sense of schoolboy honour.

"So you have been the victim of a foolish practical joke," said Dr. Locke, his brows unbending a little. "Who told you this lunch was for you, Todd?"

"I—I'd rather not say, sir, if you don't mind," stammered Todd. "I—I can see now that I was deceived. I'm so sorry! I—I'd rather be caned than say who it was, sir, if you don't mind, please!"

"But—"

The maid entered with a tray. Dr. Locke glanced at his new lunch, and laid down the cane.

"You may go, Todd."

"Thank you so much, sir!"

"You are a foolish and thoughtless boy, but I believe you are truthful," said Dr. Locke. "If I knew who it was who had played this trick, I should cane him severely. But you may go."

"Thank you, sir. I—"

"That will do."

"My Uncle Benjamin always says—"

"You may go, Todd!"

"That I should thank—"

"Go!"

"Anybody who—"

"Leave my study at once!"

"Yes, sir, but—"

Dr. Locke's hand closed on the cane again. Todd gave him a doubtful blink, and in two moments was outside the study.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### A Little too Hasty.

"HERE he is!"  
"Here's Todd!"  
"Had lunch?"  
"What did the Head say?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A crowd of juniors waited for the Duffer of Greyfriars at the end of the passage. Most of them were grinning, but some looked serious. Skinner had related the joke, and the fellows had gathered to see what happened to Alonzo. But Harry Wharton said plainly that it was a rotten joke to play on a duffer like Todd.

"He'll get a licking, as sure as a gun," said the captain of the Remove. "You ought to draw a line at getting a fellow caned for a joke, Skinner."

Skinner shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, he shouldn't be such a duffer," he remarked.

"Exactly!" agreed Bulstrode. "He shouldn't be such a chump. He tempts chaps to jape him. Besides, it was a first-class joke."

"If he's really eaten the lunch," said Russell.

"Oh, trust him for that!"

Then arose the cry of "Here he comes!"

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The juniors looked eagerly at Todd. He did not show any signs of having been caned. Skinner was curious, and a little uneasy.

"Weren't you licked, Toddy?" he asked.

"My dear Skinner—"

"You ate the lunch?" asked Wharton.

"Oh, yes! I thought it was for me, you see. Skinner told me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was very mean and deceitful of Skinner. My Uncle Benjamin always says—"

"Good old Benny!"

"Cheese it!"

"That a fellow who will tell a lie for a joke will tell any sort of a lie," said Todd. "I shall decline to take Skinner's word in the future."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ha-ha-ha-fulness is terrific."

"And the Head caught you?" said Bob Cherry.

"Unfortunately, yes."

"And you weren't licked?"

"No. Fortunately, I had time to explain that it was Skinner's idea, and not mine, to take the doctor's lunch. I explained—"

"What!" roared Skinner.

"My dear Skinner! I explained—"

"You sneak!"

"Really—"

"Sneak!" roared Bulstrode.

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Sneak! Sneak!" howled Snoop and several more.

Todd looked bewildered.

"But let me explain—"

"You've given Skinner away! Sneak!"

"Rotter!"

"Sneak!"

"Cad!"

"Really—"

"Serve Skinner jolly well right!" exclaimed Wharton. "He oughtn't to have played a trick to get a chap caned."

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent.

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific."

"I expect Todd only let it out, too," without intending to sneak. You know what an ass he is," said Harry.

"My dear Wharton—"

"Sneak!" howled Skinner, with a lively anticipation in his mind of the result to himself. "Rotten sneak! Tell-tale!"

"My dear Skinner—"

"Yah! Cad!"

"But I could not allow the Head to imagine that I had deliberately eaten his lunch!" exclaimed Todd, in distress. "I was bound to explain that I did not know it was his lunch, and that somebody had told me it was for me. I—"

"Sneak!"

"But really—"

"I'm jolly well not going to be licked because of your sneaking," exclaimed Skinner hotly. "I'm going to the Head to deny it."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Wharton. "You can't deny it."

"I jolly well can."

"But you can't go to the Head with a pack of bare-faced lies."

"No worse than sneaking, anyway."

"Look here—"

"Oh, mind your own business!" snapped Skinner.

He strode away down the passage. The juniors stared after him, most of them in great disgust. There were few of them who would have told actual falsehoods to escape punishment—Skinner was one of the few.

Wharton's lip curled.

"Cad!" he muttered. "Any decent chap would rather be cut into pieces."

"Oh, rats!" said Bulstrode. "Todd shouldn't have given him away. It was sneaking to mention Skinner's name."

"My dear Bulstrode—"

"Oh, shut up, sneak!"

"I object very much to being called a sneak," said Todd. "I did not mention Skinner's name. I would rather have been caned than do so."

"What!" roared Wharton.

"I declined to mention his name, or Bulstrode's," said Todd. "I told the Head I would rather be caned."

"But—but you just said—"

"I explained to the Head that a person had deceived me, and made it quite clear that it was Skinner's idea, and not mine. But I did not mention Skinner's name. I was very careful to avoid doing so."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows—"

The juniors simply roared. Skinner had rushed off into the Head's study to deny an accusation that had never been made. Todd had not given him away, but there was no

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doubt that Skinner was giving himself away, at that very moment.

Bob Cherry wiped his eyes.

"My only hat!" he murmured. "I really think Todd takes the bun! Hark! I think I can hear Skinner's top note."

They could all hear it, proceeding from the Head's study.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Skinner Catches It.

**D**R. LOCKE had been eating his lunch when Skinner tapped at the door. The Head laid down his knife and fork, and called to the junior to come in. Skinner entered, very nervous, but very determined.

"Well, Skinner, what do you want?" asked the Head, somewhat sharply, for he was far from pleased at being interrupted at his lunch.

"If you please, is ri—"

Skinner hesitated.

"Well, what is it? Come to the point at once."

"Ye-es, sir. It's about what Todd said."

"Todd!"

"Yes, sir, he ate your lunch—"

"I am aware of that."

"And—and told you that I put him up to it," stammered Skinner, very uneasy under the doctor's searching gaze. "It wasn't true, sir."

"What wasn't true?"

"That I put him up to it, sir."

"Oh! I am aware that some lad took advantage of Todd's absurd simplicity, and made him believe that lunch was laid here for him," said Dr. Locke. "Todd refused to mention the name of the person, and I respected his scruples, and did not compel him to do so."

Skinner's jaw dropped.

He realised that he had jumped to a conclusion a little too quickly. He could have kicked himself for coming to the Head's study at all.

"Oh, sir!" he gasped.

"I did not know, or suspect, who the practical joker might be," said the Head sternly; "but your evident desire to clear yourself, when you have not been accused, clears up that point for me, Skinner. You are the guilty party."

"If you please, sir—"

"Tell me the truth at once."

"I—I—"

"You came here to deny the accusation," said Dr. Locke. "It was not made. Only a guilty conscience could have made you think that it was made."

"I—I—"

Skinner faltered and broke off. He felt that he was fairly caught.

Dr. Locke rose to his feet.

"Now, Skinner," he said, "you may confess, or I will cause the very strictest investigation to be made, which cannot fail to bring the exact truth to light. You can take your choice."

"I—I—"

"The truth, now. Was it you who played this joke upon Todd?"

"I—I—"

"Yes or no?"

"Yes, sir," stammered Skinner desperately.

The Head smiled grimly.

"I thought so, Skinner. Hold out your hand."

Then the cane came into play.

It was then that the juniors in the passage heard what Bob Cherry facetiously described as Skinner's "top note." Skinner was not the fellow to take his punishment quietly. But he had to take it. In a few minutes more he left the study, with his hands tucked away under his armpits, and twisting himself into all sorts of mysterious shapes as he went down the passage.

"My hat!" said Trevor. "Here comes the giddy contortionist."

"Oh, cheese that—he looks hurt!"

"Ow!" groaned Skinner. "Yow!"

"Had it hot, old chap?" asked Bulstrode sympathetically.

"Yow! Yes!"

"That's what comes of being in too great a hurry," Nugent remarked. "Todd didn't give you away to the Head at all."

"No—ow!—the Head said so—yow!—when it was too late! Yaroo!"

"Well, you are an ass, Skinny!"

"I'm so sorry," said Alonzo Todd, laying his hand upon Skinner's shoulder in the fatherly way he had probably

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learned from his Uncle Benjamin—"I'm so sorry, Skinner. It was quite a misapprehension—"

"You rat!" exclaimed Skinner, shaking his hand off. "I'll make you sit up for this!"

"My dear Skinner—"

"Scat!"

Skinner walked away, groaning and grumbling. He had paid dearly for his little joke upon the Duffer of Greyfriars. Todd looked round at the grinning juniors.

"Skinner seems annoyed about something," he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "I think he does."

"It was not my fault. If he had given me time to explain, I should have reasoned with him, and he would not have gone to the Head. It is a great mistake to act in a hurry. My Uncle Benjamin always says—"

"Oh, rats!"

"That one should be slow and sure—"

The juniors walked away.

Todd looked after them in surprise.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "How singular that they should depart so abruptly when I was about to impart to them some of the valuable instruction I have derived from my Uncle Benjamin."

"I say, Todd—"

"Oh, you are still here, Bunter! As I was saying, my Uncle Benjamin always made it a great point never to act in a hurry. In fact—"

"Yes, but—"

"In fact, he has often told me that if he had been in too great a hurry himself, at several important epochs of his business career, he would never have made the great success he has made."

"How good!" said Bunter. "But I was going to say—"

"Never be a young man in a hurry; or, as the French say, 'un jeune homme trop pressé,'" said Alonzo Todd, wagging a warning finger at Bunter.

The fat junior nodded.

"I won't," he said. "I think you're an awfully clever chap, Todd, and your Uncle Benjamin must be a real old sport. I—I've often benefited by the things you've told me about what your uncle thinks."

"I'm very glad to hear you say so, Bunter."

"I suppose among other things your Uncle Benjamin warned you always to assist those in temporary want of money," suggested Billy Bunter.

"Oh, certainly!"

"And I suppose you follow in your father's footsteps—I mean in your uncle's footsteps," said Bunter.

"My dear Bunter—"

"Then I'll explain how the case stands. I was expecting a postal-order by the first post this morning, and it hasn't come yet."

"I'm so sorry."

"Well, it's only a matter of time; I'm going to write to the Postmaster-General, and complain of this continual delay in letters of mine which contain remittances," said Bunter. "This postal-order, I suppose, will be along to-morrow at the latest—very likely to-night."

"I am sure I hope so, Bunter."

"I suppose you would have no objection to advancing me five bob, and taking the postal-order when it comes?"

"My dear fellow—"

"I'm sure that's exactly what your Uncle Bendigo would like—"

"My Uncle Benjamin—"

"I mean Benjamin. That's just what he would advise—helping a chap out of a strictly temporary financial difficulty," urged Bunter. "The postal-order will be along as right as rain in the morning."

"If you are sure of that—"

"I'm quite sure."

"Then I should have no objection to advancing you the money, Bunter. Only—"

"Hand it over, then."

"Only—"

"No need to waste time, Todd. It will be afternoon-bell soon. Hand me over the five bob, and I can get a snack at Mrs. Minble's before lessons. I never get enough to eat, and I was cut pretty short at dinner."

"I'm so sorry—"

"Look here!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "You said you had no objection."

"That is quite correct—"

"Then hand over the tin."

"I'm so sorry I cannot. You see, I have no objection to lending you the five shillings, Bunter; but I have no money, and it is therefore impossible for me to advance you this small loan. I'm so sorry!"

And the Duffer of Greyfriars walked away, leaving Billy Bunter speechless.

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## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Alonzo's New Idea.

WHEN the Remove took their places in the Form-room for afternoon lessons, Mr. Quelch's stern glance singled out Alonzo Todd. The Duffer of Greyfriars was looking quite calm and cheerful, as if he had never thought of such a thing as being called over the coals by a Form-master.

"Todd!" said Mr. Quelch.

The Duffer looked up.

"Yes, sir."

"You were absent from dinner?"

"Yes, sir."

"What excuse have you to offer, Todd?"

"I was delayed in the village, sir."

"For what reason?"

"My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind your Uncle Benjamin now," said Mr. Quelch sharply. "Why did you not return to dinner?"

"But it is necessary to mention him, sir, as he was really the cause—"

"Do you mean that your uncle has come down to see you?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Then what has he to do with the matter?"

"My Uncle Benjamin, sir, has impressed upon me always to help the poor and needy—"

"Well, well?"

"While I was in Friardale, sir, I came upon a youth employed by the local grocer, Mr. Pounds. He was carrying a heavy basket. I offered to carry it for him."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir," said Alonzo. "He allowed me to do so, and I carried it all the way he had to go. It then occurred to me that I should have a very long walk back. That was what made me late for dinner."

Mr. Quelch looked hard at the Duffer of Greyfriars.

"Was the boy very tired?" he asked.

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Was he smaller than you?"

"No, sir; bigger."

"Then why could he not carry the basket himself?"

Alonzo scratched his nose.

"Well, I didn't think about that, sir. I wanted to be obliging."

"You will kindly be obliging on future occasions, Todd, without breaking any of the rules of the school," said Mr. Quelch. "You will take a hundred lines for not returning to dinner, Todd."

"Oh, sir—"

"That will do."

"But, sir—"

"Silence, Todd."

Alonzo sat down and was silent. He looked at Mr. Quelch more in sorrow than in anger. It was hard to be punished for carrying out the valuable precepts of his Uncle Benjamin.

"You cheerful ass!" murmured Bob Cherry. "What did you expect? What the dickens do you go around carrying people's things for?"

"My dear Cherry—"

"Pounds's boy Sam is twice as strong as you are. He was pulling your leg all the time!"

Alonzo shook his head.

"No, he assured me that he was tired. I have a plan in my head, Cherry, for all of us to combine together to assist fellows who are less fortunate than ourselves—"

"Eh?"

"I've been thinking of a plan for rescuing grocer's boys and butcher's boys, and so on, from their evil surroundings."

"But they don't have evil surroundings, you ass. A grocer's boy has a home like any other boy, I suppose, and a father and mother, as a rule. At least, he generally starts in life with a father and mother, like the rest of us."

"I am quite aware of that, Cherry. At the same time, they are poor—"

"It's possible to be poor and honest," said Bob Cherry.

"I did not mean that. I mean, they have no opportunities for the higher studies, and for—for—in short, for becoming like myself," explained Alonzo.

Bob Cherry chuckled softly.

"That's jolly lucky for them, isn't it?" he murmured.

"My dear Cherry, I wish you would take the matter seriously. I assure you that it is a very serious matter indeed. There are a large number of poor boys in Friardale and the surrounding neighbourhood, and it was borne in upon my mind to-day that it was my duty to start a mission."

"A what?"

"A mission," said Todd firmly.

"Mission!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Exactly. I am going to save them from their miserable

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"Oh! Yow! Yaroo!" roared the unfortunate Skinner. (See page 5.)

surroundings—to plant a love of the higher pleasures and the higher knowledge in their minds."

"My hat!"

Mr. Quelch looked round.

"Someone is talking," he said warningly.

"Yes, sir," said Alonzo. "I was talking, sir. I'm so sorry, but I was explaining my new idea to Cherry, sir, about—"

"Take fifty lines for talking in class, Todd."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

The lesson proceeded.

Alonzo Todd paid it little attention.

He was evidently thinking to himself the details of his scheme for a mission among the boys of Friardale, and that subject absorbed his mental energies, almost to the exclusion of anything else.

Alonzo earned fifty more lines, and a rap from the pointer, that afternoon; but Todd cared little for trifles like that.

When he was keen on a thing, he was invulnerable. And having made up his mind to do a kind and obliging thing to the boys of the village, he was willing to stand any amount of rebuffs.

When the Remove went out of the Form-room after lesson, Alonzo tapped Harry Wharton on the shoulder.

"Hallo!" said Harry

"Are you busy this afternoon, Wharton?" asked Alonzo.

"Well, we're practising footer."

"I was thinking of calling a meeting—"

"A what?"

"A meeting in the Form-room."

"What on earth for?"

"To discuss my new idea."

"Oh, you've got a new idea, have you?" said Wharton.

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with a laugh. "Don't discuss it at all, Toddy. Take it out into a quiet place and bury it."

"My dear Wharton—"

"It's pretty certain to be a rotten one, you know, and we're getting rather fed up with your wheezes."

"This is a matter of duty—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry, coming up. "Todd's got a scheme for reclaiming the wasters of Friardale. He's going to have a mission."

"A mission? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Great Scott!"

Todd blinked reproachfully at Bob Cherry.

"My dear Cherry, it is not a laughing matter, though you seem determined to treat it so. If you fellows would help me, we would have a mission among the poor boys of Friardale, and help them to better things."

"Well, you cheeky ass!" said Harry Wharton.

"My dear Wharton—"

"What bizney have you got to meddle with them?" demanded Wharton. "Do you think you could teach a grocer's boy anything, you ass? The rudiments of Latin, perhaps, but he could teach you more than you could teach him. You're an ass, Todd."

"By giving a series of lectures—"

"Lectures?"

"Yes, on the higher life, and the higher possibilities of human nature," said Todd firmly. "That is how I hope to serve and benefit the poorer classes in Friardale. I want a Form meeting to discuss the project. I think it would raise and elevate the Remove itself to be engaged in such a work."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I trust you will attend the meeting. I shall put a notice up in the hall," said Todd, walking away.

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The juniors roared.

"Well, this is a little too rich, even for Alonzo!" said Bob Cherry.

"The richness is terrific."

"The ass!" said Wharton, half laughing and half frowning. "If he meddles with the fellows in Friardale, they'll give him beans, whatever his intentions are."

"Serve him right."

"Oh, let's attend the meeting, though!" said Bulstrode. "We'll rot him, and start him on his mission. It will be ripping fun!"

And most of the fellows agreed that it would be.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Somewhat Mixed.

ALONZO TODD sat in his study with a sheaf of manuscript notes before him, upon which he was pencilling in the few blank spaces left. Frank Nugent looked into the study, and Todd glanced up absent-mindedly.

"Time for the meeting!" said Frank.

"Eh?"

"Have you forgotten the meeting?"

"The meeting!" repeated Todd.

"Yes, ass!"

"Dear me!" said Alonzo, looking at his watch. "It is seven o'clock, and the meeting was fixed for seven. I forgot it. I have been preparing the notes for my speech."

Frank grinned.

"You're going to make a speech, then?" he said.

"Well, I should hardly call a meeting without making a speech," said Todd. "I am going to describe my ideas on the subject of helping and raising the poorer youth of Friardale. I will be ready in a minute."

"I'll take the notes in," said Frank.

"Certainly. Be careful of them."

"They sha'n't leave my hands."

Nugent took the sheaf of notes from the study. Instead of going down into the Form-room, he turned into No. 1 Study. Harry Wharton was there.

"What on earth have you got there, Frank?" he asked, glancing at the notes in Nugent's hand.

"Todd's notes."

"Todd's what?"

"His notes for the speech he's going to make on the subject of raising the poorer youth of Friardale," grinned Nugent. Wharton laughed.

"The ass! You're surely not going in to hear his silly speech, Frank? It will be a lot of rot, and not worth the waste of time."

"It will be funny."

"What are you doing with those notes?"

"Making them funnier."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nugent was rapidly pencilling away among the pencilled notes. The additions he made certainly made the notes funnier.

He spent five minutes or more in reading over the notes and making additions, and then gathered them up.

"Come on!" he said. "When Alonzo starts referring to these slips of paper, his blessed speech will be well worth listening to."

Harry laughed, and followed Nugent from the study. They found Alonzo already in the Form-room. The room was very crowded, and some of the Upper Fourth Form had come in to see the fun. Temple, Dabney & Co. thought that a speech by Todd might be worth listening to, and, in any case, there was a chance for "rotting."

Todd came over to Nugent.

"Dear me! Where have you been?" exclaimed the Duffer of Greyfriars. "I expected you here before me."

"Here's your notes," said Nugent. "I've carried them all the way. Your speech was bound to be pretty heavy, you know."

"My dear Nugent—"

"Speech! Speech!" shouted the juniors.

"Oh, certainly, my dear fellows!" said Alonzo. "I will deliver my speech directly. Please do not be too eager. Make less noise. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Speech! Speech!"

"Oh, certainly!"

"Speech!"

Alonzo mounted upon a form under the gas. He had his notes in one hand—the notes that had been carefully doctored by Frank Nugent.

"Gentlemen—" he began.

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen, it is very gratifying to me to find so many of the Remove gathered together to listen to me—"

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"Hear, hear!"

"I am about to address you on a most important subject, I—"

"Get to the point!"

"Get on with the washing!"

"Cut the cackle, and get to the horses!"

"My dear fellows," said Todd mildly, "if you interrupt me in this way, you will throw me into confusion."

"We'll throw you into the passage if you don't get on," said Bulstrode.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Very well. I must consult my notes. 'Gentlemen,'" said Todd, reading out from the first of his slips of paper in a great hurry, "it must have occurred to you that there are a great many youths in the world less fortunately placed than yourselves, whose time is wholly occupied in playing beat your neighbour."

"What!"

"Who?"

"How?"

"Dear me," said Todd, "that is wrong. I have written the wrong words. I meant to say, whose time is wholly occupied in hard and wearing labour."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Todd blinked at his notes.

"Is it not the duty of fellows more fortunately placed to help as much as possible these youths, and on all possible occasions to give them thick ears?"

"What?"

"I mean to give them help and advice. There—there is something wrong with my notes. I—I have made a mistake, I think. To continue. 'Suppose one of us were born to a life of hard work, with no relaxation except that afforded by Bank Holidays on Hampstead Heath, and following an organ'—I—I—I mean—I really must have made a mistake with these notes! Let me see. I will go on from the next point. 'Shall we not put our amusements aside, and all combine together, and with one united voice say, 'Rats?''"

"What!"

"Dear me! Someone has altered my notes. I meant, with one united voice, say we will help our poorer brethren," said Todd, very much flurried.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And how can we help them, my friends?" said Todd, warming to his subject. "Is it not by visiting them in their homes, and helping them to a knowledge of the higher life and the higher possibilities? Suppose we see them, and talk piffle to them?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I mean talk sense and counsel to them. Someone has altered my notes."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then is it not probable that they will kick us out?—I mean that they will thank us from their hearts?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And after our mission is accomplished, we shall congratulate ourselves upon a prize crop of thick ears"—

"Dear me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should have said, we shall congratulate ourselves upon good work well done, and shall feel very satisfied with ourselves—"

"You generally do now, Toddy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner jumped on a form.

"I move a vote of thanks to the speaker, and suggest that this meeting be adjourned!" he exclaimed.

"Seconded!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

"My dear fellows, I have hardly started yet!" exclaimed Alonzo Todd.

"Hands up for adjourning the meeting!" yelled Skinner.

Every hand except Alonzo's went up.

"Passed unanimously," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"You're done, Alonzo."

"I am not! I am not done!"

"Your mistake—you are."

And Harry Wharton left the Form-room. The Removites, considering that they had had enough fun with Alonzo and his brilliant idea, followed.

"Dear me," said Alonzo Todd, blinking after them, "this is really very unfeeling. They do not feel at all for the

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unfortunate situation of the poorer youth of Friardale. My dear fellows—"

But the dear fellows were gone.

Alonzo Todd was left alone in the Form-room, and he slowly left it. It began to dawn upon him that the Remove had only attended the meeting as a joke, and that he had just about as much chance of engaging them in his mission as of leading them upon an expedition to the moon. Alonzo shook his head sadly and left the Form-room. He was discouraged. But he did not give up his idea.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Alonzo Begins.

**A**LONZO'S new idea was the cause of much merriment in the Remove. The juniors talked over it, and chuckled over it, and grinned over it. But no one thought seriously that Alonzo would try to carry it out. They did not know Alonzo yet.

The next day was Wednesday, a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and after dinner Alonzo was busy. Alonzo's present quarters were in a study with Skinner and Vernon-Smith. Vernon-Smith was the richest fellow at Greyfriars, and it had occurred to Alonzo that his wealth might very well be used in the new mission. Alonzo found him in the study after dinner, and tackled him on the subject. Vernon-Smith had not been to the Form meeting, but he had heard of the mission.

"You might care to come with me, Smith," Todd remarked, before leaving the study.

Vernon-Smith stared at him.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Haven't you heard? I've taken up a mission."

The Bouncer of Greyfriars laughed.

"You utter ass!" he said. "You don't mean to say that you're really going to play the giddy goat like that?"

"My dear Smith! My Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me to help the poor and needy, and assist the unfortunate to a higher life. It has occurred to me that you might care to aid me. You have money, and I have very little. Your father makes you a very large allowance. You might like to use it in the cause of assisting the needy."

Vernon-Smith laughed again.

"Go on!" he said. "You are better than a comic paper."

"My dear fellow! Suppose you devoted your large allowance to the work of assisting the needy in Friardale, I would willingly point out the way in which it could be most usefully expended."

"Thank you."

"Not at all. You are welcome to any aid I could give. Your assistance in my mission would be invaluable. Will you help me?"

"Certainly," said Vernon-Smith, rising.

"Good. How will you help me?"

"I will help you out of the study."

"Eh?"

Vernon-Smith laid his hands upon the Duffer's shoulders, swung him round, and planted a heavy boot behind him.

Alonzo reached the passage outside the study in a heap.

With a laugh, Vernon-Smith closed the door and turned the key. Todd scrambled to his feet, very much surprised.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed. "What a rude person! I cannot understand this, just as I was getting along so nicely with him! How very odd!"

The Duffer went ruefully down the passage. He met Skinner on the stairs, and Skinner stopped him.

"Going out?" he asked.

"Yes; I am going to Friardale to commence my mission."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Skinner—"

"I didn't mean to laugh," said Skinner. "It's a jolly good idea. I really think it's ripping. How are you going to begin?"

"I must be guided by circumstances. I have always been told by Uncle Benjamin that one must set a good example, and show that one is in earnest by one's own conduct. That is the way to lead the ignorant and fallen to a higher life."

"Good old Benjamin."

"I shall therefore make myself as useful and obliging as I can to the poorer youth of Friardale," said Todd, with a beaming smile. "In that way I hope to impress them with a faith in my earnestness."

"Ripping!"

"I shall be very pleased if you will come with me, Skinner, and help me in the noble work."

Skinner coughed.

"I'd come like a shot," he said. "But I—I've got an engagement this afternoon. But I shall be delighted to hear how you get on when you get back."

"Oh, certainly!"

Alonzo Todd put on his cap and went out. Harry Wharton & Co. were going down to footer practice. Bob Cherry with a football under his arm. At the sight of Alonzo Todd they stopped.

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"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Where are you off to?"

"I am going to Friardale."

"Not on the mission!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Todd nodded.

"Exactly; on the mission."

"My only hat!"

"If you fellows would care to come, I could find you plenty to do in the task of assisting the needy, and raising the poorer youth of Friardale to a higher life," said Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is really no laughing matter. My Uncle Benjamin

"My dear chap, it won't be a laughing matter for you, if you go meddling with the Friardale kids," said Nugent.

"Drop it."

"My dear Nugent—"

"You'll get into trouble, Todd," said Harry Wharton.

"I hope not; but that would not deter me, in any case. I am determined to carry out the precepts of my Uncle Benjamin."

"But look here—"

"You must not try to dissuade me. When I grow up," said Todd, becoming exalted. "I shall most likely become a missionary to the cannibal islands, and my life's work will consist in teaching those hapless heathen to wear trousers and silk hats like civilised beings. I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows—"

"Well, we've warned you," said Harry Wharton. "You'll get into trouble at Friardale."

"I am not afraid."

And Todd walked on to the gates. Easy and obliging as he was, Todd could be very determined, and he was very determined now. The idea of making himself useful to those in a humbler rank in life had taken firm possession of him, and only experience was likely to get it out of his head.

"The ass!" said Harry Wharton. "He's bound to get into trouble. That sort of babble is all right for a goody-goody story. We've all read about good little Alfred and good little Georgey helping fellows to a higher life by their noble example. But in real life—fancy Todd springing the higher life on Sam Short, the grocer's boy! He'll get it in the neck—and serve him right!"

And the chums laughed and went down to the footer.

Alonzo Todd quitted Greyfriars.

His face was beaming as he walked down the lane. The precepts of his Uncle Benjamin were in his mind. To make himself useful to all, and to oblige everybody, that was his ideal, and thus to set an example to others. He was not long at a loss for an opportunity of putting his schemes into practice.

A rough-looking fellow was sitting at the corner of the cross-roads half-way to the village. He was seated upon a heap of stones, and he had a hammer in his hand, and he was breaking the stones. His face was red and hot and discontented. Alonzo Todd stopped and regarded him.

The stone-breaker looked up with a scowl.

"Whatcher lookin' at?" he demanded.

"I am looking at you, my friend," said Todd.

"You'll know me agin!" said the stone-breaker aggressively.

"Yes, that is very probable," assented Alonzo. "Your face is very red and rough, and it would strike my observation at once, in all probability. You are engaged in very hard manual labour, my friend."

The man stared at him.

"That cannot be pleasant work," said Todd.

The stone-breaker laid down his hammer, and rose. The look on his face would have warned anybody but Alonzo Todd to look out for trouble.

"You are tired," said Todd.

"Eh?"

"Would you like me to break the stones for you?" asked Todd, with a cheerful smile.

Todd meant that offer in all seriousness.

But the stone-breaking gentleman had probably never come in contact with a youth with a mission before, so he may be excused for supposing that the Duffer of Greyfriars was attempting to "pull his leg."

"Funny, ain't you?" said the stone-breaker, making a sudden lunge and grasping Alonzo by the ear. "Very funny—eh?"

"Ow!"

Alonzo jumped as the man twisted his ear. The stone-breaker swung him round, pulled his ears, and kicked him along the road.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Alonzo. "He—he must be mad! What an ungrateful return for my kindness! Ow! Ow! Ow!"



He tore himself away from the rough grasp, and ran. The stone-breaker stood in the road, and hurled threats and painfully personal remarks after him till he was out of sight.

Alonzo Todd, greatly alarmed, ran on till he almost reached the village, and slackened down at last on the border of Friardale.

"Oh, dear!" he gasped, sinking down to rest at last on a bench outside an inn. "Oh, dear! What a dreadful ruffian! He seems utterly impervious to any idea of a higher life!"

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Misunderstood.

"KIND young gentleman—"

Alonzo looked up.

He had sunk down upon the bench quite breathless, and had not for the moment noticed that it had another occupant. The bench was under a big elm-tree outside an inn that lay a little back from the road. The other occupant of the bench was a fat man with a very red and coppery face, and a suit of clothes that would have been a disgrace to any dust-heap. His boots seemed to consist almost wholly of the uppers, which were in a very bad condition. He had an ancient and battered silk hat on his head, at a rakish angle, and long, untidy hair escaped below its rim.

Todd looked at this apparition, and the apparition looked at Todd.

"Did you speak to me?" said the Duffer of Greyfriars.

"Thank you, sir, I did," said the stranger. "Kind young gentleman! The moment I set eyes on you, sir, I says to myself, 'William Walker, this kind young gentleman is the one who will 'elp you.' 'Pon me davy, sir!"

"You are in need of help?" asked Todd.

"Yes, sir. Starving."

"Dear me! You look very plump for a starving man."

"Which appearances is deceitful, sir," said Mr. Walker, with a sigh. "Not a bite nor a sup has passed my lips this day."

"How terrible!" said Todd sympathetically.

"I'm looking for work, sir," said Mr. Walker. "I've tramped a hundred miles this week looking for work."

"The question of the unemployed is one of the most serious problems of modern times," said Todd, in the best manner of his Uncle Benjamin.

Mr. Walker blinked.

"Yes, sir," he said vaguely. "Any little 'elp—"

"I wish I could find you work, my dear fellow," said Todd.

Mr. Walker looked alarmed.

"I—I could do with a shilling to 'elp me on my way," he said. "If I could get as far as Courtfield, I could get a job from a man I know."

Todd fumbled in his pockets.

"I think I have a shilling," he said. "I shall certainly be very pleased to devote it to so worthy an object."

Mr. Walker's eyes twinkled.

"Thank you kindly, sir."

"Not at all. It is our duty to help the poor and needy," said Todd. "It is also my duty to help to raise the poorer classes to a sense of the higher life. Have you ever bestowed any consideration on the possibilities of a higher life, my unfortunate friend?"

The tramp blinked at Todd.

That peculiar manner of speech, which made the Greyfriars fellows suggest that Todd had lately eaten a dictionary, was a new thing to Mr. William Walker.

He did not quite know what to make of Todd.

But he was not the first person to find himself in that difficulty. Alonzo Todd was, as Nugent had remarked, an acquired taste. He needed getting used to.

"The higher life is possible to us all," said Todd. "For instance, suppose you were to give up drinking."

"Not a drop has passed—"

Todd held up his hand.

"Pray do not make any untruthful statements, my poor friend. The smell of strong liquor is hanging about you now, and is, indeed, somewhat unpleasant."

The tramp's coppery face became a trifle redder.

At that moment he was very near giving up the chance of the shilling, by knocking Alonzo off the seat, but he restrained himself; he was very thirsty. Alonzo never knew what a narrow escape he had had.

"I'm goin' to sign the pledge to-day, sir," said Mr. Walker hypocritically.

Alonzo beamed.

"Now, that is noble of you!" he exclaimed. "That is decidedly a step towards a higher life. My dear fellow, here is your shilling."

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He handed over the coin. Mr. Walker took it in a decidedly grimy hand.

"And now," said Todd, "if you will listen to me patiently, I will give you some hints on how to improve yourself, and— Please do not go!"

But Mr. Walker was gone.

As soon as the shilling was safe in his grimy fist, he had finished with Alonzo, and he was making a straight line for the inn.

Alonzo rose, and stared after him in great annoyance.

"Dear me! Is it possible that the man was not speaking sincerely?" he murmured. "Now I look at him, his walk is very unsteady, and he seems to be already under the influence of liquor. Dear me! He is probably going to expend my shilling in more potations, which will very probably throw him into a state of physical helplessness, described in the police reports as drunk and incapable. Dear me!"

Alonzo Todd looked worried.

It was only too probable; but it was too late to reclaim the shilling, and Mr. William Walker was evidently not in a frame of mind to listen to admonitions upon the subject of the higher life.

Todd walked on into the village.

He paused as he passed the shop of Mr. Pounds, the grocer. But Sam, the grocer's boy, was not in sight. Todd walked on to the butcher's shop, and there he found the butcher's boy in the act of starting off with a basket on his arm, which was half full of articles for delivery to various customers.

The butcher's boy rejoiced in the name of Jimmy Blogg, and he was rather a character in Friardale. He was a sturdy youth, and well known as a fighting man among the youth of Friardale; and on several occasions he had encountered fellows from Greyfriars in deadly combat, and without getting the worst of it. It was Jimmy Blogg's boast that he could lick any fellow his own size in Friardale, in Greyfriars, or anywhere else, and he was not unwilling to put the matter to the test on any occasion whatever. The sight of a Greyfriars cap frequently acted upon Blogg like a red rag upon a bull. As soon as Alonzo Todd bore down upon him, Blogg's face assumed a warlike expression. But he was too close to his employer's shop to venture upon a row just then, especially as he was starting out to deliver goods to customers. So he contented himself with a glare, and put his basket on his arm and walked off.

Alonzo Todd followed him.

Several street curs followed him, too, attracted by the meat in the basket. They were not likely to get any, but perhaps the smell was a treat to them, and they followed Blogg in hope. Blogg was accustomed to being a favourite of the canine race; but when he glanced round and saw that Todd was following him, he stared.

It never occurred to him for a moment that Todd was following him with kindly and obliging intentions.

Like the stone-breaker in the lane, he had never encountered a lad under fifteen with a mission before.

He could only conclude that a Greyfriars fellow had come down to the village to try conclusions with him, and that he was following him to a quieter spot for that purpose.

Blogg's jaw set grimly.

If it had been Harry Wharton, or Bob Cherry, or Bulstrode he would have been quite willing for the encounter, but he might have had his doubts about the result. But there was no doubt in his mind with regard to Todd. Todd was certainly a very weedy specimen, athletically considered. He had soaring ideas of all sorts, and a great mission, but he was not an athlete.

Blogg mentally determined to make an example of him, if only for his cheek in venturing to seek him out for an encounter.

"The blessed worm!" murmured Jimmy Blogg. "Coming for me, is he? Why, I could lick him with one hand, and with my eyes shut! My 'at! I'll show 'im! Wot!"

And he chuckled grimly as he strode on.

Blogg purposely chose a quiet route, and led the way into a secluded lane, shadowed by high garden-walls.

Todd followed him unsuspectingly.

He was hastening his pace to overtake Blogg, his intention being to offer to carry his basket, and then, as they progressed together, to explain to him the possibilities of leading a higher life.

He overtook Blogg in the lonely spot the butcher's boy had selected.

Blogg suddenly halted, and put his basket down on the ground, and turned upon Todd with a ferocious expression.

"Come on!" he exclaimed.

Alonzo halted.

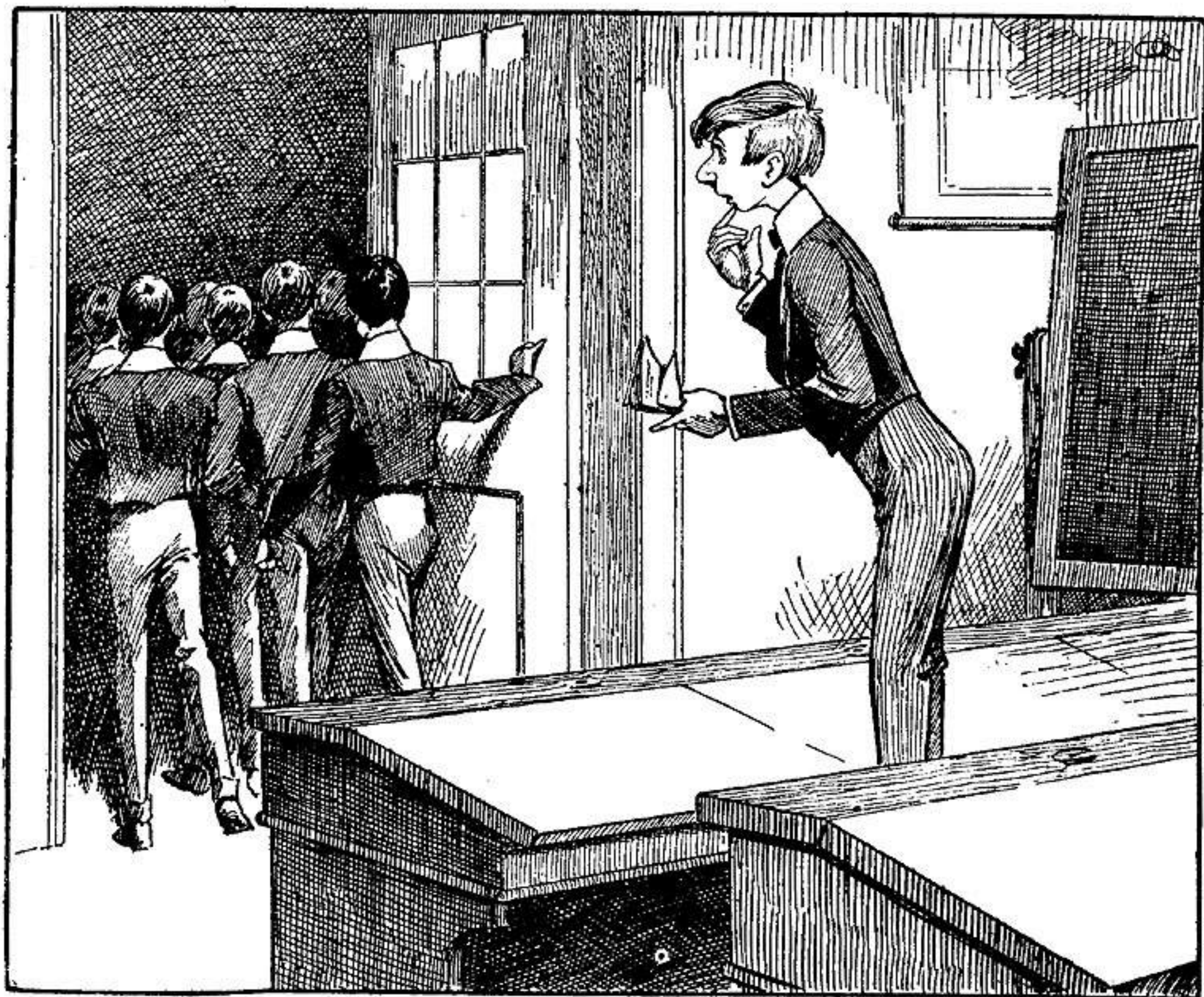
"I beg your pardon!" he said.

"Come on!" roared Blogg.

"I—I fail to understand—"

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"Dear me!" said Alonzo Todd, blinking after the retiring Removites, "this is really unfeeling. They do not feel at all for the unfortunate situation of the poorer youth of Friardale. My dear fellows——" But the dear fellows were gone. (See page 8.)

"Looking for trouble, ain't you?" said Blogg sarcastically. "Well, you've found it, first go! Here it is!"

"But——"

"Come on!"

"But——"

"I'm ready for yer!" said Blogg. "Look 'ere, I'm ready for yer! I'm ready for any chap from Greyfriars! Come on!"

"You—you are quite mistaken as to my intentions," gasped Alonzo, comprehending at last. "I did not come here with the intention of attacking you, I assure you. My intention was to be obliging. I——"

"Come on!"

"I do not desire to fight——"

"Ho, ho! Changed yer mind, 'ave you?" said Blogg. "P'r'aps that will make yer change it back again!"

And he gave Alonzo a tap on the nose that made the Duffer of Greyfriars reel.

"Oh!" gasped Alonzo. "Ow!"

"Ho, ho! Coming on now?"

"I—I assure you——"

"There you are, then! That's another!"

"Ow!"

"And that's another!"

"Yow!"

Alonzo staggered back against the wall. He was dazed and bewildered. Blogg put his hands to his sides and roared with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Yap-yap-gr-r-r-r-snarl-bow-wow-yap!

It was a sudden sound of doggy quarrelling

Blogg ceased to laugh, and swung back towards his basket.

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NEXT

WEEK:

"HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."

Two dogs had rushed upon it, and they had a choice steak between them, and were trying to tear it away from one another.

"Oh, crikey!" gasped Blogg, in dismay.

He rushed at the dogs.

One of them let go the meat and ran, the other ran—with the steak in his jaws. Blogg caught up the basket, and dashed in pursuit. The steak would not be a very wholesome morsel when it was recovered from the jaws of the stray dog, perhaps, but Blogg did not intend to return to the shop and report that he had lost it while fighting with a Greyfriars fellow. That steak had to be recovered, and Blogg dashed after the dog at top speed, his basket swinging on his arm. Dog and steak and butcher's boy disappeared round a corner, and vanished from the sight of Alonzo Todd.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Black Ingratitude!

ALONZO dabbed his nose with his handkerchief. The handkerchief came away red. The Duffer of Greyfriars gasped and dabbed, and dabbed and gasped.

"Oh, dear!" he murmured. "What a very unfortunate misunderstanding! I really wish he had given me time to explain! Ow! My nose is quite hurt!"

He dabbed the claret away again.

"It is most unfortunate! Blogg is a very hasty person, and I am afraid he is of a very quarrelsome disposition. Ow!" Alonzo left the spot somewhat disconsolately.

He had started upon his mission with the best intentions

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and the highest hopes, but he did not seem to be reaping great successes.

His efforts with the stone-breaking gentleman, with Mr. William Walker, and with Blogg, the butcher's boy, had certainly not "panned out" well.

But Todd was not to be long discouraged.

He dabbed his nose till the claret ceased to flow, and then, there being no sign of Blogg, he walked back to the High Street of Friardale.

At the corner of the lane he met Sam Short, the grocer's boy. Sam nodded to him genially. Todd had carried his basket the previous day, thereby giving Sam the impression that he was "cracked," as the grocer's boy called it. But a cracked youth who was willing to carry heavy baskets any distance was an acquisition, and Sam was glad to see Alonzo again. Sam had a heavy grocer's basket on his arm, and he was feeling the weight of it very keenly. Sam always had a heavy basket to carry, and, as a matter of fact, he was growing a little lop-sided from the weight always being on one side of him. Sam was very glad to shift his burden to other shoulders for a time, as was only natural.

"Ah, I am glad to see you, Short!" said Alonzo, with a genial nod. "I see that you have a heavy basket to carry."

"Awful heavy!" said Sam. "There's 'am, and there's heggs, and there's butter and bacon, and there's cheese and—"

"Yes, it's quite full," said Todd, looking into the basket. "Would you like me to carry it for you?"

Sam grinned.

"I'd be jolly glad!" he said.

"Then pray hand it to me."

"Suttingly!"

Sam handed over the heavy basket willingly. It was too heavy for him, and decidedly too heavy for Todd, but Todd took it resolutely.

"You'll be careful with it," said Sam, a little anxiously. "There's three dozen of heggs in it, and if they got broke—"

"I will be very careful."

"You see—"

"You need not be uneasy," said Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me to be very careful."

"Orl right! Only, them eggs—"

"It is all right."

Todd carried the basket on.

They stopped at several doors in various streets, and part of the contents of the basket was delivered, but the eggs remained, and many more articles, and Todd was beginning to breathe very hard.

It occurred to him that Sam Short might as well take a turn, but the idea did not seem to enter Sam's mind at all.

He walked along with his hands in his pockets, whistling cheerily, apparently quite forgetful of the fact that there was such a thing as a grocer's basket in existence.

"Dear me!" murmured Todd, at last.

Then Sam looked at him.

"Getting tired?" he asked.

"N-n-no! Only a little—a little fagged!" murmured Todd.

"Oh, you're all right! Don't you want to carry the basket?"

"Oh, certainly—yes!"

"The round won't last more'n a hower more!" said Sam.

Todd almost groaned.

The idea of carrying that dreadful basket about for an hour longer was terrible, but he had undertaken to do so. He could not help thinking that Sam was a little selfish not to relieve him of it for a time, but he did not like to speak to Sam on the subject. It would look as if he were not willing to keep on with what he had undertaken.

They entered upon the lane to go to a house some distance from the village. It was a hot and dusty lane, and Todd gasped for breath as he fagged on under the weary basket.

"How far is the house?" he murmured.

"Only a quarter of a mile," said Sam cheerily.

"Oh!"

"Buck up!"

"Oh, certainly!"

Todd changed the basket from one arm to the other, and then back again—and then again and again. Sam Short seemed quite unconscious of it. He walked on with his hands in his pockets, cheerily whistling "I'll Lose Myself with Lucy at Lucerne." Todd changed the basket several times. But both his arms were aching equally now, and at last he put the basket up on his shoulder, supporting it there with one hand.

"Here, careful with that basket!" said Sam warningly.

"Oh, it is all right—"

"If you break them eggs—"

"It is all—Ow!"

Todd stumbled on a stone.

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."

The basket flew from his shoulder, and he made a wild clutch after it in vain. There was a crash in the road.

Packets of tea and sugar and butter and cheese rolled out in all directions, and over them all were great splashes of broken eggs.

Sam gazed at the wreck in dismay. He was not whistling now. Todd gasped, and mopped his forehead.

"I'm so sorry!" he gasped.

"You've broken them eggs!"

"I'm sorry—so sorry—"

"That won't mend them eggs!" roared Sam ferociously.

"You idiot!"

"My dear fellow—"

"You'll have to pay for them eggs! I shall 'ave it stopped hout er my wages!" roared Sam. "You chump! You fat-head!"

"My dear Sam—"

"Oh, you dummy!"

And Sam, unable to contain his feelings, rushed at Alonzo Todd, hitting out. The Duffer of Greyfriars backed away, feebly defending himself.

"Really, Sam—ow—my dear fellow— Yow—grooh! Pray—Oh!"

Sam was hitting out furiously. Todd did not want to fight Sam—he only wanted to oblige him. He defended himself as well as he could, but Sam was not to be denied, and Todd fairly took to his heels at last.

Sam yelled personal epithets after him at the top of his voice till he disappeared. Todd ran on breathlessly, bewildered.

He ran right into a figure that was proceeding ~~on~~ <sup>along</sup> the road, and a pair of arms closed round him. The stranger fell, and Todd fell, too.

"Oh!" gasped Todd.

A pair of bleary, blinking eyes peered into his face as the stranger sat up.

"'Pon me davy!" said the stranger, in husky tones. "It's my young friend. 'Ow are you?"

It was Mr. Walker.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Taking the Stranger In.

"O W are you?"

Mr. Walker repeated his question quite affectionately, clinging to Alonzo Todd with both hands as he did so.

Mr. Walker seemed to be very unsteady upon his legs.

Also, he exhaled a far from refreshing odour of gin and other strong liquors mixed, and Alonzo Todd gasped as he caught it.

A less suspicious person than even Alonzo Todd might have guessed that Mr. Walker was under the influence of strong drink.

Todd tried to drag himself away.

"Please let me go!" he said.

"My young friend!" murmured Mr. Walker.

"You have been drinking."

"Not a drop," said Mr. Walker, holding on to Todd's shoulders, and peering into his face with glassy eyes—"not a drop of drink have passed these lips this day, 'pon me davy."

"My dear person—"

"Not a drop! I'm subject to these attacks," said Mr. Walker. "They come on me ever since I was in South Africa. I caught the hague at the Battle of Magersfontein."

Todd was sympathetic at once.

"Oh, dear," he said, "I'm so sorry! I thought you were intoxicated."

"Intossicated!" murmured Mr. Walker reproachfully. "I'd scorn the hidea. It's hague, my young friend, hague. I take a little to drink, you know, to stop it. Otherwise, I'm a strict tee-tee-teetotaler."

And Mr. Walker lurched heavily to one side, and almost dragged Todd to the ground again. Todd righted himself and Mr. Walker.

"'Elp me along, my young friend," said Mr. Walker, "for the sake of hold times."

Mr. Walker seemed to have an impression by this time that he was a very old friend of Alonzo's.

"I will help you with pleasure," said Todd, "but—"

"This is my way," said Mr. Walker, with a vague gesture up the road towards Greyfriars.

Todd looked relieved.

"That is also my way," he said. "I will certainly help you."

"You're a gentleman, sir," said Mr. Walker. "'Pon my davy, you are. You're a gentleman, and as a gentleman myself, sir, I appreciate it."

And Todd set off up the road with Mr. Walker.

It was not an easy or a pleasant task to guide the errant

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steps of Mr. William Walker. He seemed to have a scheme for getting along a road as a barge gets up a river against the wind—in a series of very long tacks from side to side.

Todd's efforts to keep him on a straight course were useless.

He would begin marching quite straight, and then suddenly veer off to the right, and keep on in a great hurry as if determined to end up in the ditch. Then he would swing back, and make off for the other side of the road at great speed.

The distance to Greyfriars was not great, but in this style of travelling it took a considerable time to cover.

Todd was pretty breathless by the time the clock-tower of Greyfriars School came in sight.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "This is a most troublesome person, and if I were at all suspicious, I should think that he was indeed intoxicated, and that it was not ague at all."

To add to the general comfort of the situation, it began to rain.

Mr. Walker, having arrived within a hundred yards of the school-gates, was taken with a sudden fancy for having a nap.

He sat down suddenly in the road, and leaned up against a grassy bank, and closed his bleared eyes and snored.

Todd looked at him in dismay.

The rain was descending in a thin and steady shower, and was evidently becoming worse and worse every minute.

To remain there looking after Mr. Walker was impossible, and Todd was strongly inclined to bolt into the shelter of the school and leave the hero of the high road to his fate.

But the precepts of his Uncle Benjamin were fresh in his mind.

It was impossible to leave a man sitting in the soaking rain without shelter even if he had been intoxicated, and, as he was suffering from ague, there could be nothing worse for him than his present situation, if he were left in it.

So, trying not to heed the rain that was soaking through his Eton jacket, and trickling down the back of his neck, Todd shook Mr. Walker by the shoulder, and tried to awaken him.

That was no easy task.

For some minutes Mr. Walker refused to open his eyes.

"Mr. Walker!" exclaimed Todd, shaking him energetically.

"Wake up! It's raining."

The eyes opened at last, and the tramp blinked sleepily at Todd.

"Wharrer marrer!" he murmured.

"Wake up."

"Who yer?"

"Eh! I'm Todd! Don't you know me? Dear me! You must wake up, Mr. Walker."

"Lemme 'lone."

"Wake up."

"Groo!"

"It's raining."

"Snore."

Todd shook Mr. Walker again. He was going to sleep.

"You must wake up and get some shelter," he said. "It's raining hard, and we're going to have a regular downpour."

"Wake up."

"Ow! Groo!"

"I will find you shelter."

"Lemme 'lone!"

"My poor friend. I must help you. I cannot leave you in the rain. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at the idea of such a thing. I must help you to shelter."

"Groo!"

"Think of your ague! This rain will make it worse."

"Yah!"

"Pray get up!"

A dash of rain in Mr. Walker's face had the effect of awakening him a little. He sat more upright, and stared at him.

"What's marrer?" he stammered.

"It's raining. Come with me, and I'll get you shelter."

Mr. Walker staggered up with Todd's assistance.

"It's my young friend," he murmured—"my noble young friend, 'pon my davy."

"Yes. Come on."

Todd propelled Mr. Walker towards the school.

Alonzo was not much given to reflection, but even he felt that there might be some trouble arise through introducing a character like Mr. Walker into the school. But what else was to be done?

There was no other shelter for a great distance, and both of them were already soaked to the skin, and the rain was coming down harder every moment.

Todd had an idea of finding Mr. Walker a shelter in some outhouse, perhaps in the wood-shed, or the loft over the stables, where he could dry himself, and go on his way refreshed after the rain.

As for Mr. Walker, he had no ideas at all. Todd's shilling, and a good many more shillings, had been expended by Mr. Walker in liquid refreshment, and Mr. Walker was quite incapable of connecting his ideas.

Todd walked in at the school-gates in the driving rain, with Mr. Walker clinging to his shoulder.

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NEXT WEEK: "HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."

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ONE  
PENNY.

The rain had driven everybody indoors, and there was no one to watch the arrival of Todd and his curious companion. Todd was glad of it. He knew that the younger portion of Greyfriars might have chipped Mr. Walker, while Wingate or any other of the seniors might have ordered him away.

Todd steered Mr. Walker's uncertain course towards the wood-shed.

He opened the door, and propelled Mr. Walker in.

The tramp sank down upon the floor at once. He sat there and blinked at Todd.

"Dear me!" gasped Todd. "I am very tired, and very wet!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Walker.

"You are very wet, my poor friend."

"Groo!"

"You must have a rub down, and a change of clothes," said Todd. "I will bring you a towel as soon as I can, and I will manage to get you some clothes. Unfortunately, my own will not be large enough for you. However, I will obtain some. I will leave you here for the present."

Mr. Walker watched him dazedly while he went out and closed the door. Todd had not taken six steps before he heard the door open, and he looked back, and saw Mr. Walker gazing out after him with swimming eyes.

"Which, I don't know the name of this hotel," said Mr. Walker, with almost preternatural gravity.

"Please go in."

"Which I don't know."

"This is Greyfriars," explained Todd.

Mr. Walker shook his head.

"Never 'eard of a hotel of that name," he said gravely.

"It is not a hotel; it is a school."

"A which?"

"A school! It is my school! Please go in," said Alonzo, in distress. "If you are seen here, you may be ejected. Gosling, the porter, is a very hard and unsympathetic man. Please go in."

Mr. Walker looked vaguely round him.

"Which I don't know the name of this hotel," he remarked gravely, and as if mentioning the matter for the first time.

Alonzo Todd sighed. He came back, pushed Mr. Walker into the shed, and closed the door.

Then he hurried off towards the schoolhouse. He was no sooner gone than the door of the wood-shed opened again, and Mr. Walker stood there, blinking out uncertainly into the rain.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER,

### Alonzo's Friend.

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"My hat! Look at him!"

"Soaked!"

"Drenched!"

"You champion ass!"

Those remarks, and many more like them, greeted Alonzo Todd as he scuttled into the schoolhouse. The Duffer of Greyfriars was dripping with water, and it squelched out of his boots as he entered the house. His face and hair were streaming; his cap was a limp rag, his collar a wet clout.

He gasped and blinked at the juniors who greeted him.

"Oh, dear!" he exclaimed. "It is very wet."

"Haven't you noticed that about the rain before?" asked Bob Cherry. "It's usually wet, you know. Quite a well-known fact in natural phenomena."

"My dear Cherry—"

"What on earth did you come through the rain for?" asked Harry Wharton. "You're soaked to the skin."

"Yes. It was very unfortunate."

"How did the mission get on?" demanded several voices, and there was a laugh.

"Not exactly a success at first—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I shall persevere—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I have not the slightest doubt that in the long run I shall induce the poorer youth of Friardale to strive towards a higher life. Meanwhile—"

"Meanwhile, you'd better change your things, or you'll catch your death of cold," said Harry Wharton.

"Yes, indeed. That is so."

"Come up to the dorm., and I'll give you a rub down," said Harry, who was really concerned for the Duffer. Todd was not an athlete, and the soaking he had had was quite enough to make him ill, unless he took the greatest care.

"Thanks so much!" said Todd.

Wharton marched him off to the Remove dormitory. His boots squelched up the stairs and along the passage. He left a trail of water wherever he went, and he left the Remove fellows roaring with laughter.



"My only hat!" said Hazeldene. "I think Todd gets richer every day! I should have liked to see him in Friar-dale on his mission."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We must have the story out of him," said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner strolled away to the Remove dormitory. He was curious to know what had happened to Alonzo in the village. The swelling on Alonzo's nose was a pretty clear indication that the course he had followed had not been wholly a smooth one. There had evidently been trouble.

The door of the dorm. was half open when Skinner reached it, and Harry Wharton and Todd were talking. Skinner did not enter. He guessed from Todd's confidential tone that he was telling Wharton something not intended for all ears; and Skinner meant to know what it was. Skinner had no conscientious objections to eavesdropping. He leaned against the wall outside the open door and listened.

Harry had jerked off Todd's things at express speed, and was rubbing him down with a rough towel. Todd was wet all over; his skin was glistening with water, and certainly only Wharton's vigorous treatment saved him from catching a severe cold. Todd gasped under the rub down. Wharton put his beef into it, and Todd almost collapsed under his energetic attentions.

"I—I think that will do," gasped Todd. "I think I—I can finish, thank you, Wharton. Thank you so much! Give me the towel!"

Wharton laughed, and sat down on a bed to recover his breath.

"Right-ho!" he said.

"I've something to tell you," went on Todd, lowering his voice, and speaking in jerks as he towelled. "I want you to help me!"

"Another rub down?"

"Oh, no!" said Todd hastily. "Not at all. Oh, no! But but—"

"Well?"

"I think I—I have mentioned my Uncle Benjamin to you," said Todd.

Wharton stared.

"I think you have," he grinned. "Some thousands of times, I think."

"Well, then, you remember my saying, perhaps, that my Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to help the poor and needy, even at the cost of considerable personal sacrifice," Todd remarked.

"Yes, I think I've heard you babble something of the sort," assented Harry, with a yawn.

"My dear Wharton—"

"If you've finished, I'll get off. I—"

"I have not finished."

"Oh, go on, then!"

"I have been striving to-day to help the poorer youth of Friar-dale to a nobler life, but without any marked success so far. I have also aided an unfortunate man who is suffering severely from the ague, which he caught during the campaign in South Africa."

Wharton looked interested.

"An old soldier?" he asked.

"Precisely."

"Name?"

"Walker?"

Wharton laughed.

"That's a significant name," he remarked. "I hope his name won't prove to be walker in more senses than one. What regiment?"

"I really did not think of asking him."

"You've probably been spoofed, Toddy."

"I think not. The man was unable to walk, owing to his ague, and perhaps partly to some strong liquor which he took for it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I could not leave him in the rain, so I brought him in—"

Harry Wharton jumped.

"Brought him in!"

"Oh, certainly!"

"Into Greyfriars," said Wharton dazedly.

"Yes. There was no other shelter at hand."

Wharton seemed petrified.

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"You've brought a drunken tramp into the school!" he gasped.

"My dear Wharton, you misjudge him very much. He is one of the unemployed, looking for work, and suffers from ague."

"Oh, rats!"

"Wharton, my dear fellow—"

"Where is he now?"

"In the wood-shed."

"My hat!"

"I have given him shelter," said Todd. "But he will catch cold unless he is dried, and has a change of clothes. I can take him my towel, but about the clothes, I really do not know what to do. You see, a boy's clothes will be of no use to him. How can I get a suit of man's clothes?"

"Well, you ass—"

"You see, I must manage it somehow. I thought I would ask your advice, Wharton, as you are really a sensible fellow."

The captain of the Remove laughed.

"Thanks!" he said. "Look here, you've acted the giddy goat, Todd. But I suppose you must do as you've said; and as soon as you've done it, you'd better get rid of your precious friend at once. If he's found on the premises there will be a row."

"In the cause of charity, of course, I have to be prepared to run risks of rows. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Never mind your Uncle Benjamin now. The question is, where can you get some old clothes for the tramp," said Wharton thoughtfully.

"But my Uncle Benjamin—"

"Bother Benjamin! Look here, Trotter has old clothes given to him by the masters, and he may have some left in hand. Shall we see?"

"A very good idea."

"Then get your things on," said Harry Wharton. "I'll buzz off and find Trotter, and see if he has any. He usually sells them, but he may have some left."

"Thank you so much!"

Wharton went to the door. He heard a faint sound in the passage, but when he left the dormitory, there was no one in sight. Skinner had scuttled away at once, and by the time Wharton reached the stairs, Skinner was in Bulstrode's study, bursting with his news.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### Gosling on the Warpath.

**B**ULSTRODE was sitting alone in the study, staring dejectedly out of the window. The rain had stopped all the pursuits of the half-holiday, and Bulstrode was in a discontented humour. He looked round surlily as Skinner came dashing in excitedly, and slammed the door behind him.

"Well, what's the row?" he asked.

"News!" gasped Skinner.

"What?"

"Great news!"

"What's happened?" asked Bulstrode, with some interest.

"It's that blessed duffer Todd!" gasped Skinner. "He's fairly done it this time! What do you think he's done?"

Bulstrode shrugged his shoulders.

"Can't guess," he said.

"He's got quite to the limit. He's brought a drunken tramp into the school to give him shelter, and he's hidden him in the wood-shed."

"Phew!"

"Ha, ha! What do you think of that?"

Bulstrode grinned.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Yes, rather! I heard him telling Wharton so in the dorm. Wharton's going to raise some clothes for the chap to change into, and then he's going to get him off the premises, before he's found and Todd gets into a row."

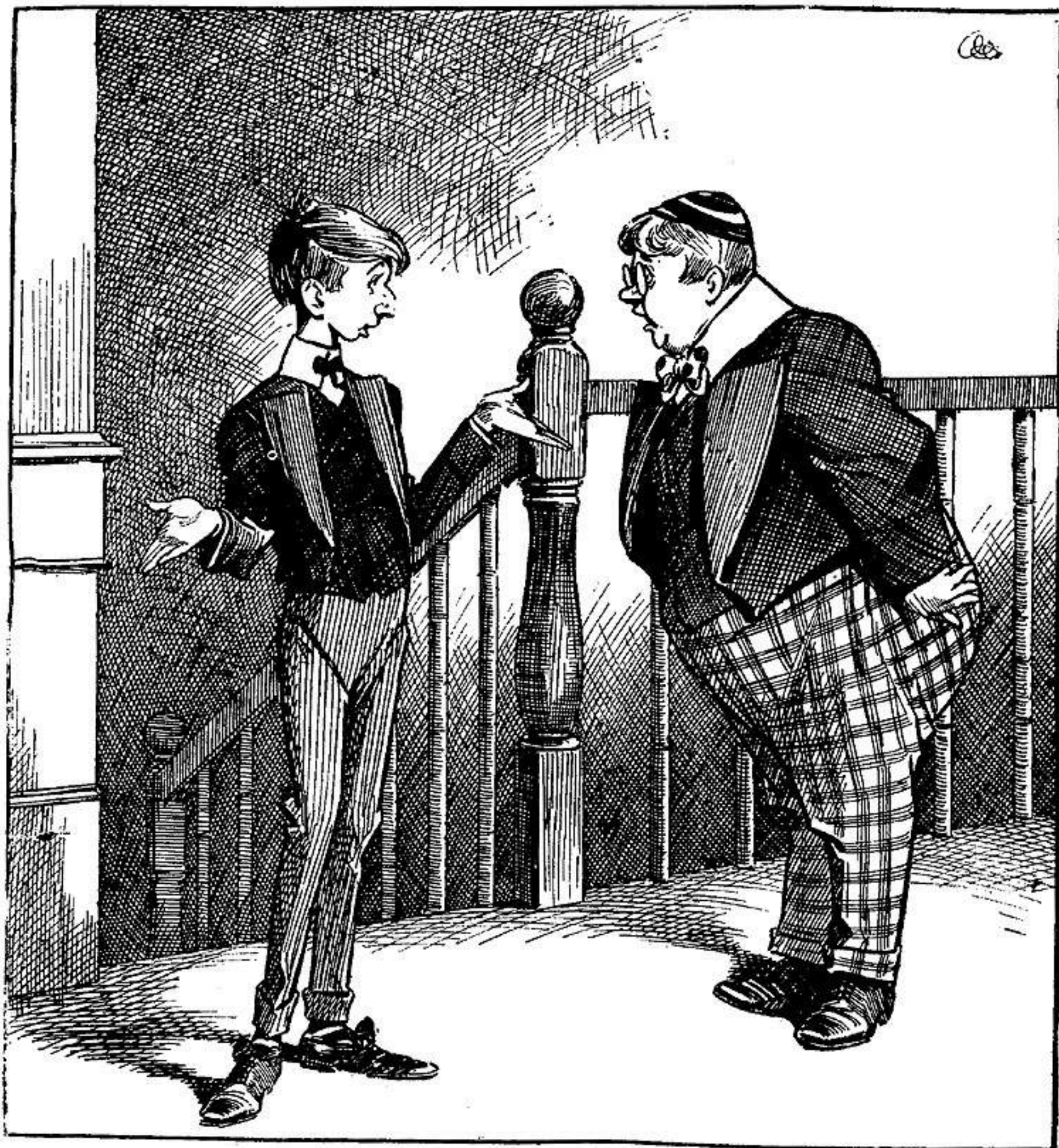
"Chump!" said Bulstrode.

"Look here!" said Skinner eagerly. "It would be a lark if he were found, you know. What if we were to give Gosling a hint? The tramp's drunk, and he would go for Gosling as like as not, and it would be fun."



Have you packed the MAGNET in your trunk?





"I have no objection to lending you the five shillings, Bunter, but I have no money, and it is therefore impossible for me to advance you this small loan. I'm so sorry!" The fat junior of Greyfriars gasped.  
(See Page 6.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"What do you say?"  
"Done!"  
"Come on, then!"  
Bulstrode paused.  
"What about this blessed rain?" he exclaimed. "We shall have to cut across the Close to Gosling's lodge."  
"Put on your mac., and take a brolly," said Skinner.  
"Come on! Don't spoil a ripping good joke for the sake of the rain."  
"Oh, all right!"  
The two juniors turned up their trousers, put on macintoshes, and collared the first two umbrellas they could find.  
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find. Then they dashed out into the Close. Several fellows saw them go, and called after them in surprise.  
"Hallo; Bulstrode!"  
"Whither bound?"  
"What's the row?"  
"Looking for a bath?"  
But the jokers of the Remove did not reply. They ploughed on through the rain and the mud to the porter's lodge. Bulstrode hammered at the door, and Gosling opened it, not in the best humour.  
"What's the matter?" he demanded.  
"Look here, Gosling—"  
"None of your little jokes, Master Bulstrode."



"I'm not joking," said Bulstrode. "If you want a blessed tramp to steal all your tools and things—why, I don't care."

Gosling started.

"A tramp!" he repeated.

"Yes, rather!"

"What do you mean?" asked Gosling more civilly. "If there's a tramp on the premises, Master Bulstrode—"

"Well, look in the wood-shed and see."

"A tramp in the wood-shed!" repeated Gosling, in amazement. "You don't mean to say that a blessed wagrant has had the cheek to come into my wood-shed!"

"Well, look and see."

Gosling took a thick stick and an umbrella, and started off towards the wood-shed. Bulstrode and Skinner chuckled in concert.

"Let's go and see the fun," said Bulstrode.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

They followed Gosling. The school porter was breathing fury. He didn't like tramps, and he kept a good many tools and other things in the wood-shed, and he was responsible for them if they were stolen. He didn't like rain, either, and his umbrella did not keep it all off. Gosling was not in a pleasant humour.

He reached the wood shed.

He did not need more than a glance to corroborate Bulstrode's information. The door of the shed was open, and a stubby, coppery face was looking out. The face belonged to a drenched and ragged body.

Mr. Walker looked cheerfully at Gosling.

"Good arternoon!" he said affably.

Gosling snorted.

"Outer that!" he said.

"Hey?"

"Houter that!" roared Gosling, more emphatically.

"Eh?"

"Will you get hout?"

"Which, my young friend—"

"Hout!"

"'Pon me davy!" said Mr. Walker, looking at Gosling with intoxicated gravity, "'pon me davy, you surprise me. Fancy asking a gentleman to go hout of his hotel on a rainy day! I don't understand this conduct."

And Mr. Walker shook a dirty forefinger at the school porter.

Gosling was almost foaming.

"Will you get hout?" he yelled.

"Suttingly not!" said Mr. Walker. "'Pon me davy—"

He got no further.

Gosling had quite lost his temper, never very amiable. He rushed at Mr. Walker brandishing the big stick.

"My heye!" said Mr. Walker.

Gosling grasped him by the collar, and the stick descended upon his shoulders. It was really rather brutal for the tramp had as yet made no resistance, and he was evidently not in a state to be reasoned with.

"My heye!" gasped Mr. Walker.

"Now get hout."

"'Pon me davy—"

"Hout you go!"

Gosling swung Mr. Walker out of the shed, and gave him another lash with the stick. Gosling was in a worse temper than ever, for he had to drop his umbrella to seize Mr. Walker, and he was getting very wet.

Bulstrode and Skinner roared with laughter. If Mr. Walker got hurt, and Gosling got wet, or both got both, so to speak, it was equally good fun to them.

"Ow!" roared Mr. Walker, as he felt the stick a second time. "Ow! This ain't the way to treat a gentleman."

"Hout you go!"

"Ow! Yow!"

"Hout, then!"

"'Pon me davy!" gasped Mr. Walker.

"Houtside!"

Gosling propelled Mr. Walker along, adding cuts with the stick to quicken his movements. But Mr. Walker, as he recovered from his astonishment, suddenly retaliated. He swung round on Gosling, and dealt him a sudden upper cut that took effect on his chin with stunning force.

"Groo!" gasped Gosling.

He was fairly lifted off his feet, and he went with a crash to the ground, fairly in a puddle.

Splash!

"Ow! Yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode and Skinner.

Gosling lay dazed. His jaw was aching, and he fancied for the moment that it had been broken.

"Oh, lor!" he murmured. "Send for the perlice! Send for the perlice! Oh! The brute! My jaw's broken! Yow! Send for the perlice!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"'Pon me davy!" said Mr. Walker, dancing round Gosling

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and brandishing his fists in the air. "'Pon me davy! Get hup! Get hup!"

"Yaroo!"

"Hup you got! Yah!"

"'Elp!"

Gosling sat up dazedly. But he got no further than a sitting posture. Mr. Walker was ready to knock him down again.

"Get hup!" said Mr. Walker.

"Oh! My jaw! Yow!"

"You'll lay 'ands on me, will you?" said Mr. Walker. "Lay 'ands on me! 'Pon me davy! I'll show you! Get hup!"

But Gosling did not get up.

Gosling could be ferocious enough when he was having it all his own way, but when the worm had turned, Gosling felt safer sitting down.

"You go hoff the premises," he said. "I'll let you off if you go at once."

"Ho, ho!" said Mr. Walker.

"Send for the perlice."

"Ho, ho!"

"Ha, ha ha!" roared Bulstrode. "Go for him, Weary Willy! Bung it into him, Tired Tim!"

Mr. Walker, thus encouraged, picked up Gosling's stick, and began to lay it about the school porter.

Gosling yelled.

"Ow! Ow! Chuck it! Perlice! 'Elp! Murder!"

"There you are!" said Mr. Walker, "that's for you! Lay 'ands on a hold soldier, would you! 'Pon me davy!"

"Ow! 'Elp!"

"Lay 'ands—"

Gosling made a sudden jump and bolted. He pelted off towards his lodge, and Mr. Walker dashed after him, brandishing the stick.

Gosling dashed into his lodge and slammed the door. But Mr. Walker did not pursue him so far. His feet became entangled with one another, and he fell in a heap. Bulstrode and Skinner, roaring with laughter, walked away towards the house. It was this sight that greeted Harry Wharton as he came out of the School House carrying a bundle under his arm.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Todd is too Good.

HARRY WHARTON stopped, and stared. Bulstrode and Skinner hurried into the house, grinning as they passed him.

"There's your friend!" said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better go and pick him up."

Wharton gave them a glance, and hurried on. He came up with Mr. Walker, who was sitting staring dazedly about him in the rain. He blinked at Harry.

"Are you the fellow Todd brought in here?" exclaimed the junior.

"I'm Billy Walker."

"What are you doing out here?"

"Getting wet," said Mr. Walker.

Wharton laughed.

"You'd better get into shelter," he exclaimed. "I've got a towel and some dry clothes for you here. Come along!"

"Which I—"

"Buck up! If you're seen you'll be booted out."

"Who'll boot me out?" asked Mr. Walker. "That's what I want to know, my young friend. P'r'aps!" he added ferociously—"p'r'aps you'll boot me out?"

"Come along!"

"Answer my question," said Mr. Walker solemnly. "P'r'aps you'll boot me out?"

"Perhaps I will," said Harry sharply.

"Then do it," said the vagrant.

"Will you come?"

"Suttingly not. As a gentleman, I disapprove of your mode of address," said the vagrant, blinking solemnly at the junior.

Wharton made an impatient gesture. Mr. Walker was evidently too intoxicated to know where he was or what he was doing.

Harry took his arm, and ran him off towards the wood shed. Then Gosling ventured out of his lodge, and cut off towards the house. Gosling did not want to encounter Mr. Walker again. His idea was to telephone for the police.

Wharton ran the unresisting Mr. Walker to the wood shed, and ran him in. Harry had a mackintosh on, and it was streaming with water. Mr. Walker was as wet as if he had lain in a bath with his clothes on.

"There!" exclaimed Harry, pushing Mr. Walker into the shed. "Get into these things, quick, and clear out."

A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton and Alonzo Todd. BY FRANK RICHARDS.



"Eh?"

"I suppose you know you can't stay here after fighting with the porter," exclaimed Harry impatiently.

"I decline to leave this hotel!" said Mr. Walker.

"Get into those things!"

"Suttingly! But I decline to go. Are you going to lay 'ands on me?" asked Mr. Walker, squaring up to the junior.

"You chump——"

"'Pon me davy!" said Mr. Walker, "if you lay 'ands on a gentleman——"

He pranced up to Wharton. The junior did not want a bout of fisticuffs with the warlike Mr. Walker. He backed out of the shed and closed the door, and with the hope that the man would have sense enough to escape before he was searched for, he hastened back to the house.

Alonzo Todd met him in the doorway.

The Duffer of Greyfriars had finished changing his clothes, and he met Wharton with an anxious look.

"You have taken the clothes?" he asked.

"Yes," said Harry, "I got some from Trotter. Somebody will have to stand Trotty five bob for them."

"That is all right," said Todd.

"Oh, good! I thought you might think it rather expensive for a tramp. But they were worth that to Trotter, and I couldn't ask him to take less."

"It is all right. I have no money unfortunately, but that shall be your contribution to the cause of charity," said Alonzo, with a beaming smile. "You shall pay that five shillings, my dear Wharton."

"Oh! Shall I?"

"Certainly. It is your right."

"My—my right!"

"Yes. Why should you not assist in a noble work?" said Todd. "It is your right, and I shall not attempt to deprive you of it. I trust that the unfortunate man is now clear of the premises."

"He's been fighting with Gosling," said Harry.

"Dear me!"

"Gosling's gone in to see the Head, so I suppose there will be a row. You'd better keep your part of the business dark."

Todd looked alarmed.

"Oh, dear! They will search for him, then, and turn him out."

"Yes, if they don't lock him up," growled Wharton. "The less you have to do with drunken tramps, Toddy, the better."

"Poor fellow! I must go and warn him."

"Let him alone. If he doesn't choose to go——"

"I had better speak to him."

"Ass!"

Taking no notice of that polite epithet, Alonzo Todd hurried away. He dashed out into the rain with an umbrella over his head, and hurried to the wood shed. Mr. Walker was occupied in changing his clothes. Intoxicated as he was, he had intelligence enough for that. His wet rags were sprawled on the floor of the wood shed, and he was already almost clad in the cast-off garments obtained from Trotter.

He blinked at Todd.

"Ho!" he said. "It's my young friend agin, 'pon me davy!"

"My dear fellow," said Alonzo anxiously, "you must get out of this at once. They are coming to look for you to turn you out, and perhaps to arrest you."

Mr. Walker shook his head.

"Which I decline to leave this hotel till the rain stops," he said solemnly.

"But it is not a hotel," said Alonzo eagerly. "It is a school."

"Don't you tell me any fibs," said Mr. Walker, shaking a dirty finger at the junior. "I'm staying 'ere."

"Then for goodness' sake come somewhere else, and don't remain in this shed," said Todd nervously. "The police will be sent for, perhaps."

The word "police" seemed to have some effect upon Mr. Walker. Probably he had had intimate, but not friendly, acquaintance with the police before.

"The police!" he repeated.

"Yes. Do come."

"I'll go anywhere with my young friend, 'pon my davy!" said Billy Walker. "But I don't go hout in the rain."

"This way, then."

Alonzo led the vagrant from the shed, putting up his umbrella. The rain was descending in a steady downpour.

The Duffer of Greyfriars was a little puzzled where to go. He did not like the idea of sending Mr. Walker away in the pouring rain—and, besides, the man was determined not to go. But if he remained in one of the outhouses, he was certain to be discovered in the search that would be made.

The only alternative was to take him into the School House itself. He would not be looked for there, but——

Alonzo felt that it was no time for buts. He led the way round to the back of the School House.

"Pray be very quiet and careful," he said. "I am going to take you into the house, and if you are seen there will be

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an alarm at once. The servants here know nothing of the higher life."

"Wot!" murmured Mr. Walker.

He understood the necessity for caution, as Alonzo opened a side door on a passage and led him in.

Todd led him quickly up the back stairs, and then to the upper staircase which led from the Remove passage to the box-room. In the box-room they stopped, and Mr. Walker sat down on an empty trunk and breathed hard.

"You'll be safe here so long as you don't make a noise," said Alonzo softly. "I'll come and tell you when it's left off raining, and bring you some food, too."

"You're a gentleman, sir," said Mr. Walker.

"You will be quiet?"

Mr. Walker's reply was to curl up on the floor. In a few moments a far from melodious snore was proceeding from him. Todd looked at him, and, satisfied that he would be quiet for a time—while he was asleep, at all events—the Duffer of Greyfriars left the box-room and closed the door.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Gone!

"NONSENSE!" said the Head.

"If you please, sir——"

"Nonsense!"

"But it's a dangerous character, and he won't go, sir," said Gosling, standing in the doorway of the Head's study, hat in hand. "I struggled with him something desprit, sir, and he—he——"

"Why did you not turn him out?" said the Head.

"I did, sir, only he—he wouldn't go! A desprit character, sir. He had a revolver, I think, sir," stammered Gosling.

"Nonsense!"

"I was afeard for my life, sir. If you was to telephone for the perlice, sir——"

"Nonsense! Telephone for the police because a tramp has entered the Close!" said the Head. "Nonsense! Take the gardener with you, and throw him out!"

"Please——"

There was a tap at the door, and Wingate passed Gosling and entered the study. He laid some books on the Head's desk.

"Ah, thank you, Wingate!" said Dr. Locke. "Have you seen anything of this person who is making a disturbance on the premises, Wingate?"

The captain of Greyfriars smiled.

"I heard some of the juniors saying that there was a tramp in the grounds, sir, and that he had handled Gosling very roughly."

"A desprit character, Master Wingate," said Gosling. "I ain't afeard as a rule. But wot I says is this 'ere——"

"That will do, Gosling."

"Yes, sir. Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"I will look into the matter if you like, sir," said Wingate. "I will take Courtney and Loder, and I don't think the tramp is likely to give us much trouble."

"Very well, Wingate, and thank you," said the Head.

"Not at all, sir."

Wingate left the study, and Gosling followed him.

"Be careful, Master Wingate," said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—you take care. He's got a revolver."

"Stuff!"

"I ain't afeard of anybody as a rule——"

"It's a rule with a lot of exceptions, isn't it?" asked Wingate, with a grin.

"Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Oh, buzz off, Gossy! We'll manage the tramp."

Gosling went off muttering. He did not care very much what happened so long as he had nothing further to do with Mr. Walker.

Wingate called Courtney and Loder, who were in the senior common-room. Like the juniors, the Sixth had been driven indoors by the rain.

A number of juniors watched them with interest. They had heard enough from Gosling to know what was going on.

"Like us to come and help, Winny?" asked Bob Cherry.

"You stay here."

"But you may get hurt, you know."

The Greyfriars captain reached towards Bob Cherry's car, and Bob quickly backed away.

The three seniors left the House in macintoshes, and several of the juniors put coats over their heads and followed them.

"May as well see the fun," said Frank Nugent.

"The funfulness may be terrific," Hurree Jamsct Ram Singh remarked.

Harry Wharton went with the others. Where Alonzo Todd



was he did not know, and he wondered what would happen. He doubted whether Walker was gone, but if he was not gone there would be trouble. Not that Mr. William Walker was likely to offer much resistance to the three sturdy Sixth-Formers.

Wingate and his companions, followed by the juniors, hurried away to the wood-shed. They looked into the shed, but found no one therein.

"He's gone," said Loder.

"Then he's gone without his clothes," grinned Courtney.

"Look there."

"My hat!"

The wet rags once worn by Mr. Walker were lying on the floor, where he had cast them on changing.

Wingate rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"I suppose we interrupted him when he was drying himself, and he's scuttled off without his things," he remarked.

"Then he must be about here."

"Look for him."

The seniors searched the wood shed and the loft over it, the juniors helping. But Mr. Walker was not discovered.

"Blessed if I know what to make of it!" said Courtney.

"Perhaps he's had a change of clothes, and has gone off in the dry ones," Harry Wharton suggested demurely.

"Where could he get a change of clothes?"

"Someone may have given them to him."

Wingate dropped his hand on Wharton's shoulder.

"Out with it!" he said abruptly. "Did you give him new clothes?"

"Yes," said Harry frankly.

"You young rascal! Then you knew he was here?"

"Todd told me."

"Well, there's no harm in giving the poor beast clothes, if those rags were all he had," said Wingate, with a glance of disgust at Mr. Walker's discarded attire. "It's all right, Wharton. But where did you get the clothes? Your own wouldn't be any use to a man who had worn those."

"I got them from Trotter."

"Oh, well, the man's gone now! I suppose he cleared out before we came," said Wingate. "If he's gone it's all right."

"May as well look round and make sure," said Courtney.

"Oh, all right!"

They looked through the outbuildings, but there was no sign of Mr. Walker. Glad enough to get out of the rain, the searchers returned to the house. They had no doubt that Mr. Walker had dodged out of the gates while Gosling was gone up to the School House to enlist help.

"Well, it's a jolly good thing he's gone!" Harry Wharton remarked, as the juniors discarded their wet coats in the hall.

"Todd's had a lucky escape of getting into a fearful row. Where is the ass?"

"Here he is!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where have you been, Todd?"

"Out in the rain, that's a cert.," said Skinner, looking at the Duffer of the Remove, who was dripping with water.

"Where's your friend the tramp, Alonzo?"

"My dear Skinner—"

"Did you warn him?" asked Harry.

"Oh, certainly!"

"Well, he was gone when they looked for him," said Harry.

"It's lucky for him, and for you. Hang this weather! Who says punting the ball in the Form-room?"

"Hear, hear!"

The juniors trooped off to the Remove Form-room, Bob Cherry carrying a footer.

Alonzo caught Wharton by the arm and detained him.

"I want to speak to you, Wharton," he said.

"Oh, buck up, then!"

"Suppose," said Alonzo, lowering his voice secretively—"suppose I brought the tramp into the House for shelter?"

"You're not thinking of doing so, surely?" exclaimed Harry, aghast.

"My dear Wharton—"

"Look here, Toddy," said Harry seriously, "if you bring him into the house I shall make it a point to tell Wingate at once. Why, the fellow may be a thief, or a professional burglar, for all you know."

Alonzo shook his head.

"Oh, no! He is one of the unemployed, and has been looking for work for a considerable time, Wharton."

"How do you know?"

"He told me so."

Wharton laughed.

"You ass! He might tell you so without its being the case. Hasn't it occurred to you that a drunken tramp isn't likely to be a model of veracity?"

"My dear Wharton—"

"Don't you bring him into the House, that's all, or he'll jolly soon get the order of the push," said Harry. And he ran after his comrades to the Form-room.

A sound of trampling and scuffling was soon heard from the Remove-room. The juniors were busy punting about the

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footer, and they made enough noise. But the masters kindly turned a deaf ear to it. They realised that the youngsters must have something to occupy them on a wet afternoon, and the punt-about in the Form-room kept them out of mischief, anyway.

Alonzo stood looking after Wharton.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "How fortunate that I did not mention to him that I have already introduced that unfortunate man into the House. Poor Walker would have been turned out into the rain if I had. This only proves the wisdom of my Uncle Benjamin, who has told me several times that a still tongue shows a wise head."

And Alonzo walked away, well satisfied with his wisdom.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Raided.

THE chime from the clock-tower of Greyfriars announced the hour of half-past five, and the punt-about in the Remove Form-room ceased. Most of the juniors were dusty and breathless.

"Well, it's fun, if it isn't football," said Nugent, putting his collar straight. "I'm getting jolly hungry, though. What price tea?"

"Good!"

"Where's Bunter?"

"Oh, he's not here!" said Harry, laughing. "Punting a footer is too much like work for Bunter."

"The chancefulness is that the esteemed Bunter is already having tea," suggested the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Nugent looked alarmed.

"Hang it!" he exclaimed. "I thought he was here. We've got all the grub in the study, and I wasn't able to lock the cupboard; the lock's jammed."

"Come on!" said Wharton.

The chums of the Remove left the Form-room and ascended to their study. Most of the Remove were going up to tea now. Harry Wharton opened the door of No. 1 Study and looked in quickly.

Billy Bunter was there.

The cupboard door was open; and Bunter was sitting in the armchair, with his feet on the fender, asleep.

Nugent looked relieved.

"It's all right," he remarked. "The fat boulder came up here to snooze, then. I was afraid he'd bolted the Tommy. There's a cold chicken, and ham and beef, and a cake, and a dozen tarts."

"Make sure they're there now."

Nugent crossed to the cupboard and looked in.

The next moment there was a yell in the study.

"Gone!"

"What!"

"All gone!"

"My hat!"

Wharton and Hurree Singh ran to the cupboard. Nugent's alarm was not a false one; the provisions were gone.

The chums stared into the empty cupboard. It was hard, for that little feed had been selected with care, and it had very nearly exhausted the supply of pocket-money belonging to No. 1 Study.

"The—the fat toad!" muttered Nugent. "Not to leave a taste!"

"Not a tastefulness!"

"The worm!"

"The fat porpoise!"

"My hat! We'll make him sit up for it!"

The chums turned wrathfully towards Bunter.

They had no doubt as to the identity of the culprit. It was an old habit of Billy Bunter's to raid the larder in this way. Frequently he had cleared out everything, with a sublime disregard of the others. If he thought about it at all, he thought that they would manage to get some more somehow.

So the chums may be excused for jumping to the conclusion that Bunter had raided the cupboard on this occasion. They did not require proof; their knowledge of Bunter and his little ways was enough.

"The rotter!" said Nugent. "Of course, he's only pretending to be asleep! He thinks we sha'n't see through him."

"The see-throughfulness is terrific."

"Yes, rather. Yank him out!"

"Get up, you porpoise!" roared Nugent.

The fat junior did not move.

"Get up!" yelled Frank, exasperated. "Do you think you're taking us in, you dummy? Get up, or I'll turn you out of the chair."

Snore!

If Billy Bunter was playing a part, he was playing it very

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well. He did not move, and only a gentle snore came from him, as Nugent vengefully grasped the back of the armchair. Frank was as good as his word.

He turned the armchair over, and Billy Bunter rolled out on the hearthrug, with a heavy bump.

There was a roar from the Owl of the Remove. Whether he had been asleep before or not, he was wide enough awake now.

"Oh! Oh! Yow!"

"You fat rotter—"

"Yaroo! W-w-what are you up to?" yelled Bunter, sitting on the hearthrug, and groping for his spectacles, which had slid down his fat little nose. "Oh, really—"

"Where's the grub?"

"Eh?"

"What have you done with the tommy?"

Bunter found his glasses and jammed them on his nose. He blinked furiously at Nugent.

"Did you turn me out?" he gasped.

"Yes, I did."

"Did you do it on purpose?" demanded Bunter fiercely.

"Yes."

"Oh, all—all right!"

Wharton laughed.

"Look here, Billy, don't gammon any more!" he said.

"Get up, and tell us what you have done with the tommy. You can't have eaten it all!"

"What tommy?"

"The stuff we had in the cupboard."

Bunter blinked towards the cupboard.

"I didn't know there was any there!" he exclaimed ruefully. "I looked in just before dinner, and there wasn't any."

"We got it in after dinner," said Harry.

"Well, I didn't know."

Frank Nugent uttered an impatient exclamation.

"Look here, Bunter, stop those blessed lies!" he exclaimed.

"You've taken the grub, and you can't have eaten it all. Where is it?"

"I tell you—"

"Where's the grub?"

"If you doubt my word, Nugent, this discussion had better cease," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity.

"Well, I jolly well do doubt your word, and you're going to produce that grub," said Nugent, grasping the fat junior by the shoulder.

"Oh, really—"

"Do you believe him, Harry?"

"No fear!"

"Do you, Inky?"

"The no-fearfulness is terrific."

"And I don't! We'll jolly well bump the truth out of him."

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Now, then, where is the grub, Billy?"

"I—I don't know."

"Bump him!"

The three chums made a simultaneous movement towards Bunter. The fat junior made a wild break for the door, but Nugent's grasp swung him back.

Billy Bunter struggled blindly.

"Help!" he roared. "I—I won't be bumped! I—I haven't had the grub! I don't know where it is. I'm fearfully hungry now. Yow—yah—yow!"

"Bump!"

The fat junior was bumped forcibly in the strong grasp of the three Removites. The dust rose from the study carpet where Bunter's stout person smote it.

"Bump!"

"Now, then, Bunter—"

"Ow—ow!"

"Where's the grub?"

"Yaroo!"

"Bump!"

"Help! Yow—ow! Yaroo!"

There was a sudden shout at the door. Bulstrode looked in with a furious and excited face, his hands clenched.

"Look here, you chaps, if this is a joke of yours, you'd better chuck it!" he shouted.

The chums dropped Bunter.

"What's the matter?" asked Harry, looking in amazement at the Bully of the Remove.

Bulstrode glared at him.

"Who's been raiding my study?"

"Your study?"

"Yes. My cupboard's cleared out, and I want to know who's done it!"

"My hat!" said Wharton, with a whistle. "So is ours!"

"Honest Injun?" asked Bulstrode suspiciously.

"Yes, rather; honour bright. We thought Bunter had done it."

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "I told you I didn't!"

"Well, you're such a blessed fabricator, you know. I don't

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know yet that you didn't; you may have gone through Bulstrode's study as well."

Bunter gasped for breath.

"Yow, I didn't! Yow!"

There was a yell in the passage. It sounded like another alarm, and the chums looked out quickly to see what was the matter. Micky Desmond had come tearing out of his study in a state of great excitement.

"Tare an' 'oun's!" he roared. "Who's been in my study intirely?"

"Your study?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Faith, yes! Somebody's raided my study, and taken away my illigant sandwiches!" shouted Micky. "Who was it? Where is the thafe of the world?"

"My only hat!" said Wharton.

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

### On the Track.

THE juniors looked at one another in surprise and dismay. That Bunter was the raider was not probable. In the process of the bumping, the fat junior would most likely have blurted out the truth, if he had been guilty. Besides, even the capacious appetite of Billy Bunter would not have been equal to the amount that had been raided. More than enough for the largest eater had been in Wharton's cupboard, and there were other cupboards robbed. Several more fellows came excitedly out of their studies with the news that various kinds of "tommy" were missing.

"It's a Form raid!" said Nugent.

And Harry Wharton nodded.

"That's what it is, I suppose," said Bulstrode, calming down. "The Upper Fourth have been raiding our studies while we were punting the footer in the Form-room!"

"The bounders!"

"Looks like it!" agreed Harry.

"The lookfulness is terrific."

"We're jolly well not going to take this lying down!" exclaimed Bulstrode warmly. "Who's game to go for the Upper Fourth?"

"All of us, I think," said Tom Brown.

"What-ho!"

"Yes, rather."

"I suppose it must have been the Upper Fourth," said Harry Wharton musingly.

"Well, it wasn't the Fifth or the Sixth, I suppose?" said Skinner, in a sarcastic tone. "I suppose they wouldn't raid junior studies? As for the infants, they wouldn't have cheek enough."

"No; you're right."

"Has anybody seen fellows belonging to the Upper Fourth hanging about here?"

"We've nearly all been in the Form-room," Mark Linley remarked. "Who has been in the studies? Bunter for one."

"I've been asleep," said Bunter. "When I come to think of it, though, I heard somebody come into the study awhile back."

"Didn't you see who it was?"

"No. I thought it was one of you fellows."

"Why didn't you look, ass?"

"I couldn't look without getting up," said Bunter, as that were quite a sufficient explanation.

"Anybody else been up here?" asked Trevor.

"What about Todd? He wasn't in the Form-room. And Smith?"

"Let's see them."

The juniors opened the door of Vernon-Smith's study. The Bounder of Greyfriars was there, reading a novel, and he did not look up as the juniors entered. He had his feet on the back of a chair, and a cushion under his head, and the stump of a cigarette between his teeth. Alonzo Todd was seated at the table, engaged in writing out an impot. Todd was a slow writer, and the imposition Mr. Quelch had given him was not half done yet, and Todd had to show it up that afternoon.

He looked up at the juniors crowding in the doorway.

"Anybody been raiding this study?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Oh, no! Why do you ask?"

"Our studies have been raided—a lot of them—and grub taken. Nobody been here?"

"Oh, no!"

"Have you heard anybody?"

"I have not noticed."

"Did you see any of the Upper Fourth hanging about the passage during the last hour or two?" asked Bob Cherry.

Alonzo Todd rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Yes, now I come to think of it, I saw Dabney," he replied. "It was when I came up to the study, perhaps an



hour ago. I remember passing him at the end of the passage.

"What was he doing here?"

"I don't know."

"Were there any more of them?"

"I really do not know," said Todd. "You see, I did not think of looking."

"Of course you didn't!" growled Bulstrode. "But it's pretty clear. I suppose the others were out of sight, or Dabney may have done the raiding on his lonesome. There's no doubt about the Upper Fourth having been the raiders now."

"No; it looks like it."

"We'll jolly well make them disgorge," said Bob Cherry. "They'll be in their studies having tea now—having tea with our grub, too. We'll raid them in turn."

"Hear, hear!"

"Good egg!"

"Come on," said Harry Wharton, setting his lips. "We'll raid Temple's study, as he's the leader, and while we collar him, some of you can block the passage and prevent the other bounders coming to help him."

"Good!"

"My dear fellows," exclaimed Alonzo, rising. "I have a suggestion to make. My Uncle Benjamin says that you should make it a point to overlook any injury you receive—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"And never repay it in kind. If a fellow punches your nose—"

"Ring off!"

"But my Uncle Benjamin—"

"He's right," said Bulstrode, coming closer to Alonzo.

"And his Uncle Benjamin knows a thing or two."

"I am truly glad, Bulstrode, to see—"

"It's like this," said Bulstrode. "If I punch you on the nose, you oughtn't to punch me on the nose, eh?"

"Certainly not. I—"

"There you are, then."

Bulstrode hit out. His knuckles crashed on Todd's nose, just where the truculent butcher-boy's knuckles had crashed a couple of hours before. Todd sat down with a sudden shock that shook the study floor.

"Ow!" he gasped.

There was a roar of laughter.

"Now you can work out the ideas of Uncle Benjamin," said Bulstrode. "It's a lot of trouble to help you in this way, but I don't mind. I'll do the same thing again any time you like."

"Ow! Yow!"

The juniors crowded out of the study, leaving Todd moping his nose, and Vernon-Smith laughing. They made their way to the Upper Fourth quarters.

The Fourth Form, like the Lower Fourth, were mostly up to tea. From Temple's study came a very agreeable smell of cooking. Frank Nugent peeped in at the door.

"My only hat!" he murmured. "They're warming up a chicken before the fire."

"Our chicken!" muttered Harry.

"Of course!"

"The of-coursefulness is terrific."

The juniors wanted no further proof. The Upper Fourth were the raiders. Wharton made his plans for the attack quickly and decisively.

A party of the Remove was posted in the passage to block the way when the alarm should be given, and stop any rush on the part of the Fourth-Formers. Then six or seven fellows followed Wharton into Temple's study.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were about to have tea. There were four fellows in the study Temple, Dabney, Fry, and Scott.

They swung round in surprise at the sight of the Removites.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Temple. "What do you chaps want? My hat! Line up, you chaps!"

But the warning came too late.

Harry Wharton & Co. were rushing to the attack, and before the Fourth-Formers could strike a blow in their defence, they were collared and hurled over, and on the chest of each of them a Removite was sitting, pinning him down.

"Oh!" yelled Temple, struggling under the weight of Frank Nugent. "Ow! What do you mean, you cheeky bounders? What's your little game?"

"We've got you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The gotfulness is terrific."

"You asses!"

"Rescue!" roared Temple. "Upper Fourth, rescue!"

"Help!"

There was a sound of disturbance in the passage. Harry Wharton laughed.

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"There won't be any rescue just yet," he remarked.

"Take that chicken, Bunter."

"What-ho!" said Billy Bunter.

"What's that?" yelled Temple.

"Clear the table, you chaps! And the cupboard! Now, then, Temple, where's the rest of the grub?"

"You blessed burglars!" gasped Temple. "Help! Rescue!"

## THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Not Gully.

"RESCUE!"

Temple, Dabney & Co. were shouting the word in chorus.

The alarm had been given all along the Fourth-Form passage, and the fellows were coming out of their studies, and hurrying towards Temple's room.

But the Removites blocked the way.

Bob Cherry and Bulstrode had dragged up a long wooden form from the window at the end of the passage, and placed it crosswise from wall to wall, and behind that slight barricade the Removites were ranked to dispute the passage of the Fourth-Formers.

"Rescue!"

"A raid!"

"Kick them out!"

"Down with the cheeky fags!"

The Fourth-Formers rushed on. But they stumbled against the heavy form, and behind the form the juniors were packed, hitting out cheerily.

The Fourth-Formers were stopped.

They came on again, but they could not get through, and all they could do was to exchange blows and yells with the Removites.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton & Co. were having it all their own way in Temple's study. Temple, Dabney & Co. yelled for help and rescue, but they yelled in vain.

As it happened, Temple had been intending to give a feed that teatime to a good many of the Form, and he had ample provisions in his study.

The raiders had not the slightest doubt that a great part belonged rightfully to the Remove, and they collared them with a clear conscience.

Billy Bunter, with the chicken in one hand, and a large pie under the other arm, hurried off to No. 1 Study.

Several more juniors, heavily laden, scuttled off, while Harry Wharton & Co. kept the leaders of the Upper Fourth prisoners, and the pack in the passage blocked any attempt on the part of the Fourth-Formers to interfere.

Under the circumstances, Temple's was the only study that it was open to the Remove to raid; but it was sufficient—the booty was a rich one.

All kinds of provisions were carried off, while Temple, Dabney & Co. raged and struggled in vain.

"Help!" roared Temple. "They're raiding us! Why don't you come, you chumps?"

"They can't," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Rescue!"

"You can save your breath to cool your porridge—if you have any when we're done," grinned Bob Cherry. "Is that about the lot, Wharton?"

"I think so."

"The lotfulness is terrific."

"Good. Let's clear, then. If these chaps make so much row, we shall have the masters or prefects on the scene."

"Good! Let's get off."

Temple, Dabney & Co. were given a final roll on the carpet, and then the Removites crowded out of the study. Nugent locked the door on the outside to prevent any immediate pursuit.

The Removites retreated in a body towards their own quarters. Temple was hammering away inside the study, and someone unlocked the door and released the leaders of the Upper Fourth.

"After them!" roared Temple.

The Upper Fourth fellows pursued the retreating raiders.

There was a sound of footsteps on the stairs, and Wingate came up, with a cane in his hand, and an angry frown upon his face.

"You young sweeps!" he shouted. "What do you mean by making this fearful row?"

He did not stop for an answer to his question. He entered into the fray with the cane, laying about him with great vigour and impartiality, the Fourth-Formers and the Removites getting equal shares of the cuts.

The combatants scattered in a very few moments.

Harry Wharton & Co. made a break for their own quarters, and the Upper Fourth crowded back into their studies.

"Don't let me hear any more rows to-day, that's all!"

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exclaimed Wingate, a little breathlessly, and he went downstairs with a grin on his face.

"Ow!" grunted Nugent, rubbing his arm. "I caught one! How that bouncer can lay it on!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Never mind," he said. "We've done the Upper Fourth, and got back the grub, and a lot more, too. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ha-ha-ha-fulness is terrific!"

"My word, this is a jolly good chicken!" said Billy Bunter, blinking up from the fire. "Temple's got a good taste in grub, I must say."

"It's our chicken," said Harry.

"My hat!" exclaimed Nugent, looking at the fowl Bunter was heating before the fire, and from which a savoury smell was rising. "My only chapeau."

"What's the matter?"

"That's not our chicken!"

"What!"

"It's bigger, and fatter," said Nugent, staring at the plunder. "It's not the one I bought of Mrs. Mumble."

"Phew!"

"Well, it's ours now," said Billy Bunter. "It's a jolly good one."

Harry Wharton looked serious.

"Is it possible it wasn't the Upper Fourth raided us after all?" he said, with a quick breath.

"Who else could it have been?"

"Well, that's true."

"Anyway, we've raided them," said Bunter. "This chicken is all right, and I'm hungry. It's about ready now."

"Hallo!" exclaimed Nugent. "Look out!"

Temple, Dabney, and Fry presented themselves at the door. The chums of the Remove were ready for war at once, but Temple held up his hand in sign of peace.

"It's all right," he exclaimed. "No more rows. Wingate has got his cars open. But look here, you've raided all our grub."

"And we've nothing for tea," said Dabney. "The other fellows are chipping us for being raided, and we're not going to have tea with them."

"Tit for tat!" said Harry.

"What do you mean?"

"You raided us."

"Last week," said Temple. "That's a long way back."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"I mean this afternoon," said Harry. "You chaps raided our studies while we were punting the footer in the Form-room."

Temple, Dabney and Fry stared at him.

"Off your rocker?" asked Temple pleasantly. "We haven't raided anybody."

The Removites looked at one another.

"Honour bright?" asked Harry.

"Of course."

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"Then we raided you for nothing. Never mind; it's all in the game! But look here, somebody has been raiding grub all along the Remove passage. Who could it have been, if it wasn't you chaps?"

Temple shook his head.

"I don't know," he said. "I know that it wasn't the Upper Fourth, that's all."

"Well, I take your word, of course, and as we've got your grub, you can stay and have tea with us if you like," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We'll send for some more, and stand our whack fairly."

"Good!"

"Oh, rather!"

And Bunter was despatched to the tuckshop for further supplies, with dire threats of what would happen to him if he devoured any en route, and then the Lower Fourth and Upper Fourth fellows sat down to tea together in great amity.

The fact that Temple, Dabney & Co. had not raided the Remove studies being established, it was a puzzle to know who had done so.

The juniors discussed it over tea, but without being able to throw any certain light on the matter.

"It must have been the Second or Third Form fags," said Temple.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"I suppose so, though I should hardly have thought that they'd have the nerve," he said. "We won't go for them in a hurry, in case they're not guilty."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, we bear no malice," said Temple, laughing. "It's all in the day's work. These tarts are prime."

"I say, you fellows, I'll cut down to the tuckshop again if you like," said Billy Bunter generously. "I don't mind taking the trouble."

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"But, really—"

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"Ring off, Tubby! Pass the cake."

"I've just taken the last piece."

"Pass the biscuits."

"I've finished them."

"Pass the jam."

"I've just—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Temple. "Bunter's just finished everything, I think. Well, we'll be off now, you chaps, and thanks awfully for the tea."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"It was ripping!" said Fry.

And the chums of the Upper Fourth departed. Billy Bunter was still busy in finishing up what was left on the table.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

"It's mighty curious," said Nugent. "Who was it raided the studies, after all?"

Wharton shook his head.

"I suppose we shall have to give it up," he said.

But the juniors were very much puzzled.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Alonzo is Surprised.

ALONZO TODD came out of his study with a paper packet in his hand, and looked up and down the passage, like Moses of old, to see whether anyone was nigh. No one was observing him, and the Duffer of Greyfriars trod softly away towards the box-room stairs, and ascended them.

He paused for a moment outside the door of the box-room.

From within he expected to hear the sound of snoring, but he did not. There was a smell of tobacco proceeding from under the door or through the keyhole; at all events, it reached the nostrils of Alonzo Todd. The junior sniffed. Mr. Walker was evidently awake!

Todd opened the door quietly.

It was dark in the box-room, and all he could make out was a point of red, which was evidently the bowl of a pipe.

The smell of a coarse, rank tobacco was stronger. Todd coughed. There was a grunting voice in the gloom.

"Who's that?"

"It is I," said Todd.

There was a chuckle.

"Ho! It's my young friend," said Mr. Walker's voice.

"Yes, indeed. I have brought you some food," said Todd.

Another chuckle.

"Thank you kindly, sir, 'pon me davy," said Mr. Walker.

"You are in the dark here—"

"Yes" said Mr. Walker. "I thought a light might show from the winder, you know, an' gimme away."

"That was very thoughtful. However, I think we can risk a light for a short time," said Alonzo. "I do not wish to bark my shins on the boxes. A concussion upon the shin is extremely painful, as you may be aware from experience, Mr. Walker. I do not desire to suffer any unnecessary contusions."

Mr. Walker chuckled again, perhaps amused by Alonzo's peculiar flow of language. Todd had closed the door, and he now struck a match and applied it to the gas jet.

Mr. Walker blinked at him in the sudden light.

Todd looked at Mr. Walker, and uttered an exclamation of amazement. Mr. Walker was resting upon a box, with his back to the wall, and his feet on another box. He had his pipe in his mouth, and was smoking with great comfort. His intoxication was quite gone. But what surprised Todd was the sight of several empty dishes, and torn paper bags, and a plate with the bones of a chicken on it, and several uneaten fragments of food. The vagrant had had a good meal.

"Dear me!" said Todd. "Then you have had something to eat?"

"Looks like it, don't it?" said Mr. Walker.

"Where did you get it?"

"I found it."

Todd laid his parcel down.

"I had brought you some bread and cheese," he said.

"It was all that I could obtain, as I am short of money."

Mr. Walker chuckled softly.

"Thankee; but I've had something better."

Alonzo's brow grew stern.

"You have been out of this room!" he exclaimed.

"P'r'aps."

"I warned you to be careful to remain here."

"Did you?" said Mr. Walker lazily.



"Yes, certainly. But you were intoxicated at the time, and probably did not notice what I said," remarked Todd. "So it was you, then, who raided the Remove studies?"

Mr. Walker grinned.

"I was 'ungry,' he pleaded. "I went down to look for anythin' to eat. I found a lot of grub in the cupboards, and nobody about."

"It was very wrong."

"I was hungry, my young friend, 'pon me davy."

"I have no doubt that you were hungry, but to take food that does not belong to you is stealing," said Todd. "It was base, especially after my trusting to your honour in bringing you into the school."

Mr. Walker gave an involuntary chuckle. The idea of anybody trusting to his honour probably amused him very highly.

"However, it cannot be helped now," said Todd. "I am sorry it has happened, for it shows that you are very far from understanding the higher life. But I hope you will feel the higher influences later. My Uncle Benjamin says that every man, even the basest, is open to the influence of good."

Mr. Walker's eyes glinted.

"Does he?" he remarked.

"Yes, indeed. I have no doubt that you could be improved, and made clean and sober and decent, impossible as it looks at first sight," said Todd, with a beaming smile. "I should not despair even of you, Mr. Walker."

"Ho!"

"But now it will be necessary for you to leave," said Alonzo. "The rain has ceased, and, as most of the fellows are doing their prep., there will be no one to observe you leave."

"P'r'aps you could 'elp a poor cove on his way," suggested Mr. Walker. "A few shillings—"

Todd shook his head.

"I had already thought of that," he said. "But I have no money. Besides, I fear that you would expend it in drink."

"'Pon me davy, I'm a strict teetotaler," said Mr. Walker. "I know the colour of me nose is agin me. But that's the weather, and sleeping in the hopen. I'm a strict teetotaler, 'cept for takin' a little for the hague."

"But—"

"If you could 'elp a pore cove with a few shillings—"

"I'm so sorry. I have tried to get some money for you," said Todd. "If there were time to communicate with my Uncle Benjamin, I have not the slightest doubt that he would lend me a sufficient sum to start you on your way. My Uncle Benjamin has always impressed upon me to help the poor and needy. Unfortunately, that is impossible now. I have tried to borrow some money of Vernon-Smith, but he is extremely hard, and he refuses to lend it to me. It is selfish of him, as he is a millionaire's son, and has a very large allowance, and has ten pounds of his own in the study at the present moment. But he is not generous, and he has never had the advantage of being instructed by my Uncle Benjamin. I am afraid you will have to go forth penniless, my poor friend; but I give you my best wishes."

Mr. Walker did not look particularly gratified by Todd's best wishes. Perhaps he had no use for them.

"You had better take this opportunity of getting away," said Todd, as Mr. Walker made no movement to go. "It is safe now, and will not be safe later. Pray come with me."

"In the study?" repeated Mr. Walker.

"Eh?" said Todd.

"Master Smith has ten pounds in the study?"

"Yes," said Todd. "But of course that has nothing to do with us, as he refuses to lend any of it."

"P'r'aps he might if I asked him perlately," said Mr. Walker, with a curious gleam in his eyes.

Todd shook his head.

"Not at all likely. He is more likely to call out, and have you turned out of the house by violence, and then I should get into trouble for letting you in."

"I'd like to see him," said Mr. Walker.

"No, no; it would not do."

"The studies is them rooms in the passage down there, ain't they?" asked Mr. Walker. "The rooms where I got the grub?"

"Yes, certainly."

"And Mr. Smith is in one of them?"

"Yes, the fourth from this end."

"Ho! You're sure he's there?"

"He was there a few minutes ago, at all events," said Todd, in surprise at the interest Mr. Walker showed in Vernon-Smith. "I have only just asked him to lend me some money."

"And he's got ten pounds?" said Mr. Walker musingly.

"Yes. It is very hard-hearted of him, is it not?"

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"Werry," said Mr. Walker. "'Pon me davy, it is. Does he carry it about on him—in his clothes?"

"Yes, in his pocket-book," said Todd. "But that does not matter now. It is now quite safe to go down, and you had better come without losing time."

Mr. Walker rose to his feet. His eyes were gleaming under his bushy brows, and his lips were drawn over his teeth with an expression like the snarl of a savage dog. He looked a very different man from the drunken, babbling vagrant who had been assisted into the box-room by the confiding Alonzo.

The tramp made a sudden spring towards the door, and interposed between it and the junior.

Todd looked at him in astonishment. Even now he was not alarmed. He did not realise the depths of the ingratitude of William Walker.

"Let us go!" he said.

Mr. Walker did not reply, but he grasped Alonzo Todd in a grip of iron—a grasp in which Todd was quite helpless.

"Quiet, now!" he said, and his voice came between his yellow teeth like the hiss of a snake. "Quiet!"

"I—I—"

"I'm not goin' to 'urt yer," said Mr. Walker—"I'm not goin' to 'urt yer, if you don't make any row. But if you cry out—"

A ferocious look finished the sentence.

Todd did not cry out. He was too overcome with horror and amazement.

Even now, though he was helpless in the grasp of the ruffian, he did not realise what Mr. Walker intended to do.

"Quiet!" repeated Mr. Walker.

He glanced round the room, and picked up with one hand a coil of rope that had been thrown aside from an uncorded box. He held Alonzo tightly with one hand the while. He shook the rope loose, and proceeded to tie the junior.

Alonzo found his voice.

"What—what does this mean?" he gasped. "Are you mad? Why are you treating me in this unprovoked and unpleasant manner?"

"'Old yer jaw!" said Mr. Walker.

"But—"

"Quiet!"

His look was so savage that Alonzo relapsed into silence. Mr. Walker tied him hand and foot, and then jerked his handkerchief from his pocket, folded it, and jammed it into his mouth. Todd could not talk now if he wanted to. Mr. Walker tied the handkerchief in place with a length of string.

Then he laid Todd on the floor and grinned.

"I'm goin' now," he said. "If you so much as move an eyelid I'll come up and do for you. You 'ear? Mind, I mean biz! I'm not leaving this show without making a raise, not if I know it. You savvy?"

Alonzo could only stare blankly.

"There's money 'ere," said Mr. Walker. "I ain't going with empty pockets, my young friend, 'pon me davy I ain't. Them ten pounds will be useful to me, and save me looking further. You savvy? Mind, I'll come back and stave your head in if you as much as wriggle."

And leaving Todd nearly frozen with horror, Mr. Walker extinguished the gas, and left the box-room, and descended the stairs with a stealthy tread.

## THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

### Mr. Walker Raises the Wind.

VERNON-SMITH was in his study, looking over a pink paper, and he was alone there. That pink paper contained sporting news of great interest to Vernon-Smith, and he was so interested in it that he did not hear the door softly open.

A stubbly face peered into the study. Vernon-Smith, intent upon his paper, did not observe it.

"Three to one against Sand Boy!" he murmured. "I rather think I'll take that. I'll put the money on by wire, too."

The owner of the stubbly face stepped quite into the study, and closed the door silently.

Standing looking towards Vernon-Smith, he felt behind him for the lock, and found the key and turned it.

The click of the lock made Vernon-Smith start and look up.

The next moment he dropped his paper and sprang to his feet.

The tramp leaped towards him.

"Not a word!" he breathed. "One yelp, and I'll choke the life out of you! Do you understand?"

His blazing eyes, his strong hands, were close to the Bounder of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith shrank back.

How the ruffian had come there he had no idea; but he was there now, and he was evidently able to deal with Smith

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as easily as with an infant. Vernon-Smith had no desire to struggle with him.

"What do you want?" he muttered.

Mr. Walker watched him narrowly. He was ready to spring upon the junior with clutching hands if he made an attempt to give the alarm.

"What's your name?" asked Mr. Walker.

Vernon-Smith stared blankly.

"My name?" he repeated.

"Yes, quick, your name!"

"Vernon-Smith."

Mr. Walker grinned with satisfaction.

"Good!" he said. "I'm right, then; this is the study."

"This is my study," said Vernon-Smith, beginning to recover his nerve a little. "What are you doing in it? How did you come here?"

"Never mind that now," said Mr. Walker. "You've got ten pounds about you."

Vernon-Smith started.

"How do you know that?"

"That don't matter. Hand it over."

The Bounder of Greyfriars clenched his hands hard.

"You are going to rob me?"

"And it over!"

"Look here," said Vernon-Smith, "you must be mad to come here like this; and I don't know how you've managed it. But you can't get away. You'll never get out of the school with the money. You'd better—"

"Will you 'and over that money, or shall I 'andle you?" said Mr. Walker, in slow, concentrated tones.

Vernon-Smith took out his purse. The tramp snatched it from his hand. He opened it. A folded five-pound note, five sovereigns, and some loose silver lay within. Mr. Walker chuckled softly.

"Good!" he said.

Vernon-Smith bit his lips.

"You won't get away with it," he said.

The vagrant made a gesture.

"The watch!" he said.

"What?"

"Your watch—quick—and the chain!"

Vernon-Smith drew a deep breath of rage. His watch was a valuable gold one, extremely gorgeous for a boy of his age, and the chain was on the same scale. The two were worth at least forty pounds.

But there was no help for it.

The Bounder of Greyfriars gritted his teeth, and unhooked the watch and chain, and passed them over to Mr. Walker.

They disappeared into one of the tramp's pockets.

"That's about all, I think," said Mr. Walker.

He drew a length of rope from his pocket, which he had brought down from the box-room.

Vernon-Smith stepped quickly back, and the tramp scowled.

"Your 'ands!" he said.

"You're not going to—"

"Do you want me to brain you instead?"

Vernon-Smith held out his hands, and Mr. Walker tied his wrists together. He was fastening the knot with scientific care when there was a sound of hurried footsteps and voices in the passage.

The tramp grasped Vernon-Smith, his right fist clenched and ready to crash upon him if he cried out. The junior was silent.

The ruffian was listening intently.

Voices could be heard in the passage, and the footsteps were all going in one direction—towards the box-room stairs.

"I tell you I saw it—"

"But—"

"Come on! It was as plain as anything." It was Bob Cherry's voice. "I was doing a sprint round the Close, and I saw the box-room window lighted up, I tell you."

Mr. Walker gritted his teeth.

"But what about it?" asked the voice of Harry Wharton, who had evidently just been called away from prep. in his study by the excited Bob. "What does it matter if there's somebody in the box-room, fathead?"

"Come on, I tell you!"

"But—"

"I tell you I saw them!" roared Bob Cherry. "Don't you catch on? It was a fight, or something of the sort. I caught their shadows on the window as plain as anything. There's something up."

"But—"

"We don't know what became of that tramp chap Todd let into the shed. How do you know he isn't in the house now? It was a man's shadow I saw, and he was going for somebody. I tell you I'm not mistaken."

"Well, no harm in looking," said Mark Linley's voice.

The juniors ran up the box-room stairs, many of them catching Bob Cherry's excitement.

In Vernon-Smith's study, Mr. Walker had laid an iron grasp on the junior's throat, ready to choke him into silence if he spoke.

But he did not venture to speak.

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He was watching the eyes of the tramp.

Mr. Walker muttered something—something not good to hear. Most of the juniors had gone up to the box-room, but several lingered in the passage. The way of escape was not clear, but to linger in the study was fatal—the juniors would soon hear all from Todd, and track him there.

The ruffian was desperate.

He ran to the window, leaving Vernon-Smith. He threw up the lower sash but there was a sheer drop of thirty feet or more below. There was no escape that way.

The ruffian gritted his teeth.

There was nothing for it but to dart from the study, dash along the passage, and trust to the surprise of his sudden rush to get through. Mr. Walker gave Vernon-Smith a warning glare, and stepped to the door and unlocked it.

## THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Exit Mr. Walker.

HARRY WHARTON was the first to enter the box-room. All was dark there, and the captain of the Remove stumbled over something that gave a faint sound.

"A light—quick!" cried Harry.

Bob Cherry struck a match and lighted the gas.

"My hat! Alonzo!"

"Only Alonzo!"

The juniors stared at the Duffer of Greyfriars in amazement. The sight of Alonzo Todd, bound and gagged upon the floor, was startling enough.

Harry quickly dropped beside him, taking out his pocket-knife. In a few seconds he had cut the ropes through, and jerked away the gag.

Alonzo mumbled through his numbed lips:

"Oh, dear! What would my Uncle Benjamin say?"

"How did you get like this?" demanded Wharton.

"Oh, dear!"

"Faith, and it's another of his little jokes," said Micky Desmond.

"Ass! He couldn't tie himself up!"

"Faith, and I—"

"Oh!" gasped Alonzo.

"Who did this, Toddy?"

"Ow! It was Walker!"

"The tramp?"

"Yes."

"He was the chap I saw on the window," said Bob Cherry, with conviction. "He's the bounder! But how on earth did he get in here?"

"Ow!" groaned Todd. "I am very stiff. My limbs are quite cramped. It was very, very ungrateful of William Walker. But I have experienced a great deal of ingratitude to-day. It is enough to make a fellow give up trying to help the poor and needy to a conception of the higher life."

"You brought the tramp in here?" asked Harry Wharton sternly.

"Yes. I had to give him shelter after Gosling cleared him out of the wood-shed, you know," mumbled Todd. "He was wicked enough to steal the food from the studies—"

"Oh, oh! He was the raider, then?"

"Yes, and then he—he tied me up like this—"

"But what for?" demanded Wharton. "What did he do it for? I suppose it wasn't for amusement, was it?"

"Certainly not!"

"Has he robbed you?"

"Oh, no. I have nothing for him to steal," said Todd.

"You see, I am very low in funds, and, in fact, could give him nothing to help him on his way, though I greatly desired to do so. It was very unfortunate, as, if I had been able to help him he might not have thought of robbing Vernon-Smith—"

"Robbing Vernon-Smith?" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes. I forgot to mention that he has gone to Smith's study to rob him of ten pounds—"

"You utter ass!" roared Wharton. "Why couldn't you say that at first?"

"My dear Wharton—"

But Harry was already bounding down the stairs. The rest of the juniors rushed after him.

There was an uproar in the Remove passage as they came down.

Mr. Walker had made his break from Vernon-Smith's study.

The tramp had dashed out of the study, and raced down the passage towards the stairs at top speed, knocking aside the astonished juniors, who had no time to seize him.

But as he reached the head of the stairs, and glanced down, he saw that he would have to run a gauntlet he could never get through—there were seniors in sight below, and they would certainly not have let him pass. Mr. Walker rushed back along the Remove passage, to find the back stairs by



which Alonzo had admitted him. He did not remember the way very well, but he had no chance of looking for it, for he fairly met Harry Wharton & Co. as they rushed down the box-room stairs, and the juniors piled upon him at once.

Mr. Walker struggled desperately, savagely, hitting out with all his force, and several of the juniors were hurt. But they were too many for him. The tramp was borne over, and went sprawling on the floor, and the juniors piled on him.

"Got him!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Ow!" groaned Mr. Walker, all his ferocity squeezed out of him, as it were, under the weight of a dozen juniors. "Ow! I give in! Yow! Lemme alone! Don't 'it a chap when he's down! I give in, 'pon me davy! Ow!"

Vernon-Smith came out of his study. Someone had untied his hands. His face was dark with rage.

"Hold the scoundrel!" he exclaimed. "He's robbed me—he's got my purse and my watch and chain! Let me search him!"

Vernon-Smith ran his hands through Mr. Walker's pockets, and was soon in possession of his property again. Mr. Walker sat dismally on the floor, dusty and dishevelled, with the grasp of the juniors upon him. All the fight was taken out of the vagrant. He was as meek as a lamb now.

"Don't be 'ard on a cove," he murmured—"don't be 'ard, you know. I'm sure I beg the young gent.'s pardon, 'pon me davy I do!"

"Better telephone for the police," said Vernon-Smith. "He's got to go to prison."

"That will make it rough for Todd," said Harry Wharton quickly. "He'll get an awful licking for letting the chap into the house."

"Hang Todd!"

"Well, he's been an awful ass, I know, but you've got your things back, and this rotter has had a jolly good bumping, too. Suppose—"

"Look here, he's going to prison! I—"

"My dear Smith—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the Duffer! Hope you're satisfied with your blessed mission now, Toddy? Think this chap is likely to specialise on the higher life?"

Todd blinked at the grinning juniors, and at the dismayed Mr. Walker.

"As the stolen property has been recovered, I think we might give the unfortunate person another chance," he said. "My Uncle Benjamin always said that it was right to be merciful and to forgive. I—"

"Rats!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, you shut up!" said Bob Cherry. "You're dead in this act. You've got your things back, anyway. Buzz off, and dry up! Look here, you chaps! Todd will get a flogging if the Head knows he brought the villain into the house. I suggest that we take the rotter out the back way, kick him off the premises, and let the matter drop."

"Good egg!" said Harry Wharton.

And so it was decided. Mr. Walker, greatly relieved to know that he was not to be arrested, but equally greatly apprehensive as to the handling he was about to receive, was escorted down the back stairs and out into the dark quadrangle. They marched him to the gates, but the gates were locked. Wharton did not think it prudent to call Gosling to unlock them.

"I've no doubt this bounder can get over the gates," he said. "Now, all of you kick together, and kick till he's gone. Ready! Start!"

They started. The gates were not easy to climb, but Mr. Walker was over them in record time. He dropped on the other side, and rolled in the dust, and picked himself up, and ran, and the darkness swallowed up the form of the vagrant who was so impervious to the influences of a higher life.

The juniors returned to the house. They found Alonzo Todd looking very serious. The Duffer of Greyfriars gave them a mournful look.

"Sticking to the mission?" asked Bob Cherry, with a grin.

Todd shook his head.

"Upon the whole, I think I shall leave it alone for a time," he said. "I shall consult my Uncle Benjamin before I carry it any further. It has been most unfortunate all the time. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Give him a rest!" suggested Bob.

"My dear Cherry—"

"You've been making a jolly lot of row upstairs, you fags," said Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, as the juniors came downstairs to the common-room. "I think I warned you to be careful."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Oh, it's only Alonzo!" he said.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled: "Harry Wharton's Pro." by Frank Richards. Please order your copy of "The Magnet" Library in advance. Price 1d.)



# STANLEY DARE

## The Boy Detective

### INTRODUCTION.

Stanley Dare, the Boy Detective, is engaged by a nameless client to look after the safety of a girl named Violet Castleton, who is going on a pleasure voyage on board the s.s. Princess Ida. Several deaths have occurred on board during recent voyages of this vessel, and Dare's client suspects foul play. The young detective ships as a steward, and his friend, Professor MacAndrew, comes on board at Marseilles. Before the Princess Ida reaches Palermo, Stanley Dare has established the fact that the ship's doctor, with the help of a confederate named Barton Merivale, a well-known Society man, is slowly and secretly poisoning Violet Castleton by means of curarine. Her death is arranged by the two scoundrels to take place between Malta and Beyrout.

(Now go on with the Story.)

#### The Plot Progressing—A Fresh Peril—A Villainous Prison.

"We have only six days before us," exclaimed Dare, voicing the thought which was uppermost in his mind.

"Muckle may be done in six days," observed the professor, "but we'll only be playing into the hands of these villains if we do anything rash. Ye made an analysis o' the dregs o' that wine that Vallery gave tae Miss Castleton; hae ye the result?"

"Unfortunately no," interrupted Stanley Dare. "You see, I am supposed to have deserted at Algiers, and everything belonging to me has been packed up and put under lock and seal. I can't claim even so much as a lead pencil until I reveal my identity."

"That's awkward."

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"It's a good deal worse than awkward; but I must make the best of the situation."

"We maun keep our eyes open. This man Vallery will be using the drug every day, and if I can only lay hands on some more drugged wine or ither liquid, it'll be nae long before another analysis is made. I'm away noo to hae a chat with the lassie."

He crossed the deck to where Violet Castleton was standing, and was soon engaged in friendly conversation with her, while Stanley Dare went about his steward's duties.

The day passed without the detective finding another opportunity of exchanging a few words with the professor, who had installed himself in Violet Castleton's good graces, and had been her constant companion all day.

This arrangement by no means suited Dr. Vallery; but, of

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course, he could not raise any objection to it. Once or twice, when he thought he was unobserved, Dare noticed him regarding the professor with a savage and suspicious glare; but at other times he appeared to be more genial than ever, and was at some pains to cultivate MacAndrew's acquaintance himself.

The wily Scotsman met his advances more than half-way, for he meant to set a trap for this astute scoundrel.

Shortly before the dinner-gong sounded Dare noticed Barton Merivale and Dr. Vallery enter the latter's cabin; and as there was a spare cabin next to it, the young detective seized the opportunity. As soon as the door was closed, he slipped into the spare cabin, which belonged to a deaf old gentleman, who spent the greater part of his time on deck, or in the smoking-room.

Under the circumstances, Stanley Dare felt quite justified in trying to overhear as much as possible of any conversations that took place between the two plotters, and he had reason to be particularly thankful that he was enabled to hear a part, at least, of what they said on the present occasion.

"I have done with curarine now," Dr. Vallery was saying. "There is always a slight possibility that traces of it may be discovered."

"What are you going to use in place of it?" asked Merivale.

"Phantom Death!" was the strange reply.

"Eh? I never heard of it in—"

"It is my own name for a certain poison," went on the doctor, "which is practically unknown to the medical profession of the present day. But I have devoted many years to the study of toxicology, as you know, and I obtained the secret of the ingredients of the poison from a queer old Egyptian in Cairo. It was in use, I believe, in ancient Egypt; but that is a matter which scarcely interests me."

"Why didn't you use it from the first?"

"There are only two places that I know of where I can obtain the ingredients. One is the shop of this old Egyptian at Cairo, and the other at a drug store of a half-caste chemist at Marseilles. I had to wait until we arrived at Marseilles before I could replenish my stock; but now I have enough for at least twenty 'special' cases, which is all I am likely to require."

"Yes, we mustn't work the game too strongly, or we are likely to arouse suspicion. One more voyage of the Princess Ida should leave us with about a hundred thousand pounds between us. We must be satisfied with that for a time. Of course, we can't squeeze five thousand out of every client as we have out of old Bierce."

"We shall have earned it. I have been put to a lot of trouble and expense in getting rid of that steward, Stanley. I wish I could have found out more about him than I did. However, he has paid the penalty for spying, or attempting to spy, on me."

There was a pause in the conversation, during which the doctor could be heard taking some bottles out of a cupboard.

"Is that the stuff?" Merivale presently asked.

"Yes," replied Vallery. "One single drop is sufficient for one day. Six drops, on six succeeding days, and that particular case is disposed of. Violet Castleton will have the first drop in her after-dinner coffee to-night."

Stanley Dare had been so intent on listening to the cold-blooded and horrible conversation of these two villains—horrible because of the indifferent manner in which they spoke of committing murder—that he did not hear the footsteps which came to a halt outside the cabin door. Consequently, he was taken by surprise when the door was flung open, and Mr. Wilkins, the deaf old gentleman, entered.

"Hallo!" he shouted. "What are you doing in my cabin—eh?"

"I was put fresh drinking-water in ze bottle, m'sieur," replied Stanley Dare, in his character of "Alphonse."

"Fresh drinking-water? Why, confound you, there was fresh drinking-water put in the bottle not more than an hour ago! I don't want you stewards always hanging about in my cabin! Get out of it!"

He was an ill-tempered old fellow, who was always fault-finding; and he had a habit of speaking in a very loud tone of voice.

As Stanley Dare backed out of the cabin, making profuse apologies in broken English, Dr. Vallery and Merivale stepped on deck from the surgery. Vallery at once addressed himself to Mr. Wilkins, while Merivale regarded Dare with a look in his steely-grey eyes that it was hard to interpret.

"What has happened, Mr. Wilkins?" inquired the doctor, in a voice of pretended concern. "I hope that this steward has not been giving any insolence, or—"

"No, not at all!" snarled the old fellow. "If anything, he is too confoundedly civil! I suppose he was performing his duties; but he must choose another time. I want to be alone, and uninterrupted."

After so very plain a hint there was no excuse for Dr. Vallery to pursue the subject, so, with a remark to the effect that orders should be given that he was not to be disturbed,

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the doctor turned away, and Mr. Wilkins shut himself up in the cabin.

But as soon as the door was closed the expression on Vallery's face underwent a sudden change. His features were fairly quivering with rage, as, stepping to Stanley Dare's side, he hissed:

"How long were you in that cabin when Mr. Wilkins found you there?"

"But a short time, m'sieur," replied Stanley Dare, spreading out his hands deprecatingly.

"If I thought that you were telling me a lie it would be bad for you!" continued the doctor fiercely. "Or if I caught you spying—"

"I don't understand, m'sieur. Spying! But what, then, is there for me to spy upon?"

Vallery realised that he had made a mistake, and at once changed the subject.

"You joined the ship at Marseilles, I think?" he said.

"Yes, m'sieur."

"What is your name?"

"Alphonse Rouvier."

"Very well, that will do. I shall write to Marseilles and have inquiries made about you, for I am not at all satisfied that the chief steward was sufficiently particular on that point."

Dare could not resist giving Vallery a parting shot as he turned to make his way down to the saloon.

"M'sieur, le docteur," he said quietly, "is at liberty to make all inquiries. For myself, I am content to make appeal to the captain who is—or should be—superior to all other officers on board."

As he walked away he fancied he heard Vallery utter an oath under his breath, and he was conscious that two pairs of eyes were watching him with expressions that were the very reverse of friendly.

Just before the dinner-gong sounded he managed to exchange a few words with the professor, giving him a brief account of what had occurred.

"One thing is certain, Mac," he said, in conclusion. "We must take care that Miss Castleton doesn't drink any coffee after dinner to-night."

"I'll see tae that," replied the professor. "An' if I can dae it no ither way, I'll contrive tae exchange cups wi' her. I maun see that coffee, tae see what result an analysis will give."

The Princess Ida arrived at Palermo on the following evening, and in this port she was to remain for forty-eight hours, to give the passengers an opportunity of visiting some of the most interesting places in Sicily.

The next morning Professor MacAndrew took Violet Castleton on shore with him, for he knew the island thoroughly, and, moreover, the girl seemed to be quite happy in the society of the grim-visaged scientist.

Stanley Dare remained on board.

It was about midday that a boat came off with two police officials, who asked for the chief mate, and had a long conversation with the officer. Dare was sent for.

"I am sorry to have to inform you, Rouvier, that these police officials hold a warrant for your arrest on a charge of being concerned in an Anarchist outrage at Marseilles. They have received instructions by cable from the police at the French port. You will have to go with them."

Dare realised at once that this was a plot on the part of Vallery and Merivale to get rid of him. How they had worked it he did not quite know, but it is probable they had cabled instructions to their agent at Marseilles on the previous night. However, that was a matter with which he need not concern himself now. The point was, how to cope with this fresh difficulty and danger which had arisen, for there was no telling how it might end.

He appealed to the chief officer, and, keeping up the fiction—as he was obliged to—that he was a Frenchman, begged to be allowed to see the Consul, as he was certain the Marseilles police had not cabled any message concerning him.

"I cannot do anything in the matter, Rouvier," said the chief. "The police here will no doubt give you every facility for communicating either with the British or the French Consul. In the meantime, as they hold a warrant, which appears to be quite regular, you will have to accompany these two officials to the police-station."

There was nothing for it but to accept the inevitable, and make the best of the situation. The two police officials were not inclined to be communicative, and, indeed, the young detective was not very favourably impressed by their features.

The boat which conveyed them on shore landed them at the far edge of the town, where a closed-in conveyance was awaiting, in which they were driven to a stone-built building that looked strong enough for a prison.

"This is not the police bureau!" exclaimed Stanley Dare.

"No. Through here, and beyond," was the reply.



His captors kept a firm grip on his arms when he had alighted from the vehicle, and, as they were powerfully-built men, he saw that it was useless to make any attempt to escape.

Through the arched entrance of the building and down a long, gloomy corridor he was led. Then one of the officials pushed open a door on the right, and they all passed through into another corridor.

As the door swung to his two guards were joined by a number of other men, though none of them were in uniform. They pressed close round him, and he was violently seized by strong hands.

A cloth, from which came the pungent odour of a strong drug, was pressed over his mouth and nostrils, and he felt himself becoming quickly powerless in mind and body.

Then, as his senses left him, the last definite objects presented to his sight were the faces of Barton Merivale and Dr. Vallery standing out distinct and triumphant among the crowd of evil visages that hemmed him in on every side.

### A Strange Expedient—Stanley Dare's Escape.

When Stanley Dare returned to consciousness, he was lying on his back on the floor of a dirty stone cell, some ten feet in length by eight in breadth. The first thing that attracted his attention was a grated window high up on the wall facing him, and for some minutes he occupied himself in a vague sort of fashion in counting the iron bars over and over again. He seemed to be unable to concentrate his wandering senses on anything else for a time. To fix his thoughts or his attention on anything but this simple and useless matter was utterly beyond his power.

At length, however, he managed to get a firmer grip on himself, and as recollection grew upon him, he moved his limbs to find out if they were free; but his gratification ended with this discovery.

As memory resumed its sway, the events of that morning passed in review before him. The advent of the two pretended police-officers, his arrest, his conveyance to the prison-like stone building, beyond which according to his captors, was the police bureau, and the final scene in which he had been chloroformed and overpowered—all these things flashed back through his brain.

He knew now that he had been trapped. The police officials were, of course, bogus officials, the warrant was a cleverly executed forgery, and the whole affair was a plot engineered by Vallery and Merivale. That was certain, for he had seen their faces among the crowd as his senses left him.

He had risen to his feet, and an involuntary impulse caused him to pass his hands over his face. In doing so, he made a startling discovery. His false moustache and imperial had been removed. He found out also that his wig had gone. Without his disguise, it was more than probable that he had been recognised either by Merivale or Vallery. There was no certainty, of course, that this was the case; but one result of the young detective's fame was that his photograph had been published in many of the London illustrated papers.

What manner of place it was in which he was incarcerated he had not the faintest idea, but his natural impulse prompted him to try and find out some means of escape.

He had no weapon of any description in his possession—indeed, he had nothing but the clothes in which he stood up in, for his pockets had been turned out, and everything which they contained taken from them. It was, therefore, not with any great amount of hope that he took a survey of the cell which he could regard in no other light than as a prison.

The walls and floor were of stone, the door massive, and studded with iron, and the window placed so high that it was quite out of his reach. In fact, an escape by way of the window could only be practicable, if the bars were removed.

It was evidently now late in the afternoon, for the shaft of sunlight which streamed through the window slanted upwards at a sharp angle, and struck the opposite wall close up to the ceiling, that proved that the sun was setting.

But before darkness fell, the young detective determined to make an effort to obtain a view of the outside surroundings. By making an upward spring, it was just possible that he might reach the window-sill, and hook his fingers on to it. He made the attempt, but failed the first time. At the second attempt he managed to get a grip of the edge of the stone work, and then pulled himself up until he had raised himself sufficiently high to look out.

He saw a stone-paved courtyard, surrounded by high walls, and beyond the walls open and hilly country. The height of the window from the ground was about twenty feet. He had scarcely finished his survey, when he heard the sound of approaching footsteps, then the creaking of rusty bolts, and the next minute the door was opened.

Three men entered. Two of them were the stalwart ruffians

who had been masquerading as police-officers, but they were now in ordinary clothes; the third man was a small, thin individual, with a wrinkled, monkey-like face, and very small eyes that twinkled incessantly, giving them a humorous expression, as though their owner was perpetually enjoying a joke.

If this were the case, he contrived to keep the joke hidden away deep in his own mind, for anything less humorous than the sound of his voice and the words it uttered would be difficult to imagine. He appeared to be in authority over the other two, for as soon as they entered the cell he bade them put down the food and water which they were carrying. The food consisted only of plain bread.

Each man was armed!

Stanley Dare had but a limited acquaintance with Italian, which was the language of the island, so he tackled his gaolers with French.

"What is this place?" he demanded. "Why have I been brought here, and by whose orders? If I am not instantly released, you will be severely punished for this outrage!"

The little man laughed a shrill, cackling laugh, and replied in a voice so deep and hoarse as to be positively startling when coming from so small a body.

"Who shall punish me?" he demanded. "The only persons who know that you are here are those who are paying to have you kept here. And, of course, the officials of my establishment."

"And pray what is this establishment of yours?"

"We call it the Monastery. It is, so to speak, a house of detention."

"How long am I to be kept here?"

The little man shrugged his shoulders.

"Who can tell?" he answered.

"Probably you could tell if you chose to do so!" retorted Stanley Dare. "I could make a very shrewd guess as to the names of the scoundrels who are paying to have me detained. They are Vallery and Merivale."

"I do not ask the names of my clients," said the little man. "They state their wishes, and I carry them out provided the payments are made regularly."

"Well, both you and your clients will have to pay a heavy fine for this day's work, I can assure you!" declared the young detective. "I have friends on board the Princess Ida who will not rest until they have found out what has become of me. This infamous den of yours will receive a visit from the police—"

The little man interrupted him with a gesture of impatience, though his black dots of eyes seemed to twinkle more humorously than ever.

"You do not know the Palermo police," he said. "They are always ready to shut their eyes when they are paid to do so. And it will be well for you to remember that you were on board the Princess Ida under false pretences. I myself saw the disguise removed from your face while you were insensible. So, even if you could communicate with the police, the circumstances would be so suspicious that of a certainty you would be thrown into prison."

"I will run that risk," replied Stanley Dare promptly, "if you will hand me over to the police."

"We waste time," replied the little man. "I have come here to see that you are bestowed safely, and I cannot answer any more questions. Let me advise you to make no attempt to escape. Two only of the inmates of this establishment have ever made the attempt. Alas, they are both buried under the stones of the courtyard!"

The corners of his mouth twitched as he made this statement.

"I advise you to partake of the food which we so kindly provide for you," he added, pointing to the bread and water.

Then he and the attendants withdrew from the room, barring the door behind them.

Stanley Dare had no appetite for the coarse bread which had been left behind for his consumption; but, recognising the necessity of keeping up his strength, he ate some of it, and drank some of the water. Then he sat down on the floor to consider his position.

His one hope of rescue lay in Professor MacAndrew. But, then, it was doubtful whether the professor would be able to trace him in the short time at his disposal before the ship sailed. And MacAndrew would have to sail in the ship in order to watch over Violet Castleton, for if he remained behind the girl would be entirely at the mercy of the scoundrels who were plotting against her life. And they fully meant that there should be a funeral at sea between Malta and Beyrout.

Vallery could write out the death certificate, and in his capacity of ship's doctor, would be able to furnish a plausible reason why the funeral should take place as soon as possible after the death of his victim.

The young detective had sat there brooding for an hour



or more when the door was again opened, and a man thrust a mattress and a pillow into the cell.

"Your bed," he observed.

It was a man he had not seen before, and he did not look to be such an out-and-out ruffian as the others.

As a drowning man clutches at a straw, so Stanley Dare clutched at the hope that this fellow might be open to bribery. He had spoken in French, which appeared to be pretty generally understood at the Monastery. Therefore, Dare now addressed him in that language.

"A word with you!" he whispered. "Would you like to earn a thousand lire?" (Equal to about forty-two pounds in English money.)

"I am always ready to earn money," replied the fellow; "but while you speak to me keep on the other side of the cell. I have a pistol, and I am instructed to use it if necessary."

Evidently he was taking no risks, but as he was willing to listen, Stanley Dare had some hopes of him.

"You can earn the money by carrying a letter——"

"I carry no letters!" interrupted the fellow.

"Then by aiding me to escape."

The fellow shook his head.

"It is impossible!" he muttered. "I should like the money, but I like my life still better. You understand? Besides, you cannot have this money in your possession now!"

"No. But I could obtain it very easily if once I was clear of this place. I should only have to make myself known to——"

"Enough, signor! I cannot listen to you!" He glanced over his shoulder. "Someone approaches!" he muttered. Then he closed the door sharply, and shot the bolts into their sockets.

Twenty-four hours passed, and during that time Dare saw nothing more of the man on whom his hopes were centred, and it may be mentioned that he never saw him again. What became of him, the young detective had not the slightest idea; but he had an uncomfortable presentiment that their conversation had been overheard, in which case the man

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which was raging in the dimly-lit corridor not more than three yards away from him.

It was a desperate expedient, but in it lay his only chance of making his escape. The wild passions of these ruffians were let loose, and in the fury of the conflict they would not be likely to notice that it was one of their prisoners that was taking part in the fray.

Stanley Dare did not range himself on one side or the other. Indeed, in the wild melee it seemed that each combatant was striking blindly and viciously at anyone within his reach. Dare simply cut his way through the crowd; and as he was cool and self-possessed, while the Sicilians were maddened with fury, and had lost control over themselves, he held a decided advantage.

In ten minutes he was clear of the press, with nothing worse to show for his share in the fight than a wound on the right side, which was more painful than dangerous.

He had to make a guess at the way out of the Monastery, and, after traversing an interminable number of corridors and passages, and descending two flights of stairs, he found himself at a big iron-studded door, which was left unguarded. Everybody in the place seemed to be taking part in the quarrel, but as the proprietor was not visible, Dare concluded that he was not on the premises.

Quickly unbolting the door, he passed out into a narrow and deserted street. It was a steep street on the side of a hill, and over the low wall on the opposite side he obtained a clear view of the harbour.

The night was fine. About two miles out to sea a big steamer was heading towards the east. Dare recognised her by her rig.

It was the Princess Ida.

"Half an hour sooner, and I should have been able to get on board," he exclaimed. "By hook or by crook, I must get

**NEXT TUESDAY!**

**"HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."**

**BY FRANK RICHARDS.**

would probably be dealt with in the drastic manner which obtained in the Monastery. Bread and water had been brought to him twice during that period, but not a single word would his gaolers exchange with him.

Night had fallen again, and he knew that by this time the Princess Ida must have sailed. But if he could only make his escape from this infamous den, it might yet be possible to overtake her before she left Malta. If not——

Well, he preferred not to think of that contingency. But of this he was certain—that if anyone could, single-handed, thwart the diabolical schemers on the Princess Ida, Professor MacAndrew was that man. He was turning over all the possibilities of the case in his mind as he paced up and down his cell like a caged tiger, when suddenly there broke upon his ears the voices of men raised high in altercation. To judge by the sound, there seemed to be a dozen at least quarrelling amongst themselves. Then there came the sharp report of a revolver, followed by a shriek of pain. After that there was a regular pandemonium of yells, shouts, and screams.

"Those beauties are having a set-to amongst themselves," muttered Dare, "and knives are being used. There is an old saying that 'when rogues fall out, honest men come by their own.' If I can only come by my liberty I shall—Hullo! There seems to be a rush in this direction."

Without a doubt the fight was taking place in the corridor which ended at the door of the cell. The stronger party in the quarrel had driven the weaker lot into a corner. Two men were struggling right against the cell-door. Then Dare heard the bolts shot back, and the door was flung open. A man staggered in.

"Shut the door!" he gasped. "They will kill me!"

The young detective saw that his chance was come, and he was not slow to avail himself of it. In an instant he was out in the corridor, stumbling over the body of a man that lay across the threshold. He closed and bolted the cell-door again, leaving the wounded man inside.

Snatching up a broad-brimmed felt hat that had fallen from the head of one of the combatants, he put it on, and pulled it well down so as to conceal as much of his face as possible. His foot kicked against a knife. He picked that up, too. Then he flung himself into the thick of the fight

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 137.

**NEXT  
WEEK:**

**"HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."**

to Malta before she leaves! The coasting steamer from here won't sail for another three days, and I believe she is about as slow an old rattletrap as could be found afloat nowadays. I had better go down to the beach and see if I can get hold of one of those fast sailing feluccas that Palmero is noted for."

The fact that he had no money in his possession, and could not possibly get any until the following day, had for the moment escaped his memory. But, as events turned out, this was not a matter of any consequence.

Most of the native boats anchored at the other side of the bay; but there was one at this end, moored to a buoy about a hundred yards from the shore, that looked to be exactly the sort of craft he wanted. But where to find her owner?

Two men were slowly walking along the beach, and Dare was about to make his way to them and ask if they knew who owned the boat, when he caught a glimpse of the face of one of them, and, on doing so, darted at once behind an upturned fishing-craft, which had been hauled on to the beach for repair.

That wizened, monkey-like face was not one that he would be likely to forget. The man was the proprietor of the Monastery.

They passed so close to where Dare was crouching down, that, by putting out his hand, he could have touched the man nearest to him. But they did not see him.

**In the Wake of the Steamer—The Drifting Boat—MacAndrew's Peril—A Near Thing.**

As soon as the pair of miscreants were out of sight, Stanley Dare rose from his hiding-place, made his way to the water's edge, and, without taking off any of his clothes, waded in and swam off to the felucca.

It was the work of a few minutes only to cast adrift the rope that held her to the buoy; but it took him some time to set the sail. It was a good spread of canvas, and he was not used to handling sails. But he got it sheeted home at last, and then he went aft and gripped the tiller. There was a fresh breeze, and the felucca fairly raced through the water.

"This is all right!" exclaimed Dare. "She is a flyer, and

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**A Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton and Alonzo Todd. By FRANK RICHARDS**



no mistake! If the wind holds, I shall get to Malta in time. And now, if there is anything decent to eat on board, I will have supper. I am about tired of bread and water."

There was plenty to eat, and some fairly good country wine to wash down the food with. It was the most enjoyable meal he had had for some time.

The young detective did not dare to close his eyes for an instant. Awake and alert he had to keep all through the long hours of darkness. With such a fresh wind blowing, and an awkward sea running, the felucca wanted careful steering. Without a firm hand at the helm she would have swung up into the wind and been dismantled.

It was dawn on the following day when Valetta, the principal harbour of Malta, was close enough under his lee for Dare to see the ships that were moored within it. The Princess Ida was there, and a cry of triumph broke from his lips when he saw her.

Almost directly ahead of the felucca, as he was then steering, Dare observed an open boat, drifting helplessly at the mercy of the wind and waves. She appeared to be in a sinking condition, for she was very deep in the water.

Dare would have passed her without taking any further notice, for he had no time to overhaul derelict boats; but just as the felucca was drawing level, he heard a half-stifled cry, followed by a very distinct groan, come from her.

"Some poor wretch has met with an accident while out rowing or fishing," Dare said to himself. "I must do what I can to assist him. It is impossible to leave him!"

Shifting the felucca's helm, he ran alongside the drifting, water-logged boat, and looked down into her. A man was lying in the stern, gagged and bound. The gag had partially slipped from his mouth, and because of this he had been able to call out loud enough to make himself heard a short distance away.

As soon as Dare's eyes rested upon his face, the young detective uttered an exclamation of the greatest astonishment.

"MacAndrew!" he cried. "Great Scott! How did you get into this fix?"

For the man in the sinking boat was the professor. Dare unfastened the gag at once, and then cut the lashings from MacAndrew's wrists and ankles. After that he helped him into the felucca.

"Laddie," gasped the professor, "ye were just in the nick o' time. I was saying ma prayers, for I had gien up all hope o' being rescued. It was the work of those de'ils in human form—Vallery and his accomplice."

"Well, they have come to the end of their tether now," said Dare. "When is the Princess Ida advertised to sail from Malta?"

"Twa o'clock this afternoon."

"Good! That will give us plenty of time. Did you contrive to get hold of that cup of coffee which had been drugged with the stuff that Vallery calls 'Phantom Death'?" I had not the opportunity of asking you before you went on shore at Palermo."

"I did," replied MacAndrew. "And it is now in the hands of an analyst at Malta, for I thought it best to get an independent witness, since you had vanished."

"By the way," asked Dare, "how did they manage to trap you?"

The professor rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"I owe it in part to my ain carelessness," he said. "I didna' think they had ony suspicion of me; but the lynx-eyed brutes did, that is certain. I had been on shore with Miss Castleton during the day, but she returned on board about six o'clock in the evening. I did not, as I wanted to keep an eye on Merivale, who was paying some mysterious calls in Valetta. However, I lost sight of him, and was walking down the Strada San Giovanni about nine o'clock at night, when I came face tae face wi' Vallery. Ye ken weel the genial manner o' the hypocritical scoondril?"

"Only too well," replied Dare, with conviction.

"Weel, he called oot tae me: 'Ah, professor, ye're the very man I want tae see.' The de'il doot him! 'Miss

Castleton has been looking for ye. Something important. I believe, that she wants to see you about.'

"Is that so?" I replied. 'Then I'll go on board at once and see her.'

"Perhaps it would be as well," he said; 'and, as I'm returning on board now, we can go off together.'

"He had a shore boat waiting for him at the landing-steps, and as I got into it and sat down, it struck me that the face of the boatman was somehow familiar. I am sure noo that it was Merivale, in disguise."

"Highly probable," agreed Dare.

"Tae come tae the end o' my story, I was suddenly overpowered, when the boat was oot in the harbour, and bound and gagged, as you found me. They didna set me adrift then, for they had first tae get on shore themselves. They sailed the boat round St. Elmo Point, past the entrance of the quarantine harbour, and then ran her intae a wee bit inlet, which wasna owerlooked. After taking the mast and sail oot o' the boat, they removed the plug, so that she should fill and sink. Vallery glared doon at me."

"In a couple of hours, professor," he said, 'you will have gone tae join your friend, Stanley Dare, in the next world.'

"Then the boat was pushed off, and the wind being off shore, she drifted slowly oot tae sea."

"Vallery made a slight miscalculation," said Dare. "I suppose the water did not come in quite so fast through the plughole as he expected it would?"

"No; if it had— Ah, there she goes!"

He pointed away astern. The abandoned boat was now only showing about three inches of gunwale above the surface of the water. As the professor spoke, her stern went right under, and her bow cocked up a little. The next moment she had disappeared entirely from sight.

"A near thing, laddie!" murmured the professor. "If you had been only a few minutes later, I should have found a grave in the ocean. And, muckle as I love the sea, I somehow dinna fancy being buried in its cauld depths!"

The felucca was now in the grand harbour, and as it passed the Princess Ida, not more than three hundred yards distant from her, Dare and MacAndrew crouched low down, so as to run no risk of being seen by anybody on board.

Dare sailed the felucca to the upper end of the harbour, and he and MacAndrew landed at the Marina Gate.

"We must go and rouse the bank-manager first," said Dare, "and get some money from him. My credit is good here. After that we must make for the cable-office."

"While you're at the bank, I'll awa' tae the analyst who has the poisoned coffee, and get his report," said MacAndrew; "but wi' my clothes a' wet an' bedraggled, I'm no looking sae respectable as a Glasgaw professor ought tae look."

A note despatched by a trustworthy messenger brought old Captain Dundas post haste to the police magistrate's office at about half-past ten o'clock that morning.

There he met Stanley Dare and Professor MacAndrew, and was very much surprised to hear that the former had been serving as assistant steward on the Princess Ida on two separate occasions that voyage.

The police magistrate had been made acquainted with all the facts of the case, and warrants for the arrest of Barton Merivale and Dr. Vallery were even then being made out; and now Captain Dundas had to receive enlightenment regarding the dastardly plot against Miss Castleton's life, to say nothing of the very grave suspicions that more than one murder had been committed on board his vessel on previous voyages.

"This is dreadful news, gentlemen," he cried—"dreadful news. But I wish you could have laid these villains by the heels earlier in the voyage. It was surely running a terrible risk to give them a free hand for their nefarious operations all this time?"

"This is dreadful news, gentlemen," he cried—"dreadful news. But I wish you could have laid these villains by the heels earlier in the voyage. It was surely running a terrible risk to give them a free hand for their nefarious operations all this time?"

(Another instalment of this splendid Detective story next Tuesday. Please order your copy of "THE MAXER LIBRARY," in advance. Price 1d.)

**For Next Week**

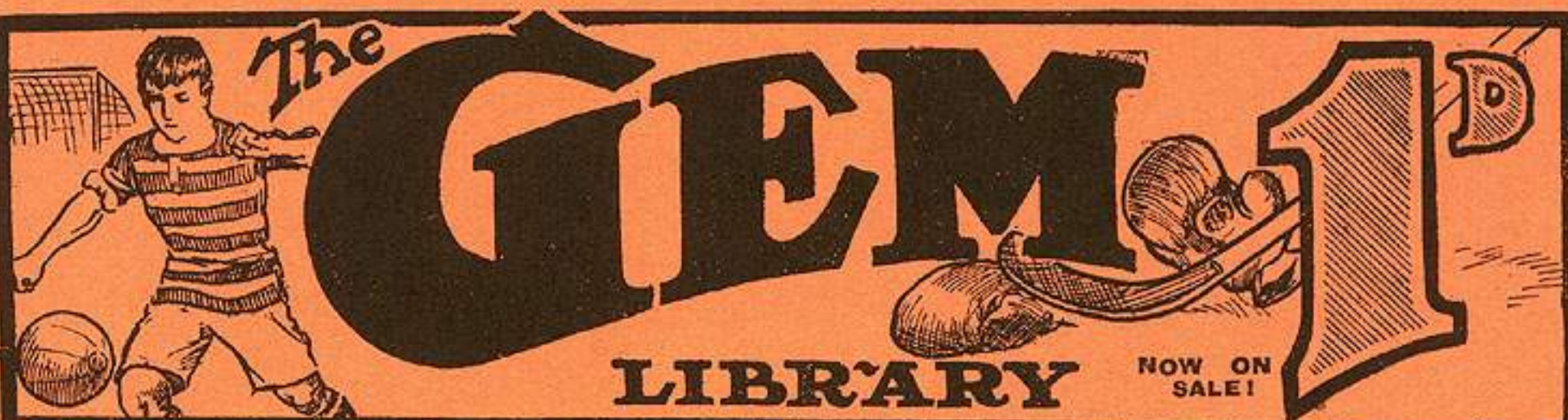
**"HARRY WHARTON'S PRO."**

Friendly rivalry is all very well, but when it comes to trickery it is time to look out. The chums of Greyfriars do look out, and the enemy in the shape of the boys of Highcliffe have a rough time of it.

*The Editor*



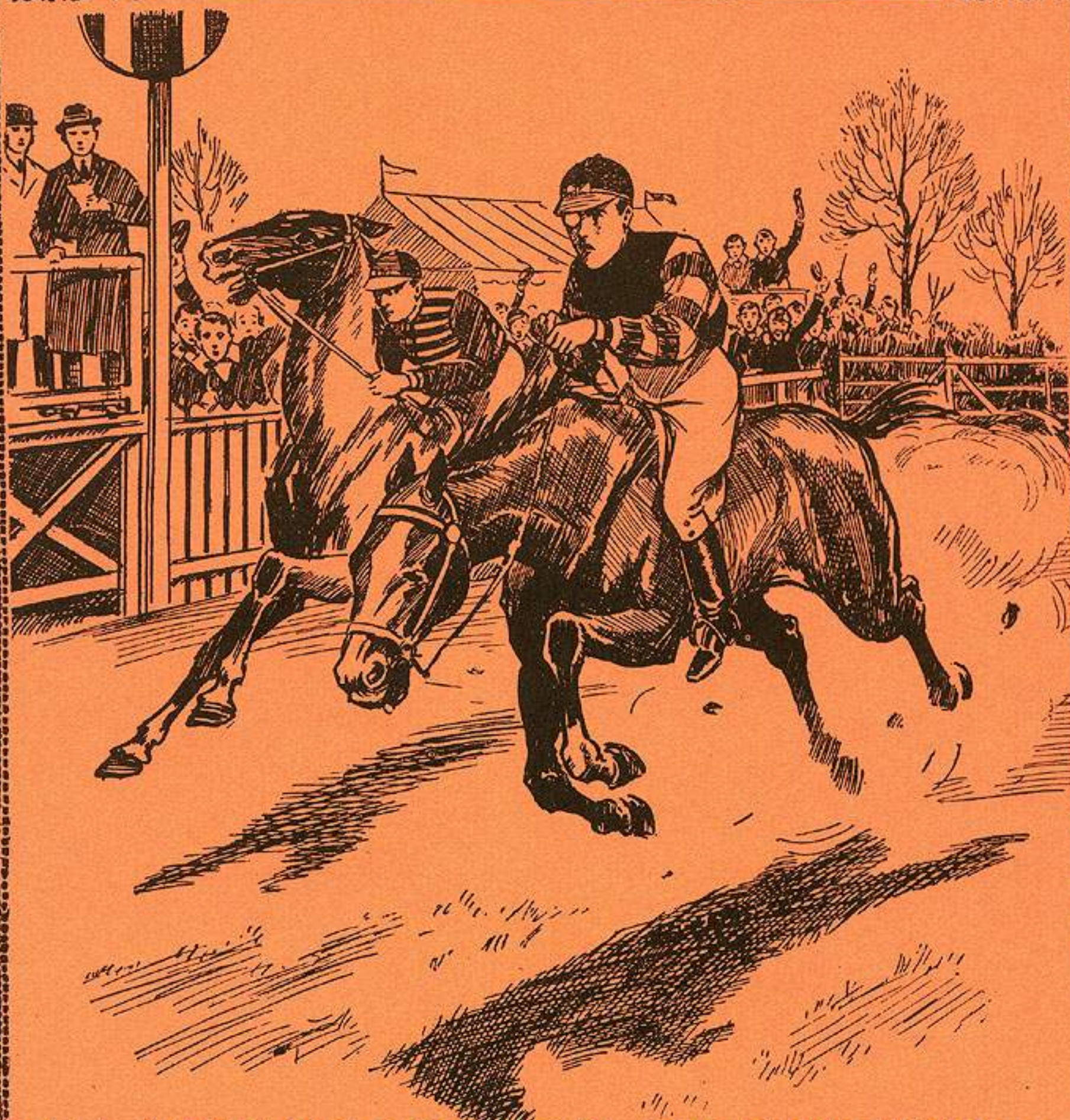
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