

£300 FOR CRICKET LOVERS! See Page 2!

No. 809. Vol. XXIV. Week ending August 11th, 1923.

# The Magnet 2<sup>d</sup>.

EVERY MONDAY

## Library of School & Detective Stories



BILLY BUNTER GETS LEFT!

SPECIAL FEATURE: GRAND NEW SERIES OF HIGHWAYMAN STORIES!





**YOUR LAST CHANCE!**

THOSE of my readers who have set their minds upon winning one of the valuable money prizes to be awarded in connection with our Grand Cricket Competition should remember that the closing date of the competition is August 16th. That means the coupon below appears in the MAGNET for the last time. Strike while the iron is hot, my chums, and forecast the positions of the cricket elevens mentioned as they will finish up at the end of the season. Bear well in mind whilst you are engaged upon this task that £300 is waiting to be won. With such a stimulus urging you on you may indeed prove true prophets.

**"BUNTER THE HUNTER!"**

That is the title of next Monday's magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. Determined to be

included in the party accompanying Sir James Vivian to his house in Cornwall, Billy Bunter tries every means in his power to accomplish that end. Needless to say, Harry Wharton & Co. are not a bit desirous of having their tame porpoise with them in the vacation—they see more than enough of him at Greyfriars—and they succeed on more than one occasion in throwing the fat and fatuous Billy off the scent. Like the proverbial bad, halfpenny, however, the Owl turns up when least expected, and the fun is fast and furious. You will find plenty to amuse you, my chums, in this coming story, so look out for it.

**"GALLOPING DICK!"**

The next sensational story dealing with the adventures of Dick Langley is a real scorcher. You will be able to visualise this gallant highwayman always turning a helping hand to the poor and the oppressed. Then, in a

flash, the cloak of gentleness disappears, and in its stead appears the man, hard as iron, up against big odds. Fearless and courteous, Galloping Dick can prove as terrible a foe as he is staunch a friend.

**"THE SILVER HAWK!"**

Ferrers Locke and young Jack Drake find themselves engaged on a case of extraordinary intricacy in next week's splendid detective story. It centres round the ever growing popular sport of motor racing. In every sport there are certain undesirable persons, whose shady actions mar what is otherwise a clean sheet, and in this go-ahead story of motor racing the world-famous detective and his plucky assistant are called in to protect the interests of a well-known firm of motor manufacturers. I will say no more—it would be a pity to spoil your appetites for the treat in store by giving away too much. Keep your peepers open for this next Owen Conquest story—you are certain to like it.

**A "SINGING" SUPPLEMENT!**

The above item completes the ripping, bumper programme for next Monday. The hard-working staff of the "Herald" has given us the amusing side of certain would-be vocalists at Greyfriars, and the result is distinctly pleasing.

**Your Editor.**

**THE LAST WEEK OF THIS GREAT CONTEST.**

**GREAT COMPETITION FOR CRICKET LOVERS!**

**FIRST PRIZE £100; SECOND PRIZE £50; THIRD PRIZE £30; and 120 Prizes of £1 each.**

**Can you forecast how the Counties are going to finish up?**

WE offer the above splendid prizes to the reader who is clever enough to send us a list showing exactly in what order the seventeen first-class County Cricket Clubs will stand at the end of the season. For your guidance we publish the order in which each of the clubs stood last year, which was as follows:

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Yorkshire.       | 10. Somerset.         |
| 2. Nottinghamshire. | 11. Derbyshire.       |
| 3. Surrey.          | 12. Warwickshire.     |
| 4. Kent.            | 13. Gloucestershire.  |
| 5. Lancashire.      | 14. Leicestershire.   |
| 6. Hampshire.       | 15. Northamptonshire. |
| 7. Middlesex.       | 16. Glamorgan.        |
| 8. Essex.           | 17. Worcestershire.   |
| 9. Sussex.          |                       |

What you have to do is to fill in on the coupon on this page your forecast of the order in which the counties will finish up. To the reader who does this correctly we shall award a prize of £100, and the other prizes in the order of the correctness of the forecasts.

In the case of ties, any or all of the prizes will be added together and divided, but the full amount of £300 will be awarded.

All forecasts must be submitted on coupons taken from this journal or from one of the other publications taking part in this contest.

You may send as many coupon-forecasts as you like.

They must all be addressed to "Cricket Competition," Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, and must reach that address not later than Thursday, August 16th.

The decision of the Editor in all matters concerning this competition must be accepted as final and binding, and entries will only be admitted on that understanding.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with "Football Favourite," "Sports Budget," "Young Britain," "Champion," "Boys' Realm," "Boys' Friend," "Popular," "Pluck," "Union Jack," "Rocket," "Nelson Lee Library," "Boys' Cinema," and "Gem," and readers of these journals are invited to compete.

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I forecast that the Counties will finish the season in this order:	
No. 1	
No. 2	
No. 3	
No. 4	
No. 5	
No. 6	
No. 7	
No. 8	
No. 9	
No. 10	
No. 11	
No. 12	
No. 13	
No. 14	
No. 15	
No. 16	
No. 17	
I enter "Cricket" Competition in accordance with the Rules as announced, and agree to abide by the published decision.	
Name	.....
Address	.....
.....	
M.	Closing date, August 16th, 1923.





William George Bunter thinks it a fine thing to be a baronet, but when the chance comes his way to strut the stage with a handle to his name, so to speak, the egregious Owl speedily begins to think that plain William George Bunter is good enough for him. The astonishing series of events bringing about this sudden change of mind is described in bright and breezy fashion by popular

**FRANK RICHARDS.**

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**Bunter Means Business!**

"BUNTER!" roared Bob Cherry. Billy Bunter, who was adorning the School House steps with his portly person, certainly heard the call. Half Greyfriars might have heard it, as a matter of fact. Bob Cherry's voice was own cousin to the celebrated voice of Stentor of old. But Billy Bunter heeded not. He leaned against the stone balustrade, with his straw hat on the back of his bullet head, and grinned.

"Bunter!"

Still Bunter did not heed.

"Seen that fat idiot Bunter?" came Bob's voice again, in tones of inquiry, within the house.

"Just outside, I believe," answered Wharton.

"Then why didn't the fat boulder answer?" growled Bob. And he came out in quest of Bunter.

"Didn't you hear me yell?" he demanded, as the Owl of the Remove grinned at him.

"I heard you, old bean," answered Bunter. "It's no go."

"Eh! What's no go?"

"Nothing doing!" grinned Bunter. "Run away and play!"

"You fat duffer!" said Bob in measured tones. "I don't know what you're driving at; but it doesn't matter, anyhow. Mauly asked me—"

"Mauly's asked you to go with him this afternoon?" exclaimed Bunter.

"No, ass! He's asked me—"

"I'm going!" said Bunter. "I don't think you fellows ought to butt in. Of course, old Brooke is bound to give him a good feed at Lantham. He'll be pleased if Mauleverer brings a pal with him. That's why I'm going. You fellows can go and play cricket."

"We're going to, ass," said Bob. "I was looking for you to tell you—"

"Oh, I know all about it!" grinned Bunter. "You want to pull my leg, and get me out of the way while Mauly clears off. I'm fly, you know! Well, I'm waiting here for Mauly to come out, and I'm not shifting. See?"

Bob Cherry laughed.

"I don't know where Mauly's going, and didn't know he was going anywhere," he said. "He's just asked me to—"

"Oh, I know what he's asked you," assented Bunter. "And you're not going to shift me. Mauly really wants me to go with him to meet his guardian, only he never does know his own mind."

"He's asked me—"

"Give it a miss, old chap," said Bunter. "You can talk till you're black in the face, but I'm not shifting. I'm waiting here till Mauly starts. I'm looking for the car. When the car comes for Mauly I'm going to be on the spot. See?"

"Will you let a chap finish?" shrieked Bob. "Mauly's asked me to tell you he wants to speak to you in his study."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

"That's all. Now go and eat coke!" said Bob Cherry. And he went down the steps and joined Johnny Bull and Hurree Janset Ram Singh in the quadrangle.

Billy Bunter gave a fat grin of satisfaction. Evidently he had not been expecting that message from Lord Mauleverer. Mauly had, hitherto, shown no enthusiasm whatever for Bunter's company that afternoon—rather the reverse. Bunter was pleased. He intended to join Mauly in the car, anyway; but it was quite nice for Mauly to want him.

Bunter rolled into the house, and paused there to speak to Wharton and Nugent of the Remove.

"You're playing cricket this afternoon, you fellows? You won't want your Sunday topper, Wharton?"

"Eh! As a rule I don't play cricket in my Sunday topper," answered the captain of the Remove.

"Then you can lend it to me."

"Bow-wow!"

"I suppose I can have your gold watch, Nugent?"

"Suppose again!" suggested Frank Nugent.

"You see, it's rather a special occasion," explained Bunter. "I'm going to meet a baronet."

"One of your titled relations?" asked Wharton with a laugh. "Well, you can borrow his hat and watch, if you like."

"One of Mauly's relations," said Bunter loftily. "Lord Mauleverer is waiting for the car to fetch him to Lantham. I'm going with him. I suppose I can have that topper?"

"You can suppose anything you like," said Wharton agreeably. "But if you touch my topper I shall touch you—hard."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"What's the matter with your own topper?" demanded Wharton.

"Well, it wants a lot of brushing, and it's never been the same since the toffee got on it," said Bunter. "I want to be decently dressed, meeting a baronet, you know. Mauly's asked me specially to go with him to meet his uncle."

"Gammon!"

"I mean he's just going to ask me. He's sent me a message to see him in his study. Can I have your topper, Nugent?"

"Just as much as you can have my gold watch," said Nugent, laughing.

"No more."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled away to the staircase, and ascended to the Remove passage. Fortunately, he knew where Wharton's best hat was kept, so if Wharton went down to the cricket before the car arrived that would be all right.

In the Remove passage he came on Sir Jimmy Vivian, the relative of the noble Mauly. Sir Jimmy gave him a grin.

"Mauly's waiting for you," he said. "Roll along."

"Are you coming to Lantham?" asked Bunter, blinking at him. Sir Jimmy, who was not always tidy, had a newly-swept and garnished look, and had clearly been taking unusual pains with his appearance.

"I'm going," answered Sir Jimmy.

"Well, I suppose there'll be room for three in the car," said Bunter. "I don't mind your coming, Vivian."

"Don't you really?" grinned Sir Jimmy.

"Not at all, old fellow," said Bunter affably. "Of course, I shouldn't take you to meet one of my titled relations."

"Oh, wouldn't you?" grunted Vivian.

"No. Couldn't be done, you know! My people are a bit particular," said Bunter. "But if Mauly chooses to take you to meet his uncle, it's no bizney of mine. You can drop your h's all over Lantham, if you like."

And Bunter rolled on to Lord Mauleverer's Study—No. 12 in the Remove—leaving Sir Jimmy Vivian glaring after him. Sir Jimmy doubled his fists, and took a step after Bunter, but he paused. He did not want to meet Sir Reginald

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Brooke that afternoon with signs of combat about him.

"The silly howl!" said Sir Jimmy to himself. "The 'orrid hass! Yah!"

Heedless of the schoolboy baronet, Billy Bunter rolled into Study No. 12. The door was open, and the key, for some reason, was in the outside of the lock. But the Owl of the Remove did not observe the latter fact. Lord Mauleverer was giving a final artistic touch to his necktie before the glass when Bunter rolled in.

"Here I am, old fellow!" said Bunter, giving his lordship a friendly poke in the ribs, which made his lordship give a convulsive jump and ejaculate "Ow!"

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Left Behind I

**L**ORD MAULEVERER turned and looked at Billy Bunter. He had finished the necktie, and was ready to start.

"Bob Cherry told me you wanted to speak to me here, old fellow," said Bunter. "Here I am, Mauly."

"Yaas," said Lord Mauleverer.

"When is the car coming?"

"Any minute now, dear boy."

"Good! I suppose it can wait a few minutes," said Bunter. "I—I want to get my best topper, and—and I'd rather wait till Wharton's gone down to the cricket."

Lord Mauleverer grinned. He could guess whose best topper Bunter had his eyes upon.

"Oh, never mind the topper, Bunter!" he said. "Take a pew, old bean."

Billy Bunter sat down, selecting Mauly's most comfortable armchair.

"Now, I had somethin' to say to you, Bunter," said Lord Mauleverer. "You know my guardian has written to me to meet him in Lantham this afternoon?"

"Yes, old chap."

"I never told you anythin' about it. It's surprisin' the way you get to know things, Bunter, isn't it?"

Billy Bunter grinned complacently.

"Precious little goes on that I don't know about," he remarked.

"Yaas, that's so. Horrid little pryin' beast, ain't you, old chap?"

"What?" roared Bunter.

"I—I mean to say, just so," said Lord Mauleverer hastily. "You know that Sir Reginald Brooke has asked me to turn up at the Lantham Royal Hotel, I dare say."

"Yes, I do!" grunted Bunter. "I happened to hear you speaking to Vivian—quite by chance, of course."

"And I dare say you know there'll be a spread, what?"

Bunter's eyes glistened behind his glasses.

"And somehow," continued Lord Mauleverer, "you seem to have got an idea into your head that you're goin'?"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"I should hate to chuck you out of the car," said his lordship. "You're too heavy for me to handle with any comfort, Bunter, especially on a warm day like this."

Billy Bunter glared at his lordship. This was not at all what he had expected to hear in Study No. 12.

"You're a sticker, ain't you, old bean?" said Mauleverer. "No good sayin' 'No' to you, is it, Bunter?"

"If you don't want my company this afternoon, Mauleverer, you can say so, I suppose," said Billy Bunter, with dignity.

"Right! I don't!"

"He, he, he!"

"Oh, gad! What are you cacklin' at, Bunter?"

"Your little joke, old fellow. I can take a joke, I hope."

"But I wasn't jokin'."

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. Evidently the Owl of the Remove was determined to persist in the view that Lord Mauleverer was joking. "It's all right, Mauly. I know what you mean, old man. I'm coming."

"The fact is, Bunter, my guardian has somethin' special to say to young Vivian. He's Vivian's guardian, too, you know."

"That's all right," said Bunter. "I don't mind."

"Oh, gad!"

"Of course, I'd rather you didn't take Vivian!" said Bunter. "I hardly care for his company."

"Oh!"

"Bit too common for me, you know," explained Bunter. "Of course, I know he's a baronet, not that I think much of baronets myself, with so many higher titles in my family. But his training, you know, Mauly. Really, Vivian is a bit thick, if you don't mind my mentioning it. Of course, it wasn't his fault that he was left an orphan in a slum, or something, without any money, and was brought up like a hooligan. Still, he's no class, isn't he? On the whole, Mauly, I'd prefer you to leave him out, as we're going to a rather swell place."

Lord Mauleverer gazed at Bunter in silence. His noble breath seemed to be taken away.

"Oh, gad!" he said at last faintly.

"That's how I look at it," continued Bunter cheerfully. "But, mind, I don't object to stretching a point to oblige a pal. If you want Vivian to come I'll stand him."

"You—you'll stand him?" gasped Mauleverer.

"I will," said Bunter generously.

"Dash it all, I'd do more than that for a pal. You might give him a hint not to cat with his knife, you know. I'll stand him. I'm not a snob."

"Oh, my hat!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Now, look here, Bunter! I knew you were watchin' for me to start, and I couldn't possibly have the trouble of kickin' you out of the car. You're too heavy."

"He, he, he!"

"So I sent you a message to come up here, old bean. I hope you'll find the study comfy this afternoon."

"Eh—what?"

"Good-bye!"

With a swiftness that was very unusual in his lazy lordship, Lord Mauleverer stepped out into the passage and jerked the door shut behind him. Bunter made a bound out of the armchair.

Click!

The key turned in the lock outside.

Bunter heard a gentle chuckle, and the sound of the key being withdrawn from the lock, and then the receding footsteps of Lord Mauleverer.

The Owl of the Remove grasped the door-knob and shook it furiously.

"Mauly!" he roared.

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

"You've locked me in."

"Yaas."

"You're not leaving me here!" roared Bunter.

"Yaas."

"Do you think I'm going to stay locked in this study while you're gone to Lantham?" shrieked Bunter.

"Yaas."

"Beast! I say, Mauly—"

But answer there came none. Lord Mauleverer was going downstairs.

"Mauly!" howled Bunter.

Bang, bang, bang!

The fat junior hammered furiously on the study door. He understood now why Lord Mauleverer had sent him that message to come up to Study No. 12. The Remove passage rang with the thundering on the door. But the door was securely locked, and remained fast. Billy Bunter was a prisoner.

Lord Mauleverer tripped gracefully down the stairs, and joined Sir Jimmy Vivian below.

"All safe?" grinned Sir Jimmy.

"Yaas."

"Lot of trouble for nothing, Mauly. You should 'ave left it to me to 'eave 'im out of the car."

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"Easy does it, dear boy," he answered. "Why heave him out of a car when it's just as easy to lock him in a study. Wharton, dear boy!"

"Hallo!" said the captain of the Remove. "Just off? Where's Bunter? Isn't he dogging you?"

"He's stayin' in my study for the afternoon," explained Mauleverer.

"What on earth for?"

"Because I've locked him in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Would you mind takin' charge of the key?" asked Mauleverer. "I might lose it. I'm always losin' things. I shall want the study again this evenin'. Only don't let Bunter out."

Harry Wharton laughed, and took the key.

"Right-ho!" he said.

"You might let him out about five o'clock, if you think of it," remarked Mauleverer. "Don't make a fag of it, of course. But if you happen to remember he's there, you know—and you happen to be indoors—you might let him out. Ta-ta!"

And Lord Mauleverer walked away with Sir Jimmy Vivian. The car from Lantham was at the gates, and it was soon rolling away with his lordship and Sir Jimmy. Harry Wharton & Co. went down to the cricket. And in Lord Mauleverer's study Billy Bunter alternatively hammered on the door and howled through the keyhole, in a state of mind that grew more and more Hunnish with every passing moment.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Remorseless!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. were playing the Shell that afternoon, and the Shell cricketers gave the Removites plenty to think about.

It was natural, therefore, that the captain of the Remove should forget that such a person as Billy Bunter existed within the limits of the solar system. So far from remembering his existence at five o'clock and going to the School House to let him out, Wharton was at that moment engaged in a hard innings against Hobson's bowling. And as the game was not likely to finish much before dark, it was probable that William George Bunter was booked to remain in the study until Lord Mauleverer's return.

The feelings of the fat junior were really indescribable when he realised that Mauly had gone and left him behind. He hammered at the door till he was tired, and howled through the keyhole whenever he heard a passing step. But his

**You want a good laugh? Then read "Bunter the Hunter!"**



howls were only answered by chuckles; the Remove fellows seemed to think there was something funny in his imprisonment. Besides, they could not have helped him without the key.

So the hapless Owl of the Remove made up his mind to it at last, and ceased to hammer and howl. A search in the study cupboard revealed the remains of a cake—which did not remain long! Two or three bottles of ginger-beer followed the cake, and then Bunter found a box of chocolates. After the chocolates had been disposed of, and as there was nothing more to eat or drink, Bunter hammered on the door again, and gave another howl or two through the keyhole. Then he roamed round the study like a very fat caged lion.

He stopped at the window and blinked out into the sunshine. There was thick ivy on the wall below, and an active fellow with a nerve of iron could have climbed down. Bunter was not an active fellow, and his nerve resembled wax rather than iron. But he blinked thoughtfully at the ivy through his big spectacles.

"I'll jolly well chance it!" he murmured. "If I fall and get killed then Mauly will be sorry he played this trick on me. He'll suffer from remorse, the beast!"

This was quite an attractive prospect—for a moment. But only for a moment. Bunter valued his fat neck at a much higher rate than the pleasure of inflicting remorse upon Lord Mauleverer.

He turned away from the window. There was nothing more to eat or drink, and he could not get out; so, obviously, the only thing to be done was to sleep. Sleep was the third pleasure of Bunter's happy life—eating coming first, and drinking second. Fortunately, Mauly's luxurious sofa was very soft and comfortable, and there were downy cushions. Bunter arranged a cushion for his head and another for his feet, and stretched his fat person on the sofa and slumbered. Through the study rumbled a deep and resonant snore.

Bunter was still snoring at six o'clock when a car stopped at the gates of Greyfriars, and Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian stepped out. They walked cheerily to the School House, and came up to the study. Sir Jimmy was looking particularly cheerful, as if he had heard some good news from his guardian at Lantham. As a matter of fact, he had.

Lord Mauleverer turned the door-handle, but the door, of course, did not open; it was still locked. From within there came a sound like the grunting and growling of some animal.

"That's Bunter!" grinned Vivian. "Snoring!"

"By gad! I forgot the door was locked," said Mauleverer. "Wharton can't have let him out!"

Sir Jimmy chuckled. "Poor old Bunter!" sighed his lordship. "He's been a jolly old prisoner all the afternoon. Cut off and ask Wharton for the key, Jimmy."

"Right-ho!"

Sir Jimmy started for the cricket-ground. Lord Mauleverer tapped on the door.

"Bunter! Wake up, Bunter!"

"Groogh! Ooooooh! Is that you, you beast?"

"Yaas."

"Let me out, you rotter!"

"Vivian's gone for the key," said Lord Mauleverer soothingly. "Won't be a few minutes, old tulip."

"I was going to get out of the window,

Mauly! Suppose I had broken my neck?"

"No such luck, old bean."

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

Lord Mauleverer chuckled. "Open that door at once, Mauly, you rotter!"

"Waitin' for the key."

"Then I'll jolly well climb out of the window."

"Go it, old top!"

"Mind, I mean it!"

"So do I!" said Lord Mauleverer cheerfully.

There was a slam as the window was thrown up. Lord Mauleverer started for a moment, and then he grinned. Billy Bunter was about the last fellow in the world to take such a risky climb.

"I'm going, Mauly!"

"Carry on, old top!"

"Good-bye, in case I'm killed!"

"Good-bye!" said Lord Mauleverer with undiminished cheerfulness.

Silence in the study. Lord Mauleverer leaned on the door and waited for Sir Jimmy to return. In a few minutes the schoolboy baronet came scudding back with the key.

"Here you are, Mauly!"

"Good!"

Sir Jimmy unlocked the door and threw it open. Then he stared round the study. The window was wide open, the curtains fluttering a little in the summer breeze. There was no sign of Bunter.

"By gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

"He can't 'ave climbed out of the

winder!" exclaimed Sir Jimmy. "He wouldn't 'ave the nerve."

Vivian ran to the window and looked down. There was no climber clinging to the ivy, and no sign of a body on the ground far below. Lord Mauleverer looked round the study.

From beneath the end of the sofa a foot was sticking out, and Mauly grinned as he noted it. Bunter, hidden under the sofa, was quite unconscious of the fact that one foot was in full view. The open window and the empty study were designed to give Lord Mauleverer the scare of his life. But Billy Bunter, though a great schemer, was not a successful schemer.

Vivian turned back from the window, and Lord Mauleverer pointed to the foot and made a sign of silence. Vivian grinned.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Lord Mauleverer. "He's done it! Of course, he couldn't climb! Bound to fall! Fancy Bunter breakin' his neck under our study window, Jimmy!"

Under the sofa, Billy Bunter grinned maliciously. His lordship was scared!

"Hawful!" said Sir Jimmy solemnly.

"Awful, dear boy—not awful," said his lordship mildly. "Ought we to go down and gather up the body, Jimmy? I'm rather tired."

"Same 'ere," said Sir Jimmy.

Bunter could scarcely believe his ears. He had never dreamed that Mauly could be so heartless as this.

"After all, if he's fallen from the window he's past help, so there's no use goin' down," said Mauleverer. "It's



"After all, if Bunter's fallen from the window," said Mauly, drawing Vivian's attention to the foot sticking out from under the sofa, "it's not much use goin' down to gather up the bits, and I feel rather tired."

"Same 'ere!" grinned Sir Jimmy. (See Chapter 3.)



sad, Jimmy Bunter was expectin' a postal-order, you know! Now he's gone before it's arrived—after waitin' for it whole terms! It's very sad!"

"Beast!" murmured Bunter under his breath.

"Orrid!" grinned Sir Jimmy.

"But it will be a relief, won't it?" went on his lordship, sitting down on the sofa. "I'm sure that if Bunter was still living he would want to hook on to the holiday party in Cornwall—what?"

"Sure to!" chuckled Vivian.

"So perhaps it's all for the best," said Lord Mauleverer. "It would be no end of trouble dodgin' him at the end of the term. Couldn't lock him in the study when the school breaks up, could we? So perhaps it's all for the best. Then we must think of his people, too! How nice for them not to have Bunter home for the holidays any more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Sir Jimmy.

"Fact is, Bunter's done a really popular thing," said Lord Mauleverer thoughtfully. "He didn't mean it that way, of course, but he has! If it wasn't too late, I'd like to thank him."

"Beast!" came a roar from under the sofa. Bunter could stand this heartless talk no longer.

"By gad! That sounds like Bunter's voice!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Must be his ghost."

"Yah! Rotter!" howled Bunter. "You'd like me to break my neck, wouldn't you, you awful, unfeeling beast! Yah!"

Bunter rolled out from under the sofa.

He picked himself up, set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and glared at Lord Mauleverer. Mauly eyed him lazily.

"Begad, is that you, Bunter, or your ghost?" he asked.

"Me, you beast!"

"But haven't you broken your neck?" asked Mauly, looking puzzled. "Didn't you fall from the window?"

"Yah!"

"You've taken us in, Bunter! You're always takin' somebody in. You've done this just to raise our hopes and then dash them to the ground again," said Lord Mauleverer reproachfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Sir Jimmy, greatly entertained by the expression on Bunter's fat countenance.

"You—you—you awful beast!" spluttered Bunter. "I—I thought you'd be stricken with remorse. Any fellow would be."

"Why?" asked Mauly innocently. "You made me believe you'd done a really kind and popular action—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And now you've disappointed me. I'm shocked at you, Bunter."

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "You—you believed I'd fallen from the window and got killed, and you—you—"

"Well, I didn't quite believe it, you know," said Lord Mauleverer amiably. "Next time you fall from a window, dear boy, don't leave one hoof stickin' out from under the sofa."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Sir Jimmy.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "You—you knew! You spoofing beast! You knew I was under the sofa all the time!"

"He's guessed it!" said Lord Mauleverer admiringly. "What a brain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter shook his fat fist at Lord Mauleverer's gently smiling face and rolled out of the study.

"Dear me!" said Mauly. "Bunter doesn't seem very friendly now; he

seems quite unfriendly, in fact. That's rather nice. I hope he'll keep it up."

But that hope was ill-founded. So long as Mauly remained an earl and a millionaire he was not likely to escape the devoted friendship of William George Bunter.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### A Man of Property!

"SUPPER in Mauly's study!" said Harry Wharton.

"Good!"

"The goodfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Singh. "The esteemed Mauly is the right peg in the round hole, as the proverb says. Let us come down on Mauly like the Assyrian on the fold of the wolves."

The Famous Five walked along to Study No. 12. The cricket match had outlasted the light, and had been left unfinished. The Famous Five had had a very scratch tea, and they were quite ready for a good supper, and supper with Mauly was always good.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Here we are, Mauly!"

"Trickle in, old tops!"

"All ready," said Sir Jimmy Vivian, "and blooming good."

"Not bloomin', dear boy!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer. "Jolly good, if you like. Awfully good. Any old thing. Not bloomin', for goodness' sake!"

"Jest as you like, Mauly," said Sir Jimmy. "What I mean is, you blokes, it's spiffing."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Spiffing all right, Mauly?" asked Vivian.

"Oh dear! Not quite. Make it rippin'."

"Ripping, then," said Sir Jimmy.

"It's blooming ripping."

Lord Mauleverer let it go at that. His

rather peculiar relative was too much for Mauly sometimes.

The supper in Study No. 12 deserved all Sir Jimmy's varied adjectives. Harry Wharton & Co. sat down to it with great satisfaction. Sir Jimmy Vivian thoughtfully turned the key in the door.

"Seen your jolly old uncle?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Yaas. He's sent you fellows his kindest regards," said Lord Mauleverer.

"And he's told me about my property!" said Sir Jimmy Vivian, rather loftily.

"Your property?" repeated Johnny Bull.

"Just that. My property in Cornwall."

"Didn't know you had any," said Bob. "Congratters, old man. Pass the cake this way."

"Well, I didn't know I 'ad any," confessed Sir Jimmy. "But I 'ave, 'aven't I, Mauly?"

"Yass."

"A blooming old 'ouse," said Sir Jimmy impressively, "hundreds of years old, called—what's it called, Mauly?"

"Pengarth."

"That's it—Pengarth," said Sir Jimmy.

"That sounds Cornish," said Harry Wharton. "But how did it come about?"

"It's nunky's doin'," said Lord Mauleverer. "The property's been in chancery for donkey's years, but it ought really to have come to Jimmy's father. Nunky has been kickin' the lawyers for years, it turns out now, and at last he's got it handed over to Jimmy—or, rather, to himself, as Jimmy's guardian. Rippin', isn't it?"

"Top-hole!" said Wharton heartily.

"That's jolly good news, Vivian."

"Yes, ain't it?" said the schoolboy baronet. "Blooming top-hole—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But why didn't Vivian's father put in for it if he had a claim?" asked Nugent.

"He was too busy painting the town red, from what I've 'eard of 'im," said Sir Jimmy, with a grin. "He was a goer, my dad was. No end of a son-of-a-gun. Course, I 'ardly remember him, but I know he spent every blessed cent and left me on my uppers—where I'd be now but for Mauly's uncle. Fancy me selling pipers—"

"Papers, old bean!" murmured Mauleverer.

"Well, I said pipers," said Sir Jimmy innocently. "Me selling pipers for a living, when I was a blooming baronet and never knowed it! And now it turns out I've got property, too! Old nunky is a good sort. Course, he ain't my uncle really, only a distant relation; but that makes it all the better of him to take so much trouble about a cove, don't it?"

"Yes, rather."

"And what's the property like?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Well, it ain't worth much in the way of money," confessed Sir Jimmy. "Still, it's my property in Cornwall."

"A jolly old house," said Lord Mauleverer. "It's been standin' for hundreds of years, an' belonged to a branch of the Vivians that has died out. It's been in chancery a long time. There's a big old stone house backin' on a huge cliff, and a bit of land, mostly rocks, I think. The house is partly ruined, but there's a sort of caretaker living there—man named something or

## LOOK, CHUMS!

£10! £10! £10!

### RESULT OF ESSEX

#### PICTURE-PUZZLE COMPETITION!

In this competition one competitor sent in a correct solution of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to:

**ALICE PACE,**

73, Grove Street,

Leek, Staffs.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided between the following two competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

H. G. Jeffrey, 14, Park Street, Southend-on-Sea.

Alex. Shaw, 61, Pontypridd Road, Porth, Glam.

Twenty-nine competitors, with two errors each, divide the ten prizes of 5s. each. The names and addresses of these prizewinners can be obtained on application at this office.

### SOLUTION.

The Essex club is at present having a stiff job to keep its head above water, owing to the sale of the Leyton ground, and the loss of numerous members. Essex was promoted to first-class rank nearly 30 years ago. Its defeats outnumber its triumphs, but the club has a fine history. Russell, the South African test match hero, is the leading batsman.

Determined to be included in the party visiting Cornwall—



other—Kelly, or Kinks, or somethin’

“Keeley!” said Sir Jimmy.

“Yaas, Keeley! This old chap served the last owner years an’ years ago, and hung on to look after the house. It’s jolly lonely. The nearest village is half a mile away, across a bay. It’s somewhere near Land’s End, or else it isn’t near Land’s End—I forget which.”

“Not much difference!” remarked Nugent.

“Well! it’s somewhere,” said Lord Mauleverer, “and now it’s fixed that it belongs to Jimmy, nunky has an idea that it would be a jolly good place to spend a few weeks of the summer vacation.”

“Good wheeze—what?” said Sir Jimmy.

“It would practically be campin’ out,” said Lord Mauleverer. “Swimmin’ and boatin’ and climbin’; all sorts of deeds of derring-do, you know; caves to explore, where the jolly old smugglers used to smug—the very thing you fellows would like. If you’re not fixed up for the holidays, how’d you like to try it on?”

“Do!” said Sir Jimmy. “Nunky’s told Keeley to get the place ready and ordered in tons of grub and things. I’m going, of course, and I’d like you fellows to come.”

“Nunky thinks it would do me good,” said Lord Mauleverer, with a sigh. “I told him I wasn’t good at campin’ out and roughin’ it. But I can’t let Jimmy go on his own. He must have somebody to look after him.”

“Course you’re coming,” said the baronet. “It’ll do you all the good in the world makin’ your own bed and cooking your own grub.”

Lord Mauleverer shuddered.

“My hat! It sounds rather a good thing,” said Bob Cherry. “We haven’t settled yet where we’re going, only we’re all going together. We’ve settled that much.”

“Think it over,” said Lord Mauleverer. “I could trust Jimmy with you, and then—”

“You’re coming, too!” said Sir Jimmy decidedly. “You’re not going to slack around, Mauly. It’ll do you good.”

“Yaas; but—”

Harry Wharton glanced at his chums. The idea had appealed favourably to the Famous Five. There was a general nodding of heads.

“Done!” said Wharton. “We’ll come, with pleasure. And we’ll make you lead a strenuous life, Mauly.”

“My dear chap—”

“Up with the sun, you know,” chuckled Bob Cherry. “Ten mile walk before brekker—”

“Oh dear!”

“I say, you fellows!” The door-handle was rattled, and the voice of Billy Bunter was heard through the keyhole. “I say, I’ll come!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“You jolly well won’t!” roared Sir Jimmy wrathfully. “Gerraway from that keyhole, you fat snail!”

“Oh, really, Jimmy—”

“If you call me Jimmy, I’ll come out to you with the poker!”

“I’m coming, Jimmy, old fellow,” said Bunter. “Bless you, I’m not a snob! I don’t mind if you drop your h’s all over Cornwall, from Devonshire to Land’s End.”

“Why, I—I—you wait a tick while I get the poker!” gasped Sir Jimmy.

He made a jump for the fender, and another jump for the door. But Billy



“Why—what—” ejaculated Bunter, amazed by Scaife’s strange proceedings. “What—oh—ah—help!” That was all the fat junior had time for. The chloroformed pad was pressed over his face and he relapsed into unconsciousness. (See Chapter 7.)

Bunter jumped first; and the passage was empty when the schoolboy baronet looked out.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Obliges!

“VIVIAN!”

“Yessir!”

Mr. Quelch stood at the door of his study, and his glance dwelt benignantly on Vivian of the Remove. It was a golden summer’s afternoon, and lessons were over at Greyfriars.

“My dear Vivian,” said Mr. Quelch, “you should say, ‘Yes, sir,’ not ‘Yessir!’”

“Yessir!” said Sir Jimmy obediently. “You should divide the two words, Vivian.”

“Yessir!”

Mr. Quelch gave it up. A good deal of Greyfriars would be required before the schoolboy baronet quite got over the effects of his peculiar early training.

“I require a registered letter to be taken to the post-office, Vivian,” said the master of the Remove. “If you are not otherwise engaged, you may take it for me.”

“Yessir!”

As a matter of actual fact, Sir Jimmy Vivian was otherwise engaged. But he never dreamed of telling Mr. Quelch so. A Form master’s requests were like the requests of Royalty, and amounted to commands.

“Very good. Here is the letter, Vivian.”

Mr. Quelch handed a sealed envelope to the schoolboy baronet.

“You will register the letter, and bring me the receipt, Vivian,” he said. “Here is a shilling.”

“Yessir!” said Sir Jimmy, again without dividing the two words.

And he trotted away with the letter.

“Oh, here you are, old fellow!” said Lord Mauleverer, as the schoolboy baronet came out of the house. “Waitin’ for you.”

Sir Jimmy held up the letter.

“I can’t come out in the boat, Mauly. Mr. Quelch has asked me to take this down to Friardale.”

“Oh, gad! What a life!” said Mauleverer. “Get some other fellow to take it, dear boy!”

“Would that do?” asked Sir Jimmy.

“Yaas, of course it would! Here’s Skinner! Let’s ask Skinner. I say, Skinner, old bean.”

Harold Skinner stopped.

“Goin’ down to the village?” asked Lord Mauleverer.

“No!” answered Skinner.

“How would you like to take this dashed letter to the post-office and register it for Mr. Quelch?” asked Lord Mauleverer.

Skinner grinned.

“Not the least little bit in the world,” he answered.

“It would be an obligin’ thing to do,” urged Mauleverer. “You’re only slackin’ round doin’ nothin’, old bean.”

—Billy Bunter proves a difficult customer to get rid of!



"And I'm going on doing it!" said Skinner.

"Why not make yourself useful for once?" suggested Mauly. "That ought to be your object, really."

"Eh! Why?"

"Because you couldn't be ornamental, you know, anyhow."

Skinner snorted and stalked away. Ornamental or not, he evidently did not want to be useful.

"Oh dear!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Let's ask some other beast. I say, Squiff! Stop a minute, Field!"

Sampson Quincy Ifley Field stopped. "Busy?" asked Mauleverer.

"I'm going down to the cricket," answered the Australian junior.

"Like to walk down to Friardale instead, with this letter?"

"Thanks, no!"

And Squiff walked on.

"Blessed if I knew what a lazy lot they are at Greyfriars!" murmured his lordship. "Hallo, here's Bunter! Bunter, old bean!"

Billy Bunter rolled up eagerly.

"I'll go!" he said.

"Thanks! You won't mind?"

"Not at all. Count on me," said Bunter. "I'm your man, Mauly. We've always been good pals, haven't we?"

"Have we?" said Lord Mauleverer. "I didn't know it, but I dare say we have as you say so. I suppose you know what you're talkin' about."

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Well, here's the letter," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Eh! What letter?"

"Mr. Quelch's letter, to be registered. Didn't you just say you'd go?" demanded his lordship.

"Eh! I was speaking of going to Pengarth—"

"Pengarth?"

"Yes, for the vacation."

"You silly ass!" howled his lordship.

"Isn't that what you called me for?" demanded Bunter indignantly.

"No, you plump owl! I want some silly ass to take this dashed letter to Friardale and register it."

"Take it yourself, and be blowed!" said Billy Bunter.

"Hold on a minute, old fat bean," said Lord Mauleverer, as the Owl of the Remove was rolling away. "Aren't you expectin' a postal-order?"

Bunter turned back at once.

"Yes, rather, Mauly, old man! One of my titled relations is sending me a postal-order for—for two pounds."

"For what?"

"I—I mean a pound," said Bunter, moderating his transports, so to speak. "If you'll cash it for me Mauly—"

"Aren't you expectin' a postal-order for half-a-crown?" asked Lord Mauleverer genially.

Bunter blinked at him searchingly. He realised that Mauleverer was good for half-a-crown, but not for a "quid." So he nodded.

"Yes; I'm expecting several, as a matter of fact," he said. "One of them is for half-a-crown, Mauly."

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"Well, I'll cash that one, if you'll take this letter down to Friardale and register it, Bunter."

The Owl of the Remove shook his head.

"I'm afraid I couldn't accept it on those terms, Mauly. But if you like to oblige me by cashing my postal-order, I'll take the letter to the post-office to oblige you."

"Oh, my 'at!" said Sir Jimmy Vivian.

"Ain't that a blooming distinction without a blooming difference?"

"You wouldn't understand," said Bunter loftily. "Is it a go, Mauly?"

"Yaas," said his lordship. "Here's the letter, and here's the half-crown, and here's Quelch's bob to pay the register fee. Mind you don't spend Quelch's bob at Uncle Clegg's by mistake."

"For goodness' sake, register the letter first!" said Sir Jimmy anxiously. "Quelch would be in a fearful wax."

"I hope I'm a fellow to be trusted with money!" said Billy Bunter haughtily.

"Oh, ah, yaas!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "Certainly!"

"Oh, my 'at!" said Sir Jimmy again.

"I'm quite glad to oblige you, Mauly," said Bunter genially. "You don't mind waiting till to-morrow for the postal-order?"

"Not at all!" grinned his lordship.

"Right-ho! I'm off, then."

Bunter put the letter into his pocket and started. Relieved of that responsibility, Sir Jimmy Vivian walked down to the boathouse with Lord Mauleverer, and they pushed out Mauly's handsome skiff. There Lord Mauleverer stretched himself on cushions in the stern, while Sir Jimmy handled the oars. This was his lordship's way of taking boating exercise.

The transference of Mr. Quelch's letter to Billy Bunter's charge was a matter of small moment. But, as it happened, that simple transaction was to have very startling consequences—especially for Bunter.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### The Man in Black!

DR. LOCKE the Head of Greyfriars, glanced at a card Trotter had brought in and gave a nod. "Show in Mr. Scaife, Trotter."

With a gentle sigh, Dr. Locke laid down "Septem contra Thebam," marking his place carefully, and rose courteously as his visitor was shown in.

Mr. Scaife was a little gentleman in black, and carried a little black bag in his hand. He looked as if he had come from a solicitor's office. The black bag was in one hand, and a rather rusty bowler hat in the other.

"Dr. Locke?" asked Mr. Scaife.

"Precisely! May I ask—"

"I have called on the instructions of Sir Reginald Brooke, sir, to see Master Vivian," said Mr. Scaife.

"Vivian of the Remove?" said the Head.

"Yes, sir. No doubt you are aware that the Pengarth property, lately in Chancery, is now established to be the property of Sir James Vivian, a junior boy in this school."

"I had not heard of it," said the Head.

"It is Sir Reginald's wish that Master Vivian should be shown certain plans and documents relating to the property," explained Mr. Scaife. "Mr. Viney, Sir Reginald's solicitor, has sent me down for the purpose."

"Oh, quite so!" said the Head. "You may see the boy at once. He is doubtless near at hand."

Dr. Locke touched a bell, and Trotter appeared.

"Request Mr. Quelch to step here, Trotter, if convenient."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, arrived in the Head's study. Mr.

Scaife, in the meantime, had accepted the Head's polite invitation to be seated, and was sitting silent and bolt upright, a good deal like a rusty-black graven image.

Dr. Locke explained to Mr. Quelch what was wanted.

"Doubtless you will arrange for Mr. Scaife to see Vivian, Mr. Quelch?" he concluded, with one eye on his fascinating Greek volume on the writing-table.

"Certainly, sir! But I fear there will be some delay," said Mr. Quelch. "Vivian has gone to Friardale."

"Dear me! How unfortunate!"

"I have sent him to the post-office to register a letter," explained Mr. Quelch. "He may be back in half an hour—though, of course, as he is free till call-over he may remain out of gates."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head. "This is very awkward for you, Mr. Scaife."

"I am sorry!" added Mr. Quelch politely.

Mr. Scaife rose.

"Not at all, gentlemen," he said. "Perhaps Mr. Viney should have written to make an appointment. It is of no consequence; I can call on another occasion."

"It is a somewhat long distance from London," said the Head. "If you would prefer to wait—"

"I think not, sir, as I have a train to catch."

"I will, if you prefer it, send some boy to find Vivian, and it is possible that—"

Mr. Scaife seemed to reflect.

"Certainly it is awkward," he said. "I am instructed to show these plans of his property to Master Vivian. May I ask how long he has been gone, sir?"

"Not more than twenty minutes," said the Remove master. "Probably he has hardly reached the post-office yet. I will ask one of the junior boys to go on a bicycle and find him if you like."

Mr. Scaife shook his head. "Perhaps I had better call again, and I will ask Mr. Viney to write to Dr. Locke, making an appointment with the boy," he said. "I am sorry to have troubled you, gentlemen."

"Not at all!"

Mr. Scaife faded out of the study.

Trotter showed him out, and the little man in black walked away to the gates, his existence being forgotten in a very few moments by the Head and the Remove master. They attached no importance to the visit of the shabby solicitor's clerk.

But Mr. Scaife, in his own way, was worth remembering.

He quitted Greyfriars, and walked quickly down the road towards the village. A hundred yards or so from the gates a car was backed into a little ratty lane.

Mr. Scaife hurried up to the car; and the chauffeur, a burly man with a thick beard, gave him an inquiring look.

"You've seen him, Scaife?"

"No. As it happens, Vivian has been sent to the post-office in the village," said Scaife in a low voice. "It may happen all the better for our purpose, Hawes."

"How?"

"I wanted only to see the boy, so that I could watch for him and recognise him, and find a favourable opportunity. This may be the opportunity ready made," said Scaife. "Get along to the village, and we will see."

"Right!" said Hawes.

Scaife stepped into the car, and in a

Time and again the "Co." throw Billy off the scent—



few moments Hawes had turned it into the road, and started for Friardale.

Mr. Quelch and the Head, who had forgotten all about Mr. Scaife by that time, would certainly have been very astonished could they have heard that colloquy, and seen Mr. Scaife's further proceedings.

Sitting in the car as it glided towards the village, he opened the black bag, and from a recess in it drew a wad of cotton-wool and a little bottle. These he placed in a corner of the seat, evidently ready for use, with the bag screening them from sight.

Having thus made his preparations, Scaife watched the road as the car ran on to the village.

A schoolboy came swinging along, whistling, and the car stopped. Mr. Scaife put his head out of the window.

"Master Vivian!" he called.

The schoolboy looked at him.

"You are Master Vivian of Greyfriars, I think?" said Scaife.

The junior grinned.

"No jolly fear! I'm not a Greyfriars chap! Wouldn't be found dead at Greyfriars!"

And Monson of Highcliffe walked on loftily.

The car moved on again, Scaife still watching the road. The car halted at the village post-office.

After a glance round Scaife entered the post-office—which, like most establishments of the kind in small villages, was also a shop. There were two or three customers at the grocery counter, and a fat junior in spectacles at the post-office desk.

The postmaster was weighing a letter on the scales. Scaife's eyes glittered.

He had little doubt now that he had found the person he sought. Vivian's Form master had said that he had sent Vivian to the village post-office to register a letter.

"Ninepence!" said the postmaster.

The fat junior paid for the letter and took the receipt, which he put in his pocket.

Then he turned round and rolled from the shop without even a blink at Scaife. Scaife followed him out.

He made a rapid sign to Hawes, who was sitting at the wheel in the car. Then he touched the fat junior on the elbow.

"Excuse me, Sir James—" he said respectfully.

### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

#### Bunter Asks For It!

**B**ILLY BUNTER glanced round. Having registered Mr. Quelch's letter, Bunter was about to start for Uncle Clegg's, to expend Mauly's half-crown in refreshments, liquid and solid. He blinked at Scaife in surprise.

"Eh, what?" he said.

Why the little man in black should address him as Sir James was a mystery to Bunter; but he was quite pleased. Evidently this very respectful man took him for a person of title.

That was natural enough, Billy Bunter being such a very distinguished-looking fellow—at all events, in his own estimation.

And Bunter liked being treated with respect. He very seldom was.

"I called at the school to see you, Sir James," said Mr. Scaife. "I have some information to give you with regard to your new property in Cornwall."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

He understood then.

For some inexplicable reason this little man in black was taking him for Sir Jimmy Vivian.

It was a natural enough mistake on Mr. Scaife's part, as Sir Jimmy was supposed to be at the post-office registering a letter. It was not likely to occur to him that, unknown to Mr. Quelch, Vivian had passed that task on to another fellow.

But sure as he was that he had found Vivian, Scaife was seeking for the schoolboy to confirm him on that point. Had Bunter answered that he was mistaken, all would have been well—for Bunter.

But Bunter didn't!

The inquisitiveness which was the dominating trait in Bunter's character came to the fore.

If this little man in black had information to give, Bunter was quite prepared to receive the information. Having received it, he could then mention that he wasn't Vivian.

That was just like William George Bunter!

"You will excuse my speaking to you here, Sir James," went on Scaife, with deep respect. "But as I have come so great a distance to see you, sir—"

"Oh! Ah! Yes!" mumbled Bunter.

"Perhaps you would step into the car, sir," suggested Scaife. "If you like, I can run you back to Greyfriars, if I'm not taking a liberty, sir."

"My dear man, that's all right," said

Bunter affably. "I'll be jolly glad to get out of the walk. Only—"

"Yes, sir."

"I—I've got an appointment over the way—sha'n't keep you a few minutes." Bunter remembered the half-crown and Uncle Clegg.

"Very well, sir. I will wait. I am entirely at your orders, Sir James."

"Right-ho," said Bunter, with a patronising nod. "Won't keep you long."

And the Owl of the Remove dodged into Uncle Clegg's little shop, where he lost no time in expending Mauly's half-crown. Curiosity as to Sir Jimmy's affairs was strong, but tuck came first.

Two shillings and sixpence vanished in record time; and then Bunter considered the threepence change out of Mr. Quelch's shilling. That threepence belonged to the Remove master. But the Remove master, of course, would expect Vivian to bring him the change, along with the registered receipt. Well, Vivian could do it—he couldn't expect Bunter to bother about a few coppers. Having decided that he would be quite justified in expending the threepence, Bunter expended it promptly. Then he rolled out of the shop, happy and sticky.

Meanwhile, Scaife had exchanged a few words with Hawes, the chauffeur.

"Easier than I thought—easier than I could have hoped. When he's in the car, take the road to Greyfriars, and turp at the first turning."

"You're sure he's Vivian?"

"Oh, yes!"



Scaife was about to close the door when Bunter put his foot in the way. "You keep on calling me Vivian!" he howled. "I'm Bunter—not Sir James Vivian!" The man made a threatening gesture with the stick. "Silence, Sir James!" he said. (See Chapter 10.)

—but, like the proverbial bad ha'penny, he turns up again!



"Good!"

Billy Bunter reappeared from Uncle Clegg's, and came over to the car.

"Ready!" he announced.

Scaife opened the door of the car.

"Please step in, Sir James."

Bunter rolled in, and Mr. Scaife followed him, closing the door of the car. The engine was already throbbing, and the car started at once.

Scaife's eyes glittered as he looked at the schoolboy.

His success had been easy—absurdly easy! Not a hitch from beginning to end. Now that the junior was in the car, he was in the kidnapper's hands, and there was no escape for him—no chance of help once they were outside the village. Mr. Scaife felt satisfied.

Billy Bunter was feeling very satisfied, too.

He was getting a free ride back to the school, and Bunter hated walking. He was going to learn particulars of another fellow's affairs, that did not concern him in the very least. And—for a short time, at least—he was going to be treated with the respect due to a baronet of the United Kingdom.

Bunter settled himself back in the car comfortably, and blinked at Mr. Scaife.

"Better get on with it," he said. "I—I shall be pretty busy when we get to the school. You were going to tell me—"

Bunter's actual thought was that when they got to the school, he would be revealed as Billy Bunter, after which the man in black certainly would not tell him anything about Vivian's affairs. In fact, it was Bunter's intention to disappear promptly, as soon as the car stopped at Greyfriars, leaving the man in black to learn at his leisure that his leg had been pulled.

"Yes, certainly, Sir James!" said Scaife.

He glanced out of the window.

The car was already leaving the village behind, and rushing out into the country road, bordered by fields and trees.

"Your guardian has told you, I understand, about the house at Pengarth," said Scaife.

"Oh, yes!" said Bunter. "Jolly old show, what?"

"A rather dismal and lonely place, I understand, Sir James. Hardly the place where a schoolboy would like to spend a holiday, I think," said Scaife, watching Bunter's face.

"Oh, I don't know!" said Bunter. "I've told Mauleverer I'm going."

"You have made up your mind, Sir James?"

"Oh, yes, I think so!" said Bunter, suppressing a grin. "They've been making a lot of preparations at Pengarth, I hear."

He did not add that he had heard it at Lord Mauleverer's study door, with his fat ear to the keyhole.

"Yes. Sir Reginald Brooke sent instructions to Keeley to have the place got in readiness," said Scaife. "But, of course, if you decided not to go—"

"Oh, I'm going!"

"That is quite settled, then?" asked Scaife.

"Quite."

"With a party of friends, I suppose?"

"That's it," said Bunter. "Old Mauly, you know, and Wharton and his crowd. I dare say it will be jolly."

He blinked from the window.

"I say, your man's mistaken the way. He's turned into the Redclyffe road."

Scaife did not answer. He had taken up the pad of cotton-wool, and, having removed the stopper from the little bottle, coolly emptied its contents on the pad. There was a sickly odour in the car.

"Why, what—" ejaculated Bunter, amazed by Scaife's strange proceedings. "What— Oh! Yah! Oh! Help!"

That was all Bunter had time for.

Scaife's grip was on him, and a chloroformed pad was pressed over his fat face.

Bunter gave a horrified wriggle or two, and relapsed into unconsciousness.

Scaife hurriedly opened both windows of the car, and replaced the pad and the bottle in the black bag.

Billy Bunter lay back in the corner of the seat, unconscious, his eyes closed under his glasses. Scaife proceeded to lift him to the floor of the car, where he covered him with a rug.

The car slowed down.

In the middle of the road ahead a cyclist had stopped, and was bending over his machine, examining it. It was—though Scaife, of course, was not aware of it—Coker of the Fifth. It was just like Coker of the Fifth to plant himself in the middle of a narrow lane, regardless of any considerations of traffic.

"Get aside!" shouted the chauffeur angrily, as he slowed.

Coker stared round,

"Eh?"

"Clear the road, can't you?"

"Better be civil, my man," said Coker of the Fifth warmly. "I've got a dashed puncture here, and I'm not taking any cheek from chauffeurs, I can tell you."

Scaife looked out of the window.

"Please clear the way," he said. "We

are in a hurry; I have a train to catch at Redclyffe."

"Well, if you put it like that, all right," said Coker, mollified.

The soft answer had turned away wrath. Horace Coker lifted his machine to the roadside, and the car ran on again.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Not What Bunter Expected!

"GROOOOGH!"

That was Billy Bunter's first remark.

He opened his eyes. What had happened Bunter did not know. He knew that his head was aching, and that he had a feeling of sickness inside. That was all he knew for some time, as he lay and mumbled and groaned.

He sat up at last.

He was on a rough camp bed in semi-darkness. A gleam of sunset came in at a small window far above his reach.

The room was small, with bare wooden walls, musty and dusty. It looked like an old disused garret.

Bunter sat on the edge of the bed and blinked round him. He wondered whether he was, as a matter of fact, in bed in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, and dreaming all this.

But it was a horrid reality.

"Beast!" muttered Bunter, thinking of the little man in black in the car.

Evidently the man in black brought him here. Why, Bunter could not even begin to guess.

He dragged himself from the bed, and went to the door. It was fastened on the outside.

"Beast!" said Bunter again.

It was clear that he was a prisoner. His throat felt dry, and he was thirsty. There was a jug of water on the washstand, and Bunter quenched his thirst. Having done so, he became conscious of the more important fact that he was hungry.

"What on earth's the game?" mumbled Bunter. "If this is a rotten practical joke, I'll make 'em sit up for it, the beasts!"

He went to the door again, and began to hammer on it with his fat fist. It reminded him of his experience in Mauleverer's study of a few days before. But even Bunter's fat mind was realising that this was a much more serious matter. It was borne in upon him that he was in desperate hands.

Two men had been in the scheme, and a motor-car, and that meant a considerable expenditure of time and money. Why anybody should spend half an hour, or half-a-sovereign, to kidnap Billy Bunter was a deep mystery. He had forgotten for the moment that it was as Sir Jimmy Vivian that the two rascals knew him.

Bang, bang, bang!

Bunter was uneasy and a little frightened; but still more he was hungry. So he banged on the door to attract attention.

There was a sound of footsteps on a creaking stair, and they stopped outside the door. A bar was taken out of iron sockets, and the door, which opened outwards, was drawn open.

Billy Bunter blinked at the man in black.

Scaife motioned him back into the garret, and followed him in. His face was cool and almost expressionless.

"I—I say, what does this mean?"

## RESULT OF

# MAGNET Limerick Competition (No. 12).

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ERNEST JACKSON, Alexandra Terrace, Darwen.

Mr. Frank Richards comes out strong in next Monday's story—



stammered Bunter. "What have you brought me here for? Where is this place?"

"You need ask no questions, Sir James," said Scaife coldly. "They will not be answered."

Billy Bunter started.

Sir James.

His fat brain comprehended. He owed his kidnapping to his irrepressible duplicity. The man in black believed him to be Sir James Vivian.

After the first moment or two of surprise Bunter grinned. It was a great relief. Just then he was sincerely glad that he was not Sir Jimmy Vivian.

"You are in safe hands," said the man in black, watching Bunter's face, and apparently perplexed by the expressions changing on it. "You will not be hurt, and you will be provided with food."

"But what—"

"It simply means this, that you are a prisoner for a few weeks," said Scaife.

"But why?" gasped Bunter.

"It is not necessary for you to know that," answered Scaife coolly. "The fact is enough for you. You will not be hurt if you give no trouble. If you make any disturbance you will be punished. Do not beat on the door again; I warn you for your own good."

"But—but—" stuttered Bunter.

"Your meals will be brought to you. I will see that you are provided with some books, if you care for them. In a couple of months you will be set at liberty. That is all!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "This isn't a dodge for holding a chap to ransom, then?"

Scaife laughed.

"No; nothing of the kind! Besides, you have no money."

"Oh, haven't I?" said Bunter warmly.

"I know all your circumstances," said Scaife contemptuously. "You are an orphan left in the depths of poverty by a spendthrift father. You live on the charity of Sir Reginald Brooke. The old property you have inherited in Cornwall is worth practically nothing—the house is scarcely habitable, and would probably not fetch a thousand pounds in the open market. If we were criminals holding a prisoner to ransom we should have secured your relative, Lord Mauleverer, not his poor relation."

Bunter grinned again.

The man in black was speaking to him, under the fixed belief that he was Sir Jimmy Vivian, that was clear.

"You seemed amused, Sir James!" said Scaife, scanning his face. "I hope you will find your sojourn here continuous amusing."

Bunter became serious again at once. Two months' imprisonment in that bare garret was not a laughing matter by any means.

"I—I say—" he stammered.

"I will see that your supper is sent up," said Scaife. "The food will be ample, but plain."

"But why do you want to keep me here?" exclaimed Bunter.

"That is my business."

"I've got to get back to Greyfriars."

"You will get back to Greyfriars safe and sound for the new term," said Scaife.

"The new term?" stuttered Bunter.

"You mean you're thinking of keeping me here till the school breaks up, and all through the summer holidays?"

"Exactly."

"You can't!" howled Bunter. "I've got to turn up at the examinations."

Scaife turned towards the door.



As the man in black turned his back for a moment Bunter made a desperate jump for the door and tore it open. "Stop!" roared Scaife. Bunter ran for his life. But as he reached the outer door the burly figure of the chauffeur was framed in it. (See Chapter 12.)

"I've got to get back this very evening for call-over," said Bunter. "Can't you understand?"

Scaife's hand was on the door.

"Hold on!" yelled Bunter. "Let me tell you something. You jolly well think I'm Vivian, don't you?"

Scaife spun round. His eyes glittered as he fixed them on the Owl of the Remove.

"I know you are Vivian!" he answered. "What do you mean?"

"Well, I ain't!" said the fat junior triumphantly. "I'm Bunter!"

"Bunter! What do you mean by Bunter?"

"My name's Bunter."

Scaife gave a hard laugh.

"Do you think you can impose on me like that?" he snapped. "You are Sir James Vivian."

"I ain't!" howled Bunter. "I—I never was in my life! Nothing of the sort! You're making a silly mistake."

"Is that all you have to say?" asked Scaife contemptuously.

"I say I'm Bunter!" gasped the Owl of the Remove, in great dismay, as he saw that his statement was not believed.

"Bunter, you know—Billy Bunter! Vivian's in my Form at Greyfriars."

"And why, then, if your name is Bunter, did you tell me that you were Sir James Vivian?" asked Scaife, with a curling lip.

"I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"Well?"

"I—I was just pulling your leg, you know. I—I was going to let you tell

me about Vivian's affairs, you know. Only pulling your leg."

Scaife smiled.

"I cannot congratulate you on your cuteness, Sir James, if you expect me to swallow a story so thin as that!" he said. "That will do!"

And the man in black quitted the garret, and closed the door after him. Bunter rushed to the door.

"I say, lemme out!" he roared. "I say, I'm Bunter. Really Bunter! I ain't Vivian at all! I say—Oh dear!"

The rattle of the bar into the sockets was the only answer Bunter received.

In utter dismay the Owl of the Remove stood and blinked at the fastened door. He had borrowed the identity of Sir Jimmy Vivian easily enough. It was not so easy to get rid of it when he wanted to do so.

Bunter had asked for it, and now he had got it.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Missing!

"BUNTER!" Mr. Quelch was calling the roll in the school Hall.

In the ranks of the Remove there was one well-known figure missing. It was the rotund figure of William George Bunter.

"Bunter!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

But there was no fat voice to answer "Adsum," and Bunter was marked down as absent.

—and those who miss "Bunter the Hunter!" will lose a good thing!



When the school was dismissed after roll-call, Mr. Quelch called to Vivian.

The master of the Remove fixed a frowning glance upon the schoolboy baronet.

"You did not come to my study with the receipt, Vivian," he said.

"The—the receipt!" said Sir Jimmy.

"The receipt for the registered letter."

"D-d-didn't Bunter give it to you, sir?"

"Bunter! What had Bunter to do with it?"

"He took the letter, sir," explained Vivian. "I was going out on the river with Mauleverer, so Bunter took the letter to the post-office."

"Oh, very well!" said the Remove master. "You may go."

Sir Jimmy went and joined Lord Mauleverer, who was waiting for him in the corridor.

"Trouble?" yawned his lordship.

"That hass Bunter!" growled Sir Jimmy.

"That ass Bunter, dear boy!" murmured Mauleverer. "But what—"

"He ain't took—"

"Taken—"

"Ain't taken the receipt from the post-office to Quelch," said Sir Jimmy. "He ought to have took—taken it at once, the fat hass—I mean, ass. I'll jolly well kick him!"

"He will turn up with it later on," said Lord Mauleverer comfortably. "Bunter always does turn up, worse luck. Why worry?"

And his lordship ambled away peacefully.

In the Remove passage Bunter's absence was not specially noted. Peter Todd, of course, noticed that he did not come into Study No. 7 to tea, but he concluded that Bunter had planted himself upon another study for that meal. Neither did Peter miss him specially when he failed to turn up for prep. It was not uncommon for Bunter to neglect his evening preparation.

But after prep was over it was noticed that the fat figure of William George Bunter was nowhere to be seen, and some of the fellows remembered that he had not answered to his name at call-over.

Shortly before bedtime Wingate of the Sixth came into the junior Common-room to ask about Bunter.

"Hasn't he come in yet?" demanded Peter Todd.

"No. Anybody know what's become of the young duffer?" asked the captain of Greyfriars, looking round.

No answer. Nobody knew apparently.

"Don't you know, Todd?"

"Haven't the least idea," said Peter.

"I haven't seen him since lessons."

"Has anybody here?"

"Yaas."

"Well, when did you see him, Mauleverer?"

Lord Mauleverer explained.

"Mr. Quelch has told me that he went to the post-office instead of Vivian," grunted Wingate. "But he doesn't seem to have come back. It's jolly odd."

And Wingate left the Common-room with a thoughtful brow.

"It's queer, and no mistake," remarked Bob Cherry, as the juniors broke out into a buzz of discussion.

"The queerfulness is terrific!"

"I suppose he got to the post-office, anyhow?" said Harry Wharton. "He's well-known there, and they'd remember. The post-office is on the telephone, too. Quelch could ask."

"And he must have gone to Uncle Clegg's!" said Mauleverer.

"Why must he?"

"Because I'd lent him half-a-crown."

There was a chuckle.

Billy Bunter had not come in by bedtime. The Remove went to their dormitory in a wondering frame of mind.

It was scarcely possible that an accident had happened to Bunter so many hours ago without news of it reaching Greyfriars. But if there had been no accident it was difficult to account for his absence. It was known by bedtime that the Head had telephoned to his home, and that Bunter had not been there; and that a telephone message had been received from Friardale Post Office, mentioning that Bunter had posted Mr. Quelch's registered letter there.

After that Billy Bunter seemed to have vanished from human ken.

But it was not generally supposed that the matter was serious, and the Removites soon ceased to discuss it, and fell asleep.

But when the rising-bell awakened them in the morning, and they found that Bunter's bed was still empty, there was a good deal of excitement. The empty bed showed that Bunter had not returned overnight.

"This is getting serious," Johnny Bull remarked, and the Remove fellows agreed that it was.

At the breakfast-table it was observed that Mr. Quelch looked very serious, indeed.

After breakfast Wingate went out on his bicycle, and rode down to Friardale, evidently to make inquiries. The school heard the result before morning classes.

Nothing was known of an accident at the police-station. Uncle Clegg mentioned that Bunter had spent two shillings and ninepence in his shop the previous afternoon, just after leaving the post-office as a comparison of times showed. Uncle Clegg had not noticed whether Bunter had turned after leaving his shop.

By that time the masters, if not the boys, were getting a little alarmed. Every police-station for a dozen miles round was communicated with by the Head. But in the Remove-room that morning Bunter's place remained empty.

When classes were dismissed the Famous Five went to the bikeshed for their machines. They had agreed to look round for Bunter if the Owl had not returned by the time classes were dismissed, and he certainly had not returned.

The chums of the Remove rode down to Friardale, where they scattered, and asked questions up and down and round about, and gradually learned some more details. In the little village the fat figure of Billy Bunter was well known, and people remembered having seen him.

Boggs, the village postman, had seen him talking to a man outside the post-office, a man dressed in black, who had a motor-car.

A village boy had seen him sitting in the car, going down the High Street towards Greyfriars.

When the youthful investigators compared notes they found that they had really made discoveries. Billy Bunter had been taken away in a motor-car by a man dressed in black—a little man.

"The jolly old mystery deepens," remarked Bob Cherry. "If it was some friend taking him for a ride he'd have come back."

"And if he'd gone away to visit somebody he'd have asked leave," said Harry Wharton. "Or, anyhow, he'd have let the Head know."

"That's certain. It's not that."

"But"—Bob whistled—"why should anybody take Bunter away in a car and not let him come back?"

"Goodness knows! But somebody's done it!"

"Kidnapping!" said Johnny Bull.

"It looks like it, though why anybody should kidnap Bunter—"

"It's a giddy puzzle. Let's get back and tell Quelch what we've routed out, anyhow."

And the Famous Five got back to Greyfriars just in time for dinner. After dinner they went in a body to Mr. Quelch's study, to acquaint their Form master with what they had learned.

Mr. Quelch looked quite startled.

"A little man in black!" he said, when Wharton repeated the description of the man who had been seen with the motor-car.

"Yes, sir."

"It is very odd," said Mr. Quelch. "The man who called to see Vivian yesterday was a little man dressed in black. It is a very odd coincidence." He paused. "Thank you very much, my boys; you have done extremely well."

And the Famous Five quitted the study, feeling quite pleased with themselves.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Mr. Scaife Has His Doubts I

**B**ANG!

Billy Bunter's fat fist smote on the door of the garret.

It was high noon, and Bunter was hungry. His breakfast that morning had been ample, but not ample for Bunter. And he had had nothing since. At Greyfriars Bunter generally contrived to get a "snack" in the morning break. But on this especial morning there was no snack for the Owl of the Remove. By midday he was famished.

When he could stand it no longer he began to bang on the garret door to attract the attention of his kidnappers.

Scaife's warning the day before was still in his mind, but when he was hungry Bunter was prepared to risk trouble. If they wanted him to keep quiet, they had to feed him. That was how the Owl of the Remove looked at it.

Bang, bang!

Footsteps came to the door at last, and it was opened. Scaife's angry face looked in, and Bunter noticed with dismay that he carried a stick in his hand.

"I—I say—" stammered Bunter.

"I think I warned you to keep silent, Sir James," said Scaife, with a threatening look.

"I'm hungry."

"You will be fed. Wait!"

"But I say—"

"Another sound from you in this room, Vivian, and you will be beaten," said Scaife quietly. "We shall not stand on ceremony with you. And listen to this—I am leaving here to-day, and shall not return. You will be guarded by my man while you remain here. He will treat you well so long as you behave yourself. Give him any trouble, and he will be very rough with you. I warn you for your own good."

"You keep on calling me Vivian!" snarled Bunter. "I tell you I'm not Vivian."

"That's enough."

"I'm Bunter—"

"That will do, I tell you!" snapped Scaife.

"I say," howled Bunter, as the man in black stepped out on the landing. "I

**BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE—send in your Cricket Competition Coupons I**



say, I can prove it. I've got a letter in my pocket addressed to me, Bunter, at Greyfriars."

Scaife did not even answer. He was closing the door when Bunter put his foot in the way. Bunter realised that if he could only make the kidnapers aware of his identity, they would not want to keep him, and he was frantically anxious now to disclaim the distinction of being a baronet of the United Kingdom.

"I—I say, listen to me—"  
Scaife made a motion with the stick. "I'll prove it!" panted Bunter. "Look here, I must have been missed at Greyfriars. You know that! They'll have gone to the police by this time."

"You are sixty miles from Greyfriars," answered Scaife coldly. "You will not be found here."

"But I say, if you ask them at Greyfriars, they'll tell you the name of the chap that's missing!" gasped Bunter.

Scaife looked at him. "If I inquire at Greyfriars I shall learn that Sir James Vivian is missing," he answered; but for the first time a tincture of doubt crept into his voice.

"You won't!" exclaimed Bunter eagerly. "They'll tell you that it's Bunter that's missing—me, you know."

Scaife stood silent, staring at him. The fat junior's eagerness was not to be mistaken. Scaife was impressed at last.

"If I take the trouble to inquire at the school," he said, "you will remain locked up here until I return."

"That's all right. But you'll jolly soon find that I'm not Vivian."

Scaife gritted his teeth. "I do not believe you," he said; "but to make sure, I shall inquire. If it turns out that you deceived me in pretending to be Sir James Vivian I will make you sorry for it."

"Eh! What?" Bunter started. He had not thought of that. "I—I say, you know, it's not my fault you took me for Vivian! I never said I was Vivian; it was you said I was, you know."

The dark doubt in Scaife's face intensified. He shut the door without another word, and barred it.

The rickety stairs creaked as he descended to the lower room. Hawes, the chauffeur, was sitting on a bench there, smoking. He looked inquiringly at Scaife's frowning face.

"Anything wrong?"  
"I don't know," muttered Scaife. "The boy says he is not Vivian. There can scarcely be a mistake; and yet—"

"He said so last night."  
"Yes, but I did not believe him, and I do not believe him now," said Scaife restlessly. "It is a trick to get away from here, of course. But—but we cannot afford to take chances. If—if it should prove that we have captured the wrong bird, the party would arrive at Pengarth as already arranged, and—"

and—"  
He broke off.

"After all, it's easy to inquire the name of the missing boy at Greyfriars; that will settle the matter. I am sure we have Vivian; but it is worth while to place it beyond doubt."

"You can't risk going near the school again," said Hawes dubiously. "They may have found out by this time that you did not come from the solicitor's."

"I hardly think they will connect Vivian's disappearance with my visit; but, of course, I cannot run risks," said Scaife slowly. "People may have noticed me in the village—and the villagers are gossips. Vivian may have been seen in

the car with us before we got out of Friardale."

"Very likely, I think. You'll be walking into a trap if you go near Greyfriars again."

Scaife smiled. "I shall not do that. I can walk into the town here and get a trunk call to Greyfriars, and speak to the headmaster. It will be easy to make him state the actual name of the boy who is missing from his school."

"Good!"  
Scaife took his hat and left the cabin—a lonely little building by a lane over the downs. His face was dark with thought as he walked away.

In the garret, Billy Bunter waited for his dinner, thinking a great deal more of his dinner than of the chance of freedom.

**THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.**

**Sir Jimmy's Peril!**

IT was a half-holiday that day at Greyfriars, and quite a crowd of the Greyfriars fellows had made up their minds to spend it in searching for traces of Billy Bunter. No news had

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come of the missing junior, and it was known to all the school now that he had been taken away in a motor-car. The conclusion was obvious; Bunter had been kidnapped. And that knowledge gave the Greyfriars fellows quite a thrill.

No great alarm was felt on Bunter's account, for there was no reason to suppose that his kidnapers intended him harm. But why they had kidnapped him was a mystery that puzzled all the school, and made William George Bunter the one topic of conversation at Greyfriars that day.

"It's a giddy mystery!" said Peter Todd. "I give it right up! Why anybody should want Bunter—"

"The whyfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Somebody's after his postal-orders, perhaps!" suggested Skinner, and there was a chuckle.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Bob Cherry. "I hope they're giving him enough to eat, anyhow."

"Not likely," said Skinner. "There isn't enough going."

"Don't you be so jolly funny,

Skinner," said Toddy. "This is a serious matter—for Bunter, at least."

"Serious for us, too, if he comes back!" said Skinner blandly. "That's what worries me."

"Oh, chuck it, Skinner!" said Bob Cherry. "I'm jolly well going out to hunt for him."

"I hope you'll find him, old man, and that they'll bag you, too!" said Skinner. "That would make life quite jolly at Greyfriars, wouldn't it?"

And Skinner walked away before Bob could kick him.

The Famous Five went out on their bicycles, and Vernon-Smith and Redwing, and Squiff and Peter Todd, and a dozen other Remove fellows, joined in the quest. It was not likely that the kidnapped junior was anywhere in the vicinity of the school, but the juniors hoped to get on the track somehow.

Meanwhile, Mr. Quelch was getting busy.

He had gone down to Friardale soon after dinner, to pursue the line of investigation opened by Harry Wharton & Co.

He returned to Greyfriars looking very thoughtful, and sought the Head. He found Dr. Locke looking very ill at ease.

"No news of Bunter?" asked the Head.

"I am sorry to say, no. But I have gleaned some information regarding the kidnapers," said Mr. Quelch. "It is clear that Bunter was taken away in a car, which waited outside the post-office when he was there. I have spoken to several persons who saw him, and have received a good description of the man who took him away—a little man, dressed in black."

"And—"

said the Head. "You will remember Mr. Scaife, who called to see Vivian yesterday," said Mr. Quelch. "He was a little man in black. And he must have been somewhere on the scene at the time; he left Greyfriars after failing to see Vivian, about the same time that Bunter must have reached Friardale. It would be very odd if there were two little men in black, both strangers in the place, in the village at the same time."

The Head looked startled.

"You do not think that the solicitor's clerk—"

he began. "I should like to ascertain whether Mr. Scaife was, as he stated, a solicitor's clerk from Mr. Viney's," said the Remove master. "If his firm answers for him, we can dismiss him from our minds. I suggest ringing up Sir Reginald Brooke's solicitors in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and inquiring with regard to Mr. Scaife."

"That is easily done."

The Head made a gesture to the telephone. Having looked through the directory for the number, Mr. Quelch rang up the exchange, and asked for a trunk call. Then he left the study.

It was twenty minutes before the call came through, and then the Head took up the receiver.

He found himself speaking to Mr. Viney.

"A gentleman from your office—a Mr. Scaife—called here yesterday," said the Head. "He brought some documents to show Vivian, in connection with his property in Cornwall—"

"What?"

"A Mr. Scaife—"

"No person of that name is employed by this firm," answered the solicitor.

"Bless my soul! Did you not send a man here to see Vivian—"

"Certainly not!"

(Continued on page 16.)

**Profits for the Prophets! £300 in prizes!**

**See page 2!**



**THE GREYFRIARS' HERALD**

Supplement No. 137. HARRY WHARTON EDITOR. Week ending August 11th, 1923.

**BOB CHERRY:**

Six hours' sleep is all-sufficient for this child. And it ought to be sufficient for any healthy, energetic fellow. The trouble with most people is that they sleep themselves stupid. They retire at about 9 p.m., and rise at the corresponding hour next morning; and then they wonder why they feel heavy and fit-for-nothing all day! Too much sleep is just as bad as not enough, in my opinion.

**LORD MAULEVERER:**

If I had my own way, begad, I should go to bed directly after tea, and rise in time for lunch next day! It has always been my pet grievance that I don't get enough sleep. No sooner do I settle my head on the pillow each night, than the rising-bell seems to start clanging. I believe old Gosling gets up earlier and earlier every morning, to summon us from our snug beds! There's an old adage which says, "Six hours' sleep for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool." To that I would add, "Twelve for a nobleman!" I could say lots and lots on this subject, but I'm dying to take forty winks on the study sofa, so you must excuse me, dear boys.

**MR. QUELCH:**

I consider that eight hours' sleep each night should satisfy the average individual. My own sleep is very often restricted to six hours, owing to the fact that I sit up late at night, working on my History of Greyfriars. I never sleep in the daytime, and I do not approve of my pupils doing so. Mauleverer, take warning!

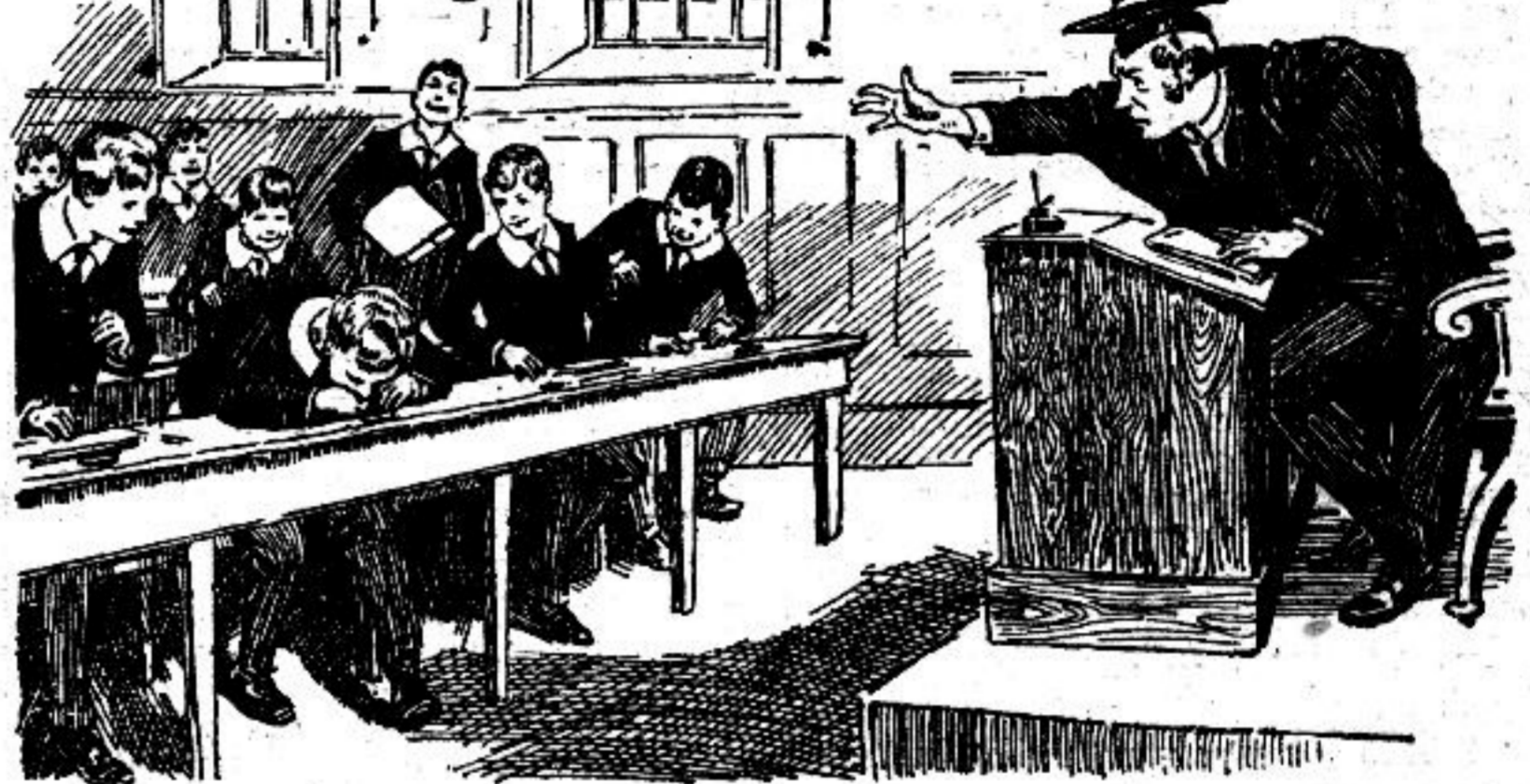
**BILLY BUNTER:**

An old scribe once gave the advice, "Sleep until you are done." A rather queer phrase this, which seems to suggest kooking, but you can see what the dear old johnnie meant. He meant that you should take your fill of slumber, and not get up till you've had it. Personally, I kossider that 18 hours out of the 24 should be spent in sleeping, and the odd 6 in feeding! But that wouldn't leave any time for lessons, so I don't suppose the Head and the masters would see eye to eye with me on the subject!

**DICKY NUGENT:**

I don't think it matters the toss of a Button how much sleep a Fellow has. Some Chaps can keep themselves fizzically fit on two hours' sleep a night, and other Chaps want 12 or 14 hours' sleep before they begin to feel good. personally i can go to sleep at any time and in any plaice. i sleep more soundly in the Form-room than anywhere else, espeshully if it happens to be a hot day. i never like going to sleep in the Dormitory. One misses all the fun—Midnite Feests, and all that sort of thing. by the way, when i went to sleep in class this morning old Twigg woke me up by herling a lexicon at my napper. Beest!

# How Long Should We Sleep?



**THE HEAD:**

I generally enjoy an unbroken, dreamless sleep of nine hours' duration each night. And I must confess that I frequently lapse into slumber in my study chair. I do not think one can make a hard-and-fast rule as to the number of hours a person ought to sleep. A short rest suffices some people; others prefer a long sleep of the Rip van Winkle variety.

## THE SNORER'S LAMENT!

By Percy Bolsover.

Upon my head each night, young Brown

The vials of his wrath is pouring;  
(Also a water-jug) to drown  
My snoring!

Bob Cherry, with a cricket-stump,  
A hole within my ribs is boring;  
He says it makes him have the hump—  
My snoring!

Fierce shouts are heard on every hand,  
And everybody's loudly roaring;  
The fellows simply cannot stand  
My snoring!

Rake comes at me with lowered head,  
And, like a bull, commences goring;  
It seems to make the chump "see red"—  
My snoring!

They tell me that my nightly noise  
Shakes every wall, and shakes the  
flooring;  
And not a single chap enjoys  
My snoring!

Myself, I like the merry din,  
Melodious music, most adoring;  
But others find no pleasure in  
My snoring!

**HURREE SINGH:**

I sleepfully slumber for about seven-hourfulness each night, and I find that this esteemed and ludicrous period of restfulness is terrifically satisfactory. I should not dreamfully think of making an orgy of sleep, like Mauly and Bunter do. In my native country, I used to sleepfully-slumber for about ten minutes each night. The heatfulness and the mosquitoes used to preventfully stop any further repose.

**DICK PENFOLD:**

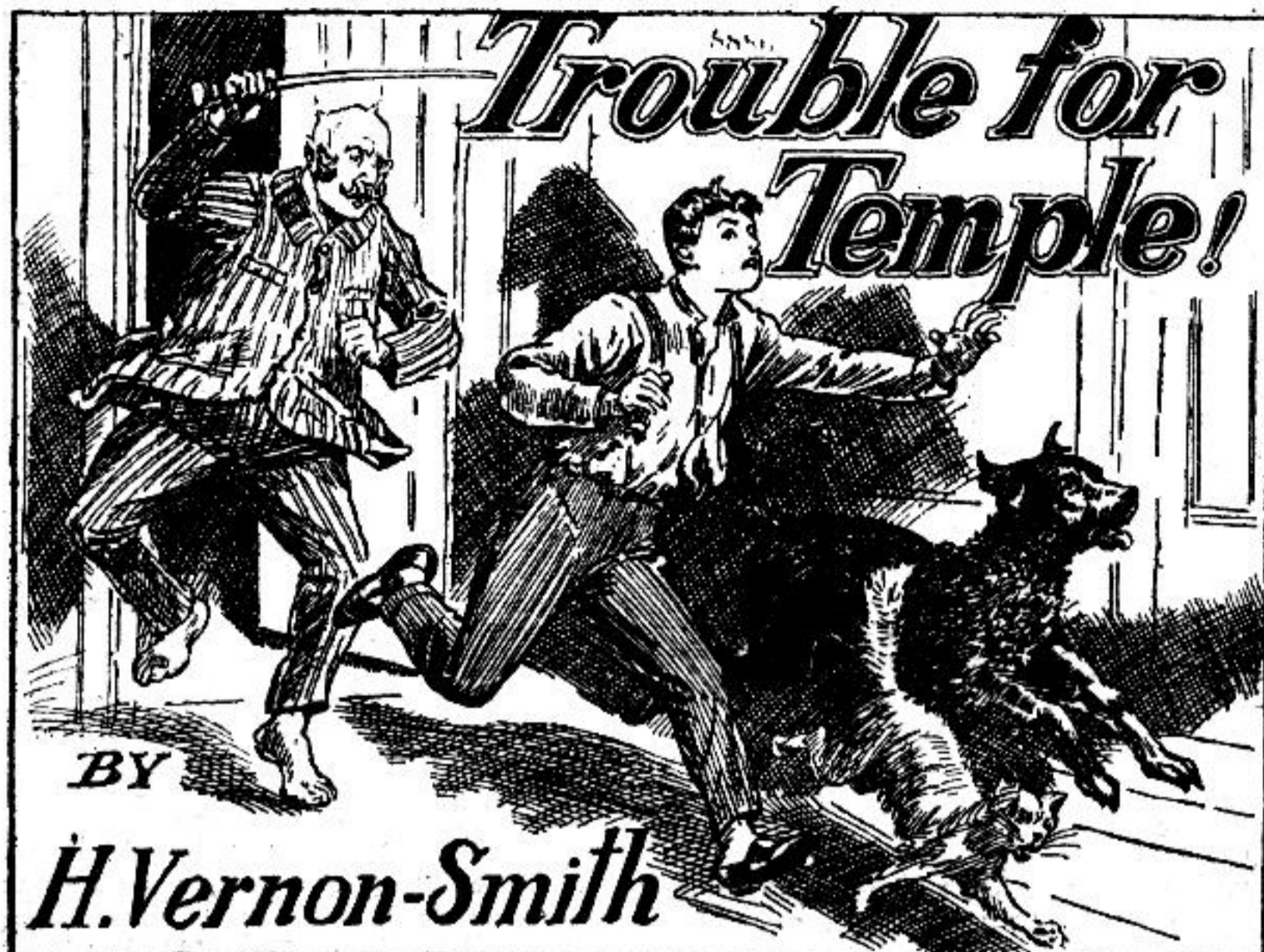
"Early to bed, and early to rise,  
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.  
But wisdom and health, and a princely exchequer  
Don't tempt me; I never get up before brekker!"

**WILLIAM GOSLING:**

There ain't no rest for the wicked, and there ain't no rest for the gate-porter of a school like Greyfriars. No sooner do I lay my weary head on the pillar, so to speak, when some belated junior rings the gatebell and clamours for admittance, and I has to go down in my tasselled nightcap and let him in. And I often get woke up in the small hours of the morning, because somebody's been took ill, and I've got to unlock the gates to let the doctor come through in his car. Mine is a hard life, mine is! I never know what it is to get a good night's sleep. Moreover, I has to turn out at five o'clock every morning, to clean up my lodge before sounding the rising-bell. It's marvellous how I manages to keep going, year in and year out. If it wasn't for a mild stimulant now and again, I should have to chuck in my mit, and retire from Greyfriars on a pension!

**Don't miss our special "Singing" Supplement! It's next!**





in his arm, and then conveyed the animals into the building.

Chuckling softly to himself, Temple made his way to Mr. Capper's bed-room. Even as he went, the animals were struggling and straining to get to grips with each other.

"As soon as I bundle 'em into Capper's room there'll be a regular cat-an'-dog fight!" murmured Temple.

On reaching his destination he cautiously pushed the door open, and gave Rover a push which sent the dog well into the room. Then he hurled the kitchen cat on top of it.

Instantly there was an uproar. Rover barked and snarled, and the cat made a noise like a soda-water siphon in action.

Temple lingered outside the door, listening to the commotion.

The yapping and snapping grew louder and fiercer, and at any moment Temple expected to hear a startled shriek from Mr. Capper. But no shriek came.

There was a sound of someone jumping out of bed, and an angry voice exclaimed:

"What's the meanin' of this, hey? Cats an' dogs in my room in the middle of the night, begad! Out you go!"

Temple gave a gasp. For the voice was not that of Mr. Capper—it was the voice of Sir Hilton Popper, the fiery baronet and governor of Greyfriars, who was putting up at the school for the night, and occupying Mr. Capper's room.

Sir Hilton had picked up his silver-mounted cane, and he laid about him fiercely.

Rover, yelping with anguish, came rushing out of the room at top speed. The dog cannoned full into Temple, the force of the impact knocking Cecil Reginald over.

"Yaroooooh!" yelled Temple, thereby giving himself away completely.

There was a fierce snort from Sir Hilton Popper.

"A practical joker, begad! I'll give him a thrashin' that he won't forget in a hurry!"

So saying, the baronet strode into the corridor, and proceeded to belabour the recumbent form of Cecil Reginald Temple.

Whack, whack, whack!

Wild yells of anguish rang through the night. Cat, dog, and Temple fled for dear life, with Sir Hilton Popper in hot pursuit.

Before Temple could shake off his pursuer, he received at least half a dozen stinging blows across his shoulders. And when at last he crawled into his dormitory, he felt that life was not worth living!

**C**ECIL REGINALD TEMPLE, the leader of the Upper Fourth, went to bed looking very annoyed.

Temple had just fallen foul of old Capper, his Form master. Capper had dropped on him very heavily for playing a concertina in the Close, and refusing to stop when ordered to do so.

"A thousand lines!" snapped Temple, as he started to undress. "That's the stiffest impot I've had this term! It will take me a month of Sundays to write it. Capper's a beast! Can't a chap play a concertina without getting into hot water?"

"It's certainly a bit thick," agreed Dabney. "What are you going to do about it, old man?"

"I'll make Capper sit up!" declared Temple. "I'll give him a scare of some sort—this very night, too! He's very nervous at night."

"Going to dress up as a ghost?" asked Fry.

Temple shook his head.

"Capper's a cute beast, an' I'm afraid he'd tumble to my identity," he said. "I shall have to think of somethin' else."

Temple laid awake for hours, trying to think of ways and means whereby he could scare the master of the Upper Fourth.

It was not until midnight that he was seized with an idea. The distant barking of a dog gave him an inspiration. He knew that the dog in question was Rover,

a big retriever owned by Mr. Mimble, the gardener.

Temple happened to know, also, that Rover, and the kitchen cat were on anything but affectionate terms. They were, in fact, bitter enemies, and there was always a scrap when they got to close quarters.

Temple sat up in bed. He was grinning in the darkness.

"I'll smuggle the dog and the cat into Capper's bed-room!" he muttered. "Then the fur will start flying, and old Capper will have the scare of his life!"

Acting upon Shakespeare's advice that conspiracies no sooner should be formed than executed, Temple rose and dressed, and went down into the Close. He made his exit by way of the box-room window.

It was a dark night, and Temple had difficulty in picking his way across the Close. But he could just discern the dim outline of the tuckshop, and this guided him.

The dog Rover was chained up at the back of the shop. He barked loudly on Temple's approach, but the Fourth-Former soon calmed him down.

"Come along, old fellow!" he said, as he unfastened the chain. "We're goin' in search of your bosom pal, the kitchen cat."

Even as he spoke, Temple heard a hissing sound. Peering through the gloom, he saw the cat standing with arched back a few yards away. He gathered her up

**EDITORIAL!**

By Harry Wharton.

**S**LEEP, gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse—that is our subject for this week. And we have tackled it as thoroughly as the limitations of space will permit. You will notice that we are somewhat smaller this week; but though the quantity is

reduced, the quality remains as good as ever—and it's the quality that counts!

Sleep is a wonderful thing. According to the Ancient Mariner, it is "beloved from Pole to Pole." Personally, I wouldn't go so far as to agree with that, because there are several fellows in the Greyfriars Remove who don't love sleep at all. They are so energetic and full of life that they simply hate to lay their heads on the pillows o' nights. Bob Cherry is one of these energetic mortals. He prefers getting up to going to bed.

Lord Mauleverer is the very opposite. Sleep is the be-all and end-all of Mauly's existence, and he is never happier than when reclining on the couch in his study. So far as sleep is concerned, his lordship

holds very different views from Bob Cherry; and they both air their views in this issue.

To their horror, our respected Form masters have discovered that many of their pupils prefer sleeping in lesson-time to studying the works of that classic gentleman, P. Vergilius Maro—snawful!

But I must bring this brief editorial chat to a close, or I sha'n't be able to find space for Bolsover major's poem. And that would be a tragedy! I should have the bully of the Remove biffing me on my editorial pate with an Indian club! So long as this Special Sleep Number doesn't send you to sleep, out of sheer boredom, I shall be well content.

Full of fun and mirth—the MAGNET Supplement!



## SIR JIMMY'S SUBSTITUTE!

(Continued from page 13.)

"Then I may take it that the man who called yesterday was an impostor?" exclaimed the Head.

"Most certainly. No one has been sent from this office to see Sir James Vivian. You have been imposed upon, Dr. Locke."

"Bless my soul! Thank you, Mr. Viney!"

Dr. Locke put up the receiver, in a state of considerable agitation. He went to Mr. Quelch's study with the news.

"As I had begun to suspect," said the Remove master, "Scaife was an impostor; and it is Scaife who has taken Bunter away."

"But why—why?" said the Head helplessly. "What possible motive could the man have for kidnapping Bunter?"

"None, I think," said Mr. Quelch quietly. "It is fairly clear that Bunter was taken by mistake."

"By mistake?"

"Yes. Scaife came here inquiring for Vivian, and he was told that Vivian had gone to the village to register a letter for me. I was not then aware that Vivian had sent Bunter in his place. Scaife appears to have gone directly to the village, and to have kidnapped the boy who was posting the registered letter. Evidently, I think, he mistook him for Vivian."

"Then you think that it was Vivian whom—"

"It seems perfectly clear to me," said Mr. Quelch. "There was a plot on foot to kidnap Vivian, and Scaife's visit here was to get sight of the boy, I imagine, with that object in view. By a curious combination of circumstances, Bunter has fallen into his hands instead of Vivian."

"But Bunter would surely state his real name—"

"He might not be believed. In any case, I think stringent care should be taken of Vivian for the present, and it would be as well to give him instructions to keep within gates."

"Undoubtedly," said the Head. "But if the intended victim was Vivian, that does not lessen the mystery. Why should anyone desire to kidnap Vivian?"

Mr. Quelch shook his head.

"That is a problem," he answered. "But that clearly was the intention, and we must take precautions for his safety."

Trotter tapped at the door.

"The telephone bell's ringing in your study, sir."

"Thank you, Trotter," said the Head, rising. "Pray come with me, Mr. Quelch—it may be news."

The two masters proceeded at once to the Head's study, where the bell was buzzing persistently. Dr. Locke took up the receiver.

"Is that Greyfriars School?" came a voice over the wires.

"Yes. Dr. Locke is speaking."

"The Headmaster?"

"Yes."

"Is there a boy missing from your school?"

"Yes, yes," said the Head eagerly. "If you can give me any information, I shall be deeply indebted to you."

"I hope to be able to do, sir. The boy's name is—"

"Bunter!"

"Kindly repeat the name, sir; I did not quite catch—"

"Bunter—William Bunter."

"B-u-n-t-e-r—Bunter!" spelt out the unknown interlocutor, who evidently wanted to make certain of the name.

"Yes; that is correct."

The Head waited for an answer; but it did not come. He spoke again into the transmitter; but there was silence. The unknown had rung off.

"Bless my soul!" said Dr. Locke, in great perplexity. "This is very odd. I wonder—"

"I think it is fairly clear, sir," said the Remove master. "Bunter has told the kidnapper his real name, and the rascal has applied to you for definite information."

"Good heavens! You mean that I have just been talking with the kidnapper himself!" exclaimed the Head, aghast.

"I imagine so. I think that makes it quite clear that the wrong victim was seized by the rascal, and I will speak to Vivian at once. He must run no risks."

Mr. Quelch hurried away in search of Vivian. He found that cheery junior on the cricket-ground, fagging at bowling for Walker of the Sixth. Mr. Quelch impressed upon the schoolboy baronet that he was to remain within gates till further orders; and as he detected a rebellious gleam in Sir Jimmy's eye, he explained the reason at full length. To which the astonished Sir Jimmy replied:

"Oh, snakes! What blooming larks!"

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER!

### Not the Genuine Article!

**S**CAIFE entered the lonely cottage on the downs, with a black and scowling brow. He threw himself into a chair, clenching his hands.

"It's not Vivian!" he said, between his teeth.

Hawes stared at him over his pipe.

"Not Vivian? Sure?"

"I have spoken to his headmaster over the telephone," said Scaife, savagely.

"We've been taken in! How the mistake happened I don't know. The Form master certainly believed that it was Vivian who had gone to the post-office to register a letter. And I asked the boy. He claimed to be Vivian—for what reason I cannot even guess. He shall pay dearly for fooling me!"

"Then we've failed?" said Hawes blankly.

Scaife nodded.

"It will be useless to try to get at Vivian now. Probably they guess by this time that it was Vivian we intended to kidnap, and he will be specially taken care of. In any case, we could not venture near Greyfriars again—the whole neighbourhood will be watching for strangers. This affair must have caused great excitement there. Half the police in the county will be on the alert."

He rose to his feet, pacing restlessly about the room.

"It was a good scheme—it was well planned," he muttered. "All would have gone well but for that fool of a boy telling me his name was Vivian! What can have possessed him— But that matters little now. We have lost Vivian, we cannot venture to make another attempt, and we have a fat fool on our hands who is useless to us!"

"A pretty look-out!" grunted Hawes.

"It could not be helped. All would have gone well if Vivian could have been secured, and taken care of during the midsummer holidays. Then the party would not have gone to Pengarth. Now—"

Now—

"Now they'll go?"

"I suppose so—it is all arranged. But as the property is Vivian's, it would have fallen through had he disappeared for the whole of the holidays, of course."

"Keeley—"

"Keeley can do nothing, excepting carry out the orders he has received from Sir Reginald Brooke. But for this wretched mischance, all would have been well. Now—"

"But—but if they get to Pengarth the game's up!" said Hawes, staring blankly at Scaife.

Scaife shook his head.

"Keeley will take care. Something else may turn up to relieve us of the schoolboys. I shall take care that something turns up, in fact," said Scaife, between his teeth. "Nothing now can prevent the party from reaching Pengarth; but, after all, they have no suspicion that they are not wanted there—they will be walking into a trap, and we can deal with them."

"If they should get into Pengarth Caves—"

"We must take care that they do not," said Scaife. "After all, we shall be on the spot. And the sooner the better, now that the game is up here. We will get rid of that fat fool, and disappear!"

He tramped up the stairs.

Billy Bunter heard the approaching footsteps with a tremor in his plump heart.

He could guess that by this time the kidnapers had learned that he was not Sir James Vivian. No doubt they would get rid of him, as he was not the person they wanted; but Bunter had a very deep apprehension now as to what might happen first.

The door of the garret was thrown open, and Scaife came in. Bunter felt his tremor increase at the man's black and savage look.

"I—I say—"

"I have found out the truth," said Scaife. "You are not Sir James Vivian."

"I—I told you so, you know!" said Bunter feebly.

"You fat rascal!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Why did you deceive me?" hissed Scaife.

"I—I was only pulling your leg!" mumbled Bunter. "How was I to know you were going to kidnap me, you know? I—I wouldn't have let you think that I was Vivian if I'd known, I give you my word!"

Scaife stared at him, and burst into a harsh laugh.

"You—you dolt!" he said. "You fool! You—you—"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Bunter. "I didn't want to come here. I haven't been fed decently. I'm the chap that's got a right to complain, I suppose. I'm hungry now. If you think that I can do with bread and cheese and a chunk of corned beef for dinner, you're making a mistake. I'm simply famished!"

"After all, it is not worth the trouble to thrash you for your folly," muttered Scaife.

Bunter jumped.

"Not at all—not a bit!" he gasped. "I—I quite agree with you—I do, really! I—I'd be awfully sorry to give you any trouble—honest injun!"

There was a sound of the man below starting up the car, which had been garaged in the shed attached to the lonely cottage. Scaife-grasped Bunter by the shoulder.

"Come!" he snapped.

Does Billy Bunter get to Cornwall?—



"You—you're letting me go?" gasped Bunter.

"You are no use here, you fat fool! Come!"

"Right-ho! But I—I say, you're going to give me some grub before I go, I suppose?" said Bunter anxiously.

Scaife did not answer that question. He led Bunter down the rickety stairs with an iron grip on his shoulder.

He almost pitched the fat junior into a chair in the lower room.

"Stay there!"

"Ow! All right!" spluttered Bunter. "I—I say, what are you—you going to do with that?"

His eyes opened wide behind his spectacles at the sight of the chloroform pad.

"I—I say——"

Scaife did not heed him. Billy Bunter gave a longing glance at the door.

As the man in black turned his back for a moment, Bunter made a desperate jump for the door, and tore it open.

"Stop!" roared Scaife.

Bunter did not stop; he ran for his life. The outer door stood open, with the warm glow of the sunset beyond. But as Bunter reached the door the burly figure of the chauffeur framed in it.

Crash!

"Yooop!" gasped Bunter.

"Ow!" howled the chauffeur.

"I—I say, I—— Yarooooooh!"

Hawes grasped the fat junior by the collar, and led him back into the room.

"I—I say, you fellows——" gasped Bunter feebly. "I—I say—— Ow! Groogh!"

The chloroform pad was pressed over his nose and mouth, and Bunter's terrified eyes closed behind his spectacles. He was unconscious when he was carried into the car, and laid on the floor, covered with a rug.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Turns Up!

"N O news?"

"None!"

"Poor old Bunter!"

Crowds of Greyfriars fellows had come in, after spending the afternoon scouring the countryside for traces of the missing Owl of the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. had ridden as far as Redclyffe, having learned from Coker of the Fifth about his meeting with the man in black in the car going in that direction the previous day.

At Redclyffe they found a garage where a car had stopped for petrol, and by the general description they supposed it was the same car. But after passing Redclyffe it had vanished.

The police were making inquiries far and wide; but the Famous Five, as they rode back to Greyfriars, tired and dusty, did not expect news. It seemed most probable that the car had left Greyfriars many miles behind; doubtful whether the kidnapers had stopped in Kent at all.

As they went into calling-over, the Greyfriars fellows exchanged questions; but no one had news of Bunter. And most of the fellows were feeling really concerned about him now.

It was generally known now that Bunter had been kidnapped in mistake for Sir Jimmy Vivian; for Sir Jimmy was gated for an indefinite period, and the reason was known. How anybody could have taken Bunter for him was a mystery to Sir Jimmy, and not a pleasing one, really. He was not flattered by the

idea that there was the remotest resemblance between himself and the Owl of the Remove.

Most of the fellows were at prep, when there came a loud ringing at the bell in Gosling's lodge, and the Greyfriars porter turned out, with a grunt.

Gosling jumped at the sight of a fat figure outside the bars of the gate.

"Master Bunter!"

"Let me in, for goodness' sake!" howled Bunter. "Can't you get the gate open? Quick, fathead!"

Grunt from Gosling.

"I'm hungry!" roared Bunter. "Famished! I've walked over a hundred miles this evening—ten, at least!"

"Precious goes on!" said Gosling, as he unlocked the gate. "What I says is this 'ere——"

from the staircase: "It's Bunter! He's come back."

"Bunter!"

"Great pip!"

"The Bunterfulness is terrific!"

There was a rush from all sides to see Bunter. Mr. Quelch came out of his study in a great hurry.

"Bunter, you have returned! Thank goodness! I hope you have not suffered from any ill-usage, my boy?"

"I have, sir," said Bunter. "A pair of desperate villains, sir—worse than Huns! I've been treated frightfully, sir—awful cruelty——"

"Bless my soul! What did they do, Bunter?"

"Kept me short of food, sir."

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

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



There came a loud ringing at the bell, and the Greyfriars porter turned out with a grunt. Gosling jumped at the sight of a fat figure pressed close to the bars of the gate. "Master Bunter!" he gasped. "Let me in!" howled Bunter. "I'm starving!" (See Chapter 13.)

Billy Bunter did not stay to listen to what Gosling had to say. As soon as the gate was open he bolted in.

The door of the School House was closed, and Bunter rang the bell and thumped on the door.

"Can't you let a fellow in when he's famished?" he roared.

Trotter opened the door, and almost fell down at the sight of the fat junior.

"Master Bunter, I thought you was kidnapped!" said Trotter.

"So I was!" growled Bunter. "And I've had practically nothing to eat, and had to walk hundreds of miles since they dumped me out of the car, the beasts!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" howled Bunter indignantly.

"I've had nothing to eat since dinner, and then I only had about half a pound of cheese and a loaf and a tin of corned beef. I'm dying of hunger at this moment. I've walked hundreds of miles——"

"Make it thousands!" murmured Bob.

"You escaped, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir—that is, they let me go when they found out I wasn't Vivian, sir. It was Vivian they were after, and they took me for him. I suppose they thought I looked like a baronet."

"Eh?"

"Of course, I look a good deal more

—Watch out for next Monday's MAGNET! You'll find the answer!



like a baronet than Vivian does," said Bunter. "That accounts for it. It's pretty rotten, sir, that a fellow can't have a distinguished look without all this happening to him."

"Bless my soul! Come with me to the Head, Bunter."

"Yes, sir. Is the Head at supper?"

"No, Bunter, the Head is not at supper."

"Then if you don't mind, sir—"

"Come!" said Mr. Quelch, who apparently did mind.

Bunter was led away to Dr. Locke's study. There the Head was very glad to see him—possibly the first time on record that anybody had been glad to see William George Bunter.

Bunter for once in his life gave a brief account of his experiences; he was anxious to get to supper. So, instead of adorning the tale, he gave quite a succinct account. He had little to tell; only that he had been locked up in a garret—he didn't know where—and removed under chloroform in a motor-car, and left by the roadside after dark hundreds of miles from Greyfriars, and had had to walk those hundreds of miles to get home after coming to his senses.

The hundreds of miles probably might be reduced to four or five, as it transpired that Bunter had been about two hours tramping. But certainly he was tired, and undoubtedly he was hungry.

The Head dismissed him, and he went to seek the housekeeper and supper, and it was bedtime when Bunter finished.

In the Remove dormitory all the fellows wanted to hear Bunter's story, but

they were disappointed. Billy Bunter fell asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow.

So the eager inquirers had to put it off till the morning. In the morning Bunter was ready to tell what had happened—as well as a great deal that had not happened.

"They took you for Vivian because you were registering Quelch's letter at the post-office," said Lord Mauleverer. "You earned that half-crown, Bunter, by gad! But what did you let them take you away for?"

"I struck out right and left, and felled six or seven of them—"

"Go it!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Then I was seized by a dozen more and hurled into the car," said Bunter.

"After that—"

"You woke up?" asked Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dror it mild, old chap!" suggested Sir Jimmy.

Bunter blinked indignantly at the baronet.

"Is that what you call gratitude?" he asked. "After I allowed myself to be kidnapped in your place to—to save you out of devotion—"

"Oh, my 'at!"

"Pile it on!" chortled Peter.

"If you don't believe me, Toddy—"

"Believe you! Oh, my word!"

"You allowed yourself to be kidnapped to save Vivian?" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Yes, heroic devotion, you know—"

"And you fought like a tiger and felled them right and left?"

"Yes, rather! I'm a pretty dangerous customer when I'm roused, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, gad! Those two yarns don't seem to fit together somehow," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, really, Mauly! The fact is, I've saved Vivian from being kidnapped—"

"By accident!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"By my courage and devotion," said Bunter. "The least Vivian can do now is to ask me to join the party in Cornwall for the vacation. I sha'n't refuse, Vivian, old chap."

"You won't have the chance!" grinned Vivian.

And the schoolboy baronet walked away.

"And that's gratitude!" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I'm coming with you fellows to Cornwall, all the same," said Bunter reassuringly.

That was definitely settled—in Bunter's own fat mind, at least. Billy Bunter was quite determined not to desert his old pals that vacation, and he was equally determined that his old pals should not have a chance of deserting him.

THE END.

(Billy Bunter fondly imagines that he has earned the right to be included in Sir Jimmy's party visiting Cornwall—the "Co." think otherwise. Look out for "Bunter the Hunter!"—next week's ripping story—and see who is right!)

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# GALLOPING DICK!

With his heart full of bitterness against Sir Mostyn Frayne, gamester and rogue, who, in one stroke, has robbed him of his brother, and the house and lands which had been the property of the Langleys for generations past, Dick Langley turns highwayman. Now known as "Galloping Dick," he roams the countryside—the terror of the rich, and a staunch friend of the poor:



Told by  
the world-  
renowned  
author,

**DAVID  
GOODWIN.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Drastic Measures!

"OYEZ! OYEZ! OYEZ!"

"Hereby be it known to all Honest Men, that to any who shall apprehend and bring to Justice the notorious Rogue and Highwayman, Richard Langley, commonly known as Galloping Dick, I, the Undersigned, will recompense in the sum of

**TWO HUNDRED GUINEAS,**

the same to be paid by my Steward at Fratton the day the aforesaid Rogue is delivered into the hands of the law.

"SIR MOSTYN FRAYNE, BART."

"ZOUNDS! The thing is plaguery heavy to handle!" panted Gaffer Beckton, setting the board down and mopping his brow. Let go your end o' 't, boy, an' wait while I get my breath!"

They propped the heavy oak board against the foot of the tree, and stood wiping their foreheads.

"I bain't no scholar," said old Beckton, "but it's to do wi' this here highwayman that stopped the master last week—hey?"

The younger man wrinkled his brow, stared fixedly at the painted board he and his father had brought with them, and slowly spelled out from it the inscription at the head of this chapter.

"Well," said Gaffer, "young Master Langley of Langleys! He'll take some catching, from what I remember o' him on horseback. To think o' him takin' to the road! Ay, he's soured at the treatment he's had, and no wonder! Well, we've got to obey orders and nail this board up. This here's the tree—pollard oak, at Two Mile Corner, on the Milton bridle-path—them was the steward's orders. You hold it up, Bob, while I drive in the spike."

Bob laid the board against the tree-trunk, five feet from the ground, and old Beckton, taking a tenpenny nail, began laboriously to drive it through the wood.

"Odds fish, Gaffer Beckton!" said a laughing voice behind them. "Can you

nail it no higher than that? Hoist it up to the boss of the trunk, man!"

The board dropped with a clatter, and the two men, with scared faces, turned sharply round. They gaped open-mouthed at a well-clad, handsome youth, who sat easily on a coal-black mare, a mischievous light in his eyes. It was Galloping Dick himself.

"Don't 'ee shoot, Master Dick—don't 'ee shoot!" pleaded Beckton in a quavering voice.

"Shoot! Why, man, my pistols are in the holsters. But pick up that board, Beckton, or Sir Mostyn will rate you soundly for damaging his property. Here, give it me!"

They handed him the board, their knees knocking together. Dick Langley brought the mare alongside the oak-tree. "Now the hammer and the spike!" he said.

They were given up hastily, and Dick, holding the board against the bark with his forearm, drove in the nail with a few smart strokes. Then, reining back, he read the notice through till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Faith," he said. "My value is going up like a fat goose's at Michaelmas. Two hundred guineas! I sadly fear that, even if it were earned, Sir Mostyn would find a way to avoid paying it." He turned to the two men with mischievous eyes. "Don't look so scared, Gaffer!" said Dick to the older man. "You are quite safe. What had you for bringing this board here?"

"One shilling apiece, zur."

"Tut, man, what a sorry price. Here is a guinea each for your trouble. Go back and convey my thanks to Sir Mostyn for his pretty attention. Two hundred guineas, egad!"

He laughed quietly, and the two Becktons, touching their caps gratefully, hurried off.

"There is humour in the position," said Galloping Dick to himself, as the mare Kitty walked slowly up the bridle path. "Frayne is offering my own money, so it seems, for my arrest. Ho, ho! I think I see every clodhopper in

these parts licking his lips at the thought of that two hundred guineas."

Dick reined in at the curve in the path, a hundred yards from the board, and looked round. Then, seeing someone approaching, he quickly and silently turned Kitty aside into the shade of the trees.

The stranger was a strongly-built man in rough, torn clothes, and walked with a stoop, as one who is not in good spirits. As his eye, glancing up, caught the notice-board, he stopped and read it.

The man's face was gaunt and starved. The skin stretched tight over the cheekbones and jaw. As he read the notice of the reward a fierce, hungry glare lit in his eyes.

He turned away from the board and stood stockstill in the middle of the path, pondering. Then he set out with a rapid, noiseless stride, looking about him keenly. He passed by within ten yards of Dick and disappeared round the curve.

"Ay, my friend," thought the young horseman, "you little knew how near you were to the same highwayman!"

Dick, after waiting some time, turned aside into a by-path, and rode at a foot pace away towards the crown of the heath.

Presently he stopped in his reverie and raised his head, throwing a quick glance over his shoulder. His keen senses, alert as those of a terrier, told him that he was being followed.

He did not want his pursuer—if such he was—to know that he had discovered him. There was only one. The dark figure halted and crouched low as the mare altered her stride, but presently stole onward again.

Having assured himself that he was being tracked down, Dick touched the mare with his heel, and ambled along a little faster. The man behind quickened his pace. They cleared the wood, and came out upon Blackwold Heath, a furzy plain, studded with little copses and old gravel pits.

Dick skirted one of the copses, and, as soon as he was out of sight of the unknown pursuer, trotted smartly ahead.

—MAGNET early! Don't be amongst the disappointed readers!



The light-treading mare made no sound of hoofs on the soft sward.

One glance behind him, and Dick turned the mare down the gentle slope of a gravel-pit, reached the bottom, and leapt quickly down.

"Stand till I come back, Kitty," he said.

The black mare twitched her satin nostrils. She understood.

Dick took his pistols from the holster and slipped nimbly up the farther slope of the pit. He reached the top, crouched low among the gorse bushes of the heath, and made a circuit round to the side where he had ridden down.

He stooped behind the cover of a bramble thicket just where the slope began, and cocked his pistols.

The quiet of the night covered all things. A brown owl called in the cop-pice, but other sound there was none.

Presently the dark figure of the pursuer came round the curve of the bridle-track, stooping low and walking rapidly.

Dick gave a faint whistle between his teeth, no louder than a bat's squeak. Kitty heard it from her place in the gravel-pit, and whinnied loudly.

The dark figure started at the sound and came rapidly forward in its direction, bending double now, and as though he had found what he sought. Straight to the slope leading to the gravel-pit he came, and the starlight shone on his face. It was the man who had read the notice-board with such zest.

The wild, hungry eyes were alight with fierce excitement and greed. He passed Dick's hiding-place within a yard. Down in the pit Kitty shifted her feet, and the listeners heard the rattle of gravel stones.

At the man's belt was a coil of cord, and in one hand he carried a heavy, knotted oak cudgel, evidently newly cut. His whole frame seemed to quiver with eagerness, and he lay down upon his stomach and wriggled like a snake up the slope, as though to peer over. Dick heard his breath come quick and short.

He was within a foot of the edge of the pit. He thrust out a hand to draw himself forward. But he stopped, and a gasping cry escaped him instead.

The cold barrel of a horse-pistol pressed against his neck, and he turned and looked into the eyes of Dick Langley.

Dick whistled, and Kitty came trotting up the slope.

The highwayman looked at his prisoner. There was despair and defiance in the man's wild eyes, but no trace of fear.

"Have you anything to say?" said Dick quietly. "You were seeking Richard Langley. I am he."

The man cast down his eyes but said nothing.

"What is the bludgeon for?" said Dick, pointing to it.

"For thy pate, had I caught thee," muttered the man hoarsely. "I would ha' stunned thee like an ox!"

"Indeed! And the rope, I presume, was to bind me prisoner? You sought to bring me to the gallows, and claim the two hundred guineas?"

"Ay!" said the prisoner.

"Very well. I carry my life in my hands. You tried to take it. My hand is against all men's, and now your life is forfeit to me. Have you any reason to offer that I should not kill you forthwith?"

"No," said the man, looking doggedly at the ground.

"You are not afraid? You admit your life is mine to take?"

"Take it—take it!" The man threw his head on his arms with a cry of despair, and leaned against a withered tree that grew on the edge of the pit. "What have I to live for now?"

"What do you mean, you knave?" cried Dick. "Is life worth nothing because you have failed in winning the price of my head to squander in ale-rooms? Odds bodikins, 'tis a horse-whipping and not a pistol-ball I will give you!"

"Enough!" cried the man. "Shoot, shoot! I care not a snap! My boy is dying, and I am without a penny to pay for the doctor's skill. Had I trapped thee the money paid on thy head would have saved him!"

"Man alive, what's this?" cried Dick. "Will not the doctor attend him?"

"No, curse him!" snarled the man, his starved face alight with hate, "though he keeps six servants and a stable of horses! Though I have offered to work for him without pay for as long as he will, he refuses to stir a foot to save my son without the money in his hand."

"Up, up!" cried Dick, springing on to the mare. "Jump up behind me, man, and show the road to your house. This must be looked to."

The man, half-dazed, clambered up behind, and hung on to his captor. Dick spoke to the mare, and away they rode over the black heath, the wind whistling in their ears.

"Yonder is my cottage," said the man, pointing to a dim light that shone on the edge of the plain. "It is a mean place, for I am but a charcoal-burner."

Dick pulled the mare up alongside the cottage, and bade her stand. The man listened at his door for a moment with white face, as though afraid to enter. Then he tapped softly.

A woman, her eyes red with weeping, opened the door.

"Has he—is he——" stammered the man.

"He lives yet," whispered the woman with a sob. "It cannot be for long."

She looked furtively at Dick.

"If you would let me, good people," said the young horseman. "I come as a friend."

They admitted him. He entered, treading softly. It was as the charcoal-burner had said. On a poor truckle-bed, the only couch in the room, lay a little lad of five or six, evidently at the last stages of high fever. The stamp of death seemed upon him already.

"The village wise woman says he cannot live till morning," whispered the poor woman in a broken voice. "But that if the fever could be taken in hand at its height by a skilled physician he might still live. But the doctor——"

"Do you tell me he will not come?" whispered Dick hotly, his eyes blazing.

"Ay, he will not. 'Am I to cure every beggar's brat for nothing?' said he."

"Wait!" said Dick, striding out quietly. "I will return. Tell me, who is the doctor, and where does he live?"

"But a mile along the road, sir. A large house on the right. Ye cannot miss it. Dr. Fenton is his name."

"Is he skilled?"

"There is none better in the country, but——"

"I shall be here again in half an hour," returned Dick.

And he went off at a gallop, leaving the man staring after him.

A short, sharp ride brought Dick to the doctor's house. He rang the great bell at the front, and a servant appeared.

"Call Dr. Fenton at once on a matter of extreme urgency!" ordered Dick.

The servant entered the house. A light appeared in one of the upper rooms, and through the open window Dick heard a surly voice.

"Who is it? You are sure it is not some beggarly labourer?"

"Indeed no, sir!" replied the voice of the servant. "He is dressed like a lord, and is riding a blood mare worth a hundred guineas."

"Very good," came the answer more cheerfully. "I am coming!"

The door opened, and the doctor, a stout, purple-faced man, came striding down the drive to the gate.

"Go, wake the groom and saddle me a horse," he called over his shoulder, and the servant disappeared on his errand.

"Now, sir," said the doctor to Dick, "I am at your service. What is the case, and where?"

"A child is dying of fever," replied Dick, "and may be saved, Heaven willing, by your skill. There is no time to lose."

"But where is the case, sir?" cried the doctor.

"At the cottage of the charcoal-burner, a mile along the road," said Dick grimly.

"Confound your insolence, sir!" roared the doctor, turning a deeper colour. "Am I to be turned out of my bed to attend pauper brats?"

He turned furiously on his heel to re-enter the gate. Then he gasped. A long horse-pistol levelled itself at his head.

"Who are you?" panted Dr. Fenton in a shaking voice.

"They call me Galloping Dick—at your service!"

The doctor sought for words, but could find none. Growing impatient, Dick stooped forward, gripped him by the collar, and swung him across his saddle-bow like a sack of coals.

Away leapt Kitty, Dick holding the doctor fast in front of him, and they stopped at the cottage. The door was open.

Dick laid the muzzle of his pistol to the nape of the doctor's neck, and marched him into the room. The charcoal-burner and his wife gaped in amazement.

"There is the child, Dr. Fenton," said Dick in a low voice. "You have the skill—cure him. Had you done your duty and attended the child the illness would have been checked. If he dies, you die likewise, so do your best."

The doctor made no further resistance. He saw that Galloping Dick was in deadly earnest. He doffed his coat and tended the child. Dick saw at once that he was extremely skilful at his work.

Dr. Fenton sent the charcoal-burner to his house with an order for blankets, fuel, and medicine.

A fire was lit, the doctor spread his necessities about him, and the wrestle with death commenced.

All through that night Dr. Fenton worked for the life of the charcoal-burner's child as he had never worked for the wealthiest peer in all his rich practice, and Dick sat silent and watchful, the horse-pistol across his knees. The poor parents waited in an agony of hope and doubt.

At length a gentle perspiration broke out on the unconscious boy's forehead; the troubled swoon gave way to even breathing and quiet, peaceful sleep.

Even Dick could see that the case was won.

The doctor rose, and the child's mother threw herself on her knees, sobbing quietly with joy, and smothered Dick's hand with kisses.

Something to look forward to: "The Holiday Annual"—



The charcoal-burner, choking, tried to thank him, but broke down.

"There, say no more," said Dick. "Thank the doctor, not me."

He turned away, and while the two cottagers were bending over the sleeping boy he drew a handful of guineas from his wallet and slipped them quietly down on the old oak table. Then he went out into the road, and, with a caressing word to Kitty, was soon lost over the ridge of the heath.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### A Just Punishment.

**A** MAN on a big roan hunter reined his horse back on its haunches as he saw the mare Kitty and the black mask of her rider.

"What, you rogue!" he cried. "Another knight of the road? Only last week I bailed out my purse to a gallows-bird outside Milton! Sdeath! If you'll leave your pistols in the holsters and get down on the grass, I'll show you who's the better man!"

"Why, Sir John Lade," said the highwayman, with a laugh, "you are as keen a sportsman as ever! I've no wish to come to fisticuffs with my father's old friend, for I'll go bail you haven't joined those who slander me!"

Dick Langley whipped off his mask, and chuckled jovially at the older man's surprise.

"Odd's blood!" exclaimed the old baronet, staring at the youngster's cheery features. "Dick, you rascal, is it you? Gad, I wondered why you didn't draw your pistol on me! Isn't all fish that comes to your net?"

"Not old friends, Sir John," replied Dick. "They are none too plentiful, you see."

"Dick, my boy, you've put your head into the halter this time, but hang me if I blame you! You handled the man Frayne right cleverly. Mind you, robbery's robbery, and thank Heaven I'm not a justice, or I'd have to commit you! Will you dine with me to-morrow night?"

"With all the pleasure in life, Sir John! It's good of you to ask me. A man doesn't know which are his friends or how few they be till he's stripped of his fortune and cast adrift, as I have been!"

"You are not afraid to come?"

Dick laughed.

"In this profession of mine a man has no room for being afraid, or he'd have a sorry time of it. I dined with Squire Rogers last night, and I'll be hanged—which is likely enough—if I wouldn't dine with the Lord Chief Justice if he asked me, let alone an old friend! Good-night, Sir John, and expect me at five!"

Dick rode on, feeling a new warmth at his heart.

It was good to find a friend who did not shun him in his adversity.

Dick trotted along the path, patting Kitty on the neck, and his thoughts were cheerful enough. He passed over the common, and entered the road that led through the forest. There he slowed to a walking pace, talking to his mare as he went.

"Comfortable quarters to-morrow, my little lady!" he said. "You'll take your oats in as good a stable as there is in the country while my knees are under Sir John's mahogany, for he keeps as good fare for horses as for men. Not that you suffer much, for there's never a day without you get your oats and grooming at a good inn. The innkeepers love a knight of the road, for we are

both robbers, and the innkeeper the greater. Ha, ha! Hallo! Who are these?"

A couple of rough-looking fellows, with bloated, evil-looking faces, came from the opposite direction to Dick's, and passed him at a rapid pace. One of them gave him a scowl as he went by, and each had a cudgel in his pocket.

"A pretty-looking pair!" thought Dick. "I've seen several of these gentry about lately, and if they are not up to mischief, I don't know a rogue when I see one."

He had not ridden a quarter of a mile before sounds of distress reached him, and, rounding a corner of the path, he came upon a pitiful sight. A grey-haired man, poorly but decently clad, was lying with his head propped against the trunk of a tree, groaning with pain. A little lad of seven or eight was kneeling beside him, crying bitterly, and a cruel weal across the boy's face showed he had lately received a heavy blow.

"Why, old man, what is your trouble?" exclaimed Dick, springing

"The vile cowards!" cried Dick, flushing with indignation. "Ah, I believe I know them! Were they two ill-looking rascals, in leather jerkins, that went down towards Barford?"

"Ay, that is the way they went!"

"Stay here, man!" said Dick grimly. "I will be with you again in twenty minutes."

He vaulted on to Kitty's back, and rode off at a gallop the way he had come. It was not long before he overhauled the two men who had passed him. They were hurrying along at a good pace, and they seemed to be quarrelling as they went. So engrossed were they in their dispute that they did not hear Kitty's hoofs on the turf till she was close upon them.

"Halt, there!" cried Dick, reining up. And the two men stared at him suspiciously. "Are you the knaves who robbed and beat an old man along the road?"

"What be that to you, ye popinjay?" snarled the bigger man of the two.

And both of them sprang forward, cudgel in hand. They were met by the



"Odd's fish, Gaffer Beckton," said a laughing voice. "Can you nail it no higher than that? Holst it up to the boss of the trunk, man." The board dropped with a clatter, and the two men, gaping open-mouthed, saw a well-clad, handsome youth astride a black mare. It was Galloping Dick himself. (See Chapter 1.)

down from his mare, and walking up to the aged cottager. "What villain has used you like this?"

"Ay, 'tis an ill hour I set out from my cottage, sir!" replied the old man faintly. "I be main badly hurt, and my little son here is worse off still, I fear."

"No, father; I am well enough. It's you I am afraid for," said the little fellow, choking down a sob.

"No bones broken," said Dick, examining the old man with pity, "but you have been cruelly handled. Who did it?"

"I was set upon by two footpads, sir, and gave up my purse. It held only a couple of shillings, but they searched me, and were so enraged at not finding more—for I am very poor—that they beat me cruelly with their cudgels. My little son here, small as he is, flew at them like a lion, and though he could do no hurt, one of them gave him a terrible cut across the face with a thong."

muzzles of a pair of black pistols, and the knaves fell back a pace or two.

"I will soon know the truth," said Dick quietly, a finger on each trigger. "Turn round, and walk before me the way you came, and remember that the first one who looks round or tries to escape I will shoot down like a dog! March!"

There was no help for it. Choking down their rage and chagrin, the men turned and strode back along the path. Dick, leaving the reins on Kitty's neck, followed at a foot pace, keeping a pistol aimed at each of their heads. They knew better than to attempt to run for it.

Dick made them put their best feet foremost, and very soon they came to the tree where the old man had lain. He was sitting up now, and the boy was bathing his father's bruised temples with a handful of damp moss. Both of them looked up, spellbound with surprise.

"Now, father," cried Dick, halting the two ruffians before the old man, "are



these the men who robbed you? For, if they are, I will do justice by them; and if they are not, I must in honour give them a couple of guineas each and let them go!"

"Ay," said the old man, "those are they, sure enough! Both of them beat me, and it was the bigger one who lashed my son across the face, as you see!"

"You hear?" cried Dick, turning to the two footpads. "What have you to say?"

He leaped to the ground, putting up one of his pistols, and, drawing a hunting thong from his boot, he laid into the big ruffian with such hearty goodwill that the fellow danced and yelled like a mountebank.

He made one desperate attempt to turn on his punisher, but the pistol in Dick's left hand made him recoil, and the other rascal did not dare to bolt, lest a bullet should overtake him. When the first of the rogues was well basted, Dick gave the other one nearly as sound a flogging as his partner had.

"You had a double allowance," said Dick, lowering his whip and addressing the bigger man, who was rubbing his weals with imprecations and groans, "because you were coward enough to strike this little lad. Throw down the old man's purse, and go, both of you! I've been told that a mob of footpads of your kidney have come to infest the heath. Tell your mates to leave the district, and not poach on my preserves, or I'll treat every man-jack of them as I've treated you. Off with you!"

The men slunk away, and dived into the wood.

"Can you walk, my little man?" Dick said to the boy. "Yes? You're a plucky youngster! Now, father, put a hand on my shoulder, and I'll hoist you up."

He lifted the cottager on to Kitty's back, and walked beside the mare. The old man was nearly fainting with exhaustion, but Dick held him on, and the lad showed the way to his house.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Villains Discomfited!

**N**EXT day, at four o'clock, as the sun was sinking, Dick made his toilet at a roadside inn, and rode out to his appointment with Sir John Lade. Country gentlemen dined at five in the eighteenth century, and Dick had plenty of time.

To reach Merton Court, his host's house, he had to ride over a bridge at a place called Roding Gap. A boulder-strewn torrent roared fifty feet below the bridge, to which the road led between perpendicular walls of rock. Once started between those walls, one had to go back or go on. There was no way out by the sides.

As Dick trotted in between the walls he caught sight of a crowd of figures gathered on the bridge, and he looked intently at them as he advanced.

"It's a mob of those rascals that have taken to infesting the heath!" he said to himself. "Gipsies and footpads and thieves. Ah, that looks like the rogue I thrashed yesterday!"

He glanced back. Another mob had closed in behind him, cutting off his retreat. Dick smiled grimly.

"Grab him, lads!" cried the men behind. "Pull the jackanapes down, and chuck him over the bridge!"

The men ahead shouted fiercely, and flourished a forest of cudgels. One of them was mounted, sitting a great, bony, ewe-necked horse, as long in the body as

a camel, and its rider, to bar Dick's passage, pulled the beast crossways athwart the narrow stone bridge with its low walls.

"We'll finish ye now, ye whelp!" roared the knaves. "Back or forward, we've got ye fast!"

Dick laughed.

"I have an appointment to dine," he said, "or I would stay and argue the point with you. As it is—"

He pulled the riding-thong from his boot, touched Kitty with his knee, and she sprang forward. At a hard gallop she rushed at the bridge. The cudgels were flourished amid a storm of yells. The men could see no escape for their victim, for the big horse barred the way.

To their utter amazement, Dick came on at a full gallop, lifted his reins, and, with a "Ho! up, Kitty!" the black mare went skimming over the hind quarters of the gipsy's horse like a swallow, and was away up the road before they could draw breath, but not before Dick had dealt a few sound cuts with his whip among the rascals as he sped by. A single belated pistol-shot followed him. A mocking laugh echoed far up the ravine, and the young highwayman was gone.

It was soon after midnight that Dick, after a cheery evening with Sir John Lade, declined his offer of a bed for the night, and rode back by way of the stone bridge. It was silent now, and the mob of rascals were gone.

"I won't have those knaves in my

## Sir Mostyn Frayne

*Present Owner of  
Langley Hall, who  
has offered a reward of*



## TWO HUNDRED GUINEAS

*for the apprehension  
of*

**GALLOPING DICK!**

district!" said Dick to himself. "They are a scourge to all the poor cottagers around, and have no honour even among themselves."

He rode on silently through the wood, on his way to a little wayside inn, where he knew he could put up, when through the stillness of the night rose a wild, agonised cry.

"Heaven and earth!" exclaimed Dick, urging Kitty to a canter, and turning in the direction of the sound. "It sounded like a man in mortal agony. Ah!"

He came suddenly on a little clearing, where the moonbeams glittered on a gruesome sight. A fine-looking old yeoman farmer lay on the green sward, blood flowing over his white neckerchief, his face pale and drawn, while three evil-looking rascals fingered his pockets.

One of them looked up as Dick appeared. He whipped a pistol from his boot. But Dick was too quick for him. The long black weapon leaped from the highwayman's holster, and the murderer was shot down.

The other two sprang up, not knowing which way to turn. Dick's second pistol threatened them. Leaping down, he secured the dead gipsy's weapon. The young horseman was white with wrath and horror as he saw the foul deed the men had done.

"Poor Farmer Harding!" he muttered, looking aside at the still form of the yeoman. "Have you come to your end at the hands of such vile rogues as these? Steady there, you! Here come more of your kidney!"

Another pair of the footpad fraternity, surprised at the sound of the shot, came running into the glade.

"Halt!" ordered Dick. "Keep your hands from your sides! Range up by the sides of your comrades there!"

The newcomers, amazed and startled, obeyed.

The two horse-pistols in Dick's ready hands seemed to play equally over all four of them, and they dared not resist. A rush together might have succeeded, no doubt, but two would have been killed, and none of the four dared take the risk.

"This shall end!" said Dick, his eyes stern and hard. "Blackwold Heath shall know you and your murdering crew no longer. I have caught two of you in the act, and they shall pay the penalty. Stand aside, you who came last. There stands the good farmer's horse, with a coil of wagon-rope at the saddle-bow. Take it down—so. Cut it in two, and make you two running nooses. Deftly done! Now sling them across the branch of that tree."

It was done. At the pistol's mouth the two footpads laid the noose about the necks of those who had murdered Farmer Harding. At the pistol's mouth they hauled upon the rope-falls, and the earth was rid of as vile a pair of evil-doers as all England could show.

"Go!" said Dick to the two who had done his bidding. "Get to your comrades, and let them be a dozen miles away by dawn. If any seeks a reason why he should not stay, send him here to see this oak-tree and the fruit it bears."

By daybreak every man of the evil crew was far away from Blackwold Heath, and the heavy scourge of the footpads was lifted from the poor.

THE END.

(Don't miss next Monday's sensational story of Richard Langley, chums. It's a full-of-thrills yarn that will hold your interest at a high pitch.)

There is another sensational story of "Galloping Dick" next week!





# THE THIRD BROTHER!

Having been instrumental in placing in the dock two scoundrels—brothers—whose machinations have terrorised all peaceful folk, Ferrers Locke, the wizard detective, is now the subject of the remaining brother's pent-up hatred. Sworn to avenge his misguided relatives, Maurice Stapleton sets out to take the life of the great sleuth. How does he fare? The answer is given by OWEN CONQUEST.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Under Sentence!

FERRERS LOCKE glanced at the card Jack Drake placed before him, and read:

"Mr. Albert Gurney."

"Shall I show him in, sir?" asked Drake.

"One moment, Drake. Keep the door closed."

"Yes, sir," said Drake, in surprise. Ferrers Locke stretched out his hand to the writing-table, and took from a recess a bottle of red ink.

Drake watched him silently, in growing amazement.

The Baker Street detective dipped a quill in the ink, and placed a single spot on the palm of his right hand.

Then he replaced the ink-bottle in its recess.

He glanced up with a smile, catching Drake's amazed eyes upon him.

"I seem to have surprised you, Drake?"

"Ye-es, sir," stammered the boy detective. "I—I don't quite see—"

Ferrers Locke held up his right hand.

"What would you have supposed had happened, Drake, if you had not seen me handle the ink-bottle?"

"I should suppose you had pricked your hand, with a pin or something," said Drake.

"And that that was the resulting spot of blood?"

"Yes."

"Exactly. That is a natural supposition, Drake. Now show in Mr. Albert Gurney."

Jack Drake went out of the consulting-room, greatly astonished. But the boy detective was too well-trained to allow his astonishment to show in his face.

His look was calm and sedate as usual when he showed in the visitor.

A little man, with a dark skin and very bright watchful eyes, entered the famous detective's consulting-room.

Ferrers Locke rose from his chair. He brushed his right palm with his handkerchief as he did so, leaving a faint red streak across the cambric.

"Good-morning, Mr. Gurney!"

"Good-morning, Mr. Locke!" The visitor's bright eyes were on the handkerchief. "You have had an accident, Mr. Locke?"

"Nothing to speak of," said Ferrers Locke with a smile. "Pray be seated. You wished to see me—"

"You must excuse my calling so early in the morning, Mr. Locke. The matter is so pressing," said Mr. Gurney. "I hope I have not interrupted you in dealing with your morning's correspondence?"

"I had just finished," said Ferrers Locke. He pressed the handkerchief to the palm of his right hand again, as if he felt a twinge there.

"I am afraid your hand is hurt, Mr. Locke?"

"A mere trifle," said the detective. "How can I serve you, Mr. Gurney. You have called—"

"Yes, let us come to business," said the visitor. "I know that your time is very valuable, Mr. Locke. I have called with reference to the affair of the brothers Stapleton."

Ferrers Locke raised his eyebrows.

"There was a Stapleton, the poisoner," he said. "I was instrumental in sending him to penal servitude for twenty years."

"That was Richard Stapleton," said the visitor. "He had two brothers—Albert and Maurice."

"I am not acquainted with them," said Ferrers Locke, "and I really fail to see—"

"I will explain. Stapleton, the poisoner, was condemned on evidence chiefly accumulated against him by you, Mr. Locke. But for you he would probably have escaped. As it was he barely escaped hanging."

"That is correct," assented the detective.

"His brothers are greatly attached to him," said the visitor, his bright eyes watching Locke's face. "They are determined that somehow Richard Stapleton shall not remain in a convict prison."

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"I think they will be disappointed," he said. "Stapleton's guilt was clear, and it was my own opinion that he had

confederates—in all probability the brothers you allude to. There was no proof of this, however, at the time. Richard was undoubtedly the most dangerous of the three, and society is safe from him now. The turn of the others will doubtless come."

"Possibly. But their view is that you may be induced to intervene in favour of the convict."

"That is not likely."

"They have a powerful inducement to offer."

Ferrers Locke shrugged his shoulders.

"Your intervention, Mr. Locke, would save the prisoner," said the visitor. "It was you who substantiated the case against him, but a lingering doubt existed, as he escaped the death penalty. If you should inform the proper authorities that you made a mistake—"

"I made no mistake."

"That certain facts which you mentioned at the trial now appear to you to be unfounded—"

"We are wasting time, Mr. Gurney."

"The inducement they offer you is a large one," said Mr. Gurney. "Not money—you are well known to be indifferent to such considerations—but your life itself, Mr. Locke."

"My life is not in danger so far as I am aware," the Baker Street detective smiled. "Neither do I believe that either of the Stapleton brothers would venture to use knife or pistol, Mr. Gurney."

"There is a still more deadly weapon, and more in their line," suggested Mr. Gurney.

"Poison?"

"Yes."

"You are very good to warn me."

Ferrers Locke pressed the handkerchief into his palm again, and the bright, watching eyes of the visitor glittered.

"You are in pain?" he said.

"It is nothing."

"An accident with a penknife?" asked Mr. Gurney sympathetically.

"Oh, no! It is a trifling matter," said Ferrers Locke. "I received by the post this morning a small bottle from some unknown correspondent. The screw stopper was very stiff, and there must

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have been some sharp point on it. That is all."

The visitor smiled.

"That is all I wished to know," he said. He glanced round, to make sure that no one else was in the consulting-room. Then he leaned towards the famous detective, his eyes glinting. "That bottle was sent you by me, Mr. Locke."

"Indeed!"

"I am Albert Stapleton."

"The brother of the poisoner whom I sent to penal servitude?" said the Baker Street detective calmly.

"Exactly! On the screw stopper of that bottle was a tiny point, and the stopper was intentionally stiff. In turning it you were certain to prick your hand with the tiny point. You follow me?"

"Certainly!"

"That tiny point was impregnated with a deadly poison, known only to the Stapleton brothers, and to certain natives of Java, who use it for the tips of their arrows. No antidote is known in this country."

"Indeed!"

"The antidote is known only to three persons—Richard Stapleton, whom you have sent to prison, and Maurice and myself." The visitor leaned farther forward. "Unless I choose to save you, Mr. Locke, you are a dead man within thirty minutes."

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Ferrers Locke's Escape!

THERE was a dead silence in Ferrers Locke's consulting-room. The dark-skinned man leaned back now, at ease in his chair, his bright eyes gleaming and twinkling. There was an evil triumph in his face as he watched the famous detective. Ferrers Locke pressed the handkerchief into the palm of his right hand. Then, from a drawer of the writing-table, he took a little glass bottle that seemed filled with some golden liquid. The stopper was still in the bottle.

"My little gift," smiled the visitor. "I counted upon your natural curiosity to ascertain the contents, my friend. Ferrers Locke has been caught for once."

"A cunningly contrived death-trap!" said Ferrers Locke, "and the poison—so deadly, as you say?"

"You do not believe me?"

"At least, I feel no ill-effects so far."

"Possibly not. If you wish to put my statement to the test I will wait. When you begin to feel the poison in your veins you will have, perhaps, twenty minutes to live. No doctor could save you. He would not even know how to begin to try."

"But you could save me?" The Baker Street detective's manner was perfectly calm.

"I could save you."

"The antidote—you have it with you?"

The man grinned.

"At least, I can send for it in time. I take no risks in coming here, Ferrers Locke."

"No doubt!" assented the detective.

"The minutes are passing," said Albert Stapleton. "In a quarter of an hour it may be too late for even me to save you. Is it worth while to throw away your life, Ferrers Locke, in order to leave Richard Stapleton in penal servitude?"

The Baker Street detective shrugged his shoulders.

"What terms do you make?" he asked.

"Your word of honour, backed up by

a written promise, to save Richard Stapleton from prison as the price of your life."

"I might fail."

"You will not fail. It is in your power."

"And you would always have the written promise to hold over my head, by way of blackmail, to prevent interference from me in the future."

Stapleton smiled.

"Think out your answer!" he said. "Time is passing. No power on earth can save you when the poison of the Java adder gets a grip on your system. Do you feel no effects yet?"

"None."

"You think I am bluffing? You have a constitution of iron, but it is coming. Wait a few minutes more."

"Not at all," said Ferrers Locke. "I do not think you are bluffing. I think you are speaking the exact truth, so far as you know it. I think also that you have confessed to having sent this poisoned bottle to me, and that you will be charged with attempted murder, and sent to join your rascally brother in a convict prison."

"You cannot frighten me," said Stapleton contemptuously. "We are alone here. Where are your witnesses? And in twenty minutes more you will be a dead man, unless you come to my terms."

Ferrers Locke tapped on the writing-table lightly.

It was a signal. The door of a Japanese lacquer cabinet opened, and a figure in uniform stepped out. Stapleton started to his feet.

"Here is your prisoner, Inspector Heath," said Ferrers Locke tranquilly. "You heard all that was said?"

"Every word, Mr. Locke."

The Scotland Yard inspector advanced towards Stapleton, the handcuffs in his hand. The dark-skinned man leaped to his feet, his eyes were blazing.

"Better take it quietly," said the inspector, with a grin. "Wrists, please!"

There was a moment's struggle, and then the handcuffs clicked on the wrists of the would-be poisoner.

He turned his eyes, blazing with rage and hatred, upon the Baker Street detective.

"So you guessed and laid a trap for me, Ferrers Locke?" he said, in a low, panting voice.

"Precisely."

"But you cannot save yourself," said Stapleton exultingly. "Whatever may become of me you are doomed to a terrible death."

The Baker Street detective laughed.

"You do too much credit to my power of credulity, Mr. Stapleton," he said. "I have said that you will be charged with attempted murder. But attempted murder only." He dropped the handkerchief, and raised his right hand, with the palm towards Stapleton. "Look!"

"But—but you—"

"No, I did not open the poisoned stopper," said Ferrers Locke, with an icy smile. "My dear fellow, I am not so careless with articles that I receive by post. More than once a bomb has been sent to me. If I had not learned to take precautions, Mr. Stapleton, I should not

have lived long enough to send your brother to Portland and you after him."

The man trembled with rage.

"You lie—you lie!" he exclaimed hoarsely. "I saw the spot on your hand, the scratch—"

"The spot, but no scratch," said Ferrers Locke. "And the spot, my dear fellow, was placed there a few moments before you entered from the red ink."

There was a quiet chuckle from the inspector.

"You see," continued Ferrers Locke, "I made a very careful examination of the bottle. I discovered the tiny point on the stopper, and I made a careful examination of that in my laboratory. I found that it was poisoned. Then I knew all that I needed to know."

Stapleton ground his teeth.

"An old idea," said Ferrers Locke. "A trick that was used by the Borgias centuries ago, revived by you for my benefit. I have never had the happiness of meeting you before, Mr. Stapleton; but when you stepped out of your taxi your likeness to your brother was sufficient for me to identify you. I observed you from the window, you will understand, and so prepared this little comedy for you. Inspector Heath had already come to consult me, called on the telephone, with regard to the poisoned bottle. I requested him to step into the cabinet yonder, and he was kind enough to oblige me."

"I shall not fail next time!" gasped Stapleton.

"There will be no 'next time' for some years to come, I think," said Ferrers Locke tranquilly. "You have given yourself away very completely, Mr. Albert Stapleton. As soon as I recognised you as the poisoner's brother I concluded that you had come to see how your trick had worked. I confess that I did not then guess that you were thinking of imposing terms upon me for the release of a convict. Quite a cunning scheme if it had worked. But I am a very old bird to be caught with such chaff."

"You've had a narrow escape, Mr. Locke," said Inspector Heath.

"I have had many as narrow," said the Baker Street detective. "You will require this stoppered bottle, inspector; but be careful how you handle it. I have not the slightest doubt that a scratch from the tiny point means death, as this scoundrel has informed me. It is, I believe, the same unknown poison that was used by Richard Stapleton."

Jack Drake had stepped into the consulting-room. His face was white as he listened to Ferrers Locke.

"Mr. Stapleton's own taxi waits below," added the detective. "It will serve to convey him from here. I think I had better come with you, inspector."

"I think so, Mr. Locke. Come, my man!"

Stapleton's eyes burned.

"You have me," he muttered. "But beware, Ferrers Locke, there is another, free, who will yet deal with you."

"I shall take my chance of that. Come!"

Jack Drake waited while the taxicab drove away with the inspector and his prisoner and Ferrers Locke. More than once the boy detective had seen his chief in deadly peril, but it was hard to realise that that sunny morning Ferrers Locke had escaped a terrible death in his own rooms by a hair's breadth. Only the habitual care and watchfulness of the famous detective had saved him.



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Drake started up when Locke came in at last.

"Now you know the meaning, Drake, of the little comedy that puzzled you so much when you showed in my visitor," smiled the detective.

"But what a fearfully narrow escape, sir," said Drake, his voice trembling a little. "Now I know why you would not allow me to open the bottle."

"I should have lost my invaluable assistant," said Ferrers Locke.

"And that villain—he will be safe now?"

"For five years, at least."

"Good!"

"But the case is not yet over, Drake."

"Not?" asked Drake. "But what—?"

"There is the third man," said Ferrers Locke; and a glint came into his eyes. "Three desperate criminals, Drake, and only two of them are under lock and key. Villains as they are, they have a strong attachment for one another—and they have always worked together. The case will not be ended until I have dealt with the third brother."

"But you will easily find him—he will not long escape you, sir," said Drake.

"I could lay my finger on him to-day, if I chose."

"Then—"

"But it would be useless. That he was a party to this attempt is pretty clear; but there exists no proof, and certainly the prisoner will not betray him. There is no charge that can be made against Maurice Stapleton, until—"

"Until?" said Drake.

"Until he makes an attempt in his turn," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "The Java poison is his secret, too, and I have not the slightest doubt that he will play the same game that has just failed. With the poison in my veins, and the antidote known only to Maurice Stapleton, he will count upon reducing me to his orders, and through my influence obtaining the release of his brothers. Where Albert has failed, Maurice will hope to succeed."

Drake shivered.

"And we must wait till he, choosing his own time, makes the attempt," he exclaimed.

"Patience is necessary in our profession, Drake. I shall wait for Maurice Stapleton to strike, and then—"

"But if he should not fail?" faltered Drake.

Ferrers Locke laughed.

"The future is on the knees of the gods," he said. "But two of my enemies are behind prison walls; and I shall hope to be successful in dealing with the third man."

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Laid Low!

**D**URING the weeks that followed Jack Drake gave a great deal of thought to the case of the Stapletons. Albert Stapleton's trial and sentence came in due course, and the attempted assassin was sent to five years' penal servitude. But Drake's thoughts were of the third man—the enemy and avenger who lurked unseen, biding his time.

Ferrers Locke had escaped once, but would he escape when the third man struck? That was a thought and a fear that haunted Jack Drake's mind—and

never had he been so watchful, so keen, as during the weeks that followed.

So far as he could see, Ferrers Locke had dismissed the matter from his mind. The famous detective was busy, as usual; and he seemed to be giving no thought to the third brother. And gradually, in the interest of successive cases, the matter grew dim in Drake's own mind, and he ceased to think of Maurice Stapleton—though the unknown man lurked, as it were, at the back of his mind, as a dark and threatening shadow.

And then—to drive away all remembrance of it—came Ferrers Locke's illness.

Locke was a hard worker, and he seldom gave himself a holiday that was not combined with business; but he seemed made of iron. His illness, when it came, took Drake by surprise—it came so suddenly and so terribly.

Inspector Heath, of Scotland Yard, was breakfasting one morning with the

before the inspector could reach him. But Ferrers Locke answered no word.

His eyes, fixed and glassy, stared at the boy detective with no meaning in them.

"Good heavens! He is ill!" exclaimed Inspector Heath. "Locke, my dear fellow—"

He raised the inert figure of the detective in his strong arms, and laid him upon a couch.

Drake bent over him.

"Locke—Mr. Locke—speak—a word, for Heaven's sake!" he breathed.

The detective panted.

"A doctor—quick!"

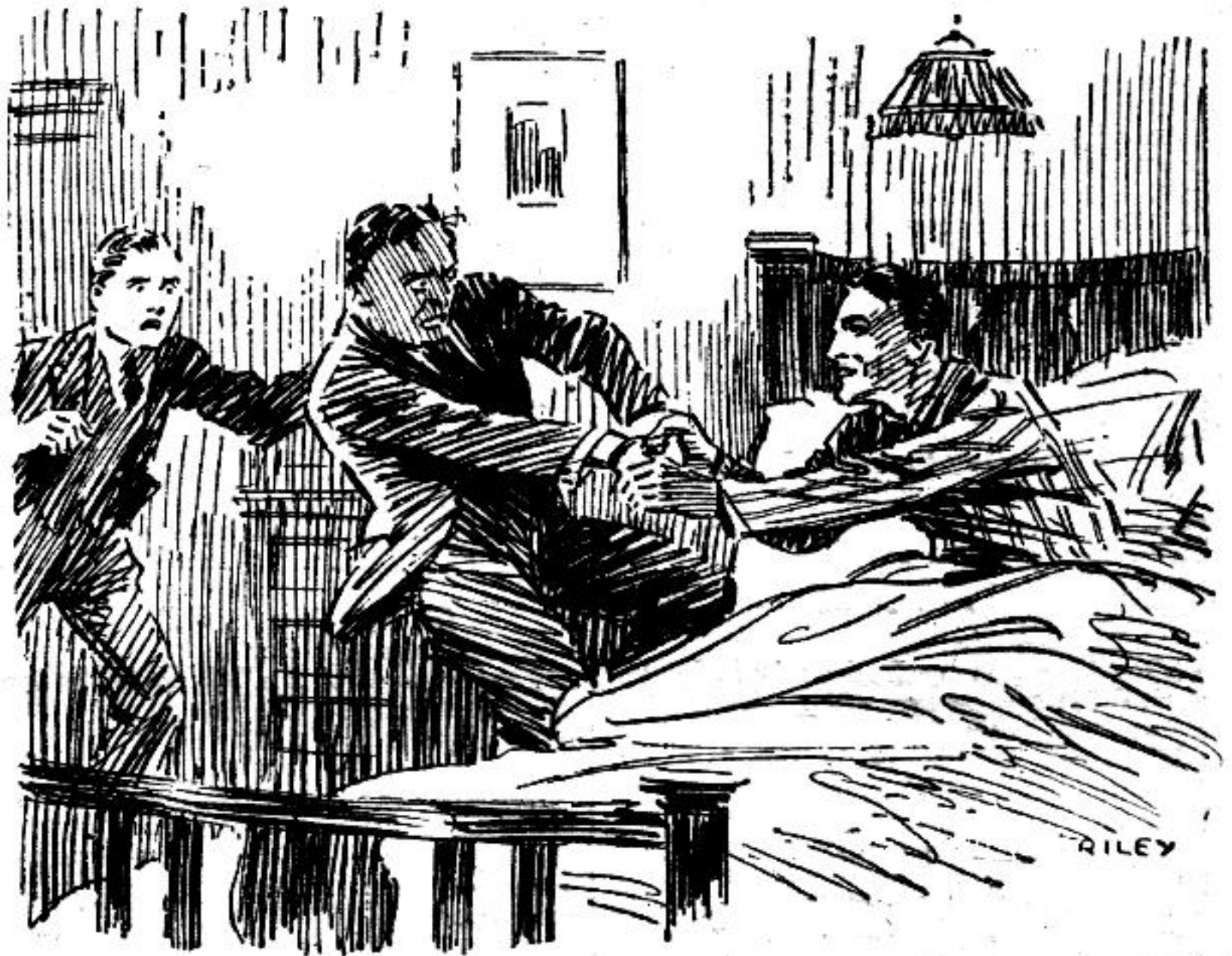
Drake tore to the telephone.

He rang up Dr. Buxton, in Harley Street, and, fortunately, found the medical gentleman at home.

"Impossible," was the answer to a passionate demand to the great man to come at once.

"It's Ferrers Locke—"

"Oh, Locke! Is he ill?"



"One word first," muttered Ferrers Locke feebly. "Well?" Stapleton bent over him. What followed made Drake wonder whether he was dreaming. The dying man on the bed made a sudden movement, there was a click of metal, and Maurice Stapleton staggered back, with the handcuffs fastened on his wrists. (See Chapter 4.)

famous detective and his boy assistant. The inspector desired to hear Locke's opinion of a baffling case of burglary on which he was engaged, and Locke had asked him to breakfast to discuss the matter. Over the eggs and bacon and coffee the discussion had gone on, Locke's observations as clear and lucid as usual; and the inspector rose at last with a satisfied expression on his face.

"Many thanks, my dear Locke," he said. "I think you've made it fairly clear. Why—what—"

He made a hasty step towards Locke.

Ferrers Locke had sunk back suddenly in his chair, his chin on his breast, his hands hanging helplessly at his side. His coffee-cup had fallen, and the coffee streamed on the floor beside a cracked cup.

"Mr. Locke!" panted Drake.

He was by Ferrers Locke's side

"A sudden seizure at breakfast; he can barely speak!" panted Drake into the transmitter. "For Heaven's sake come at once!"

"I am coming this instant."

Drake put up the receiver, and ran back to Locke. Inspector Heath stood beside Locke. The detective was sitting up now, his face drawn.

"He's coming, sir!" panted Drake. "Dr. Buxton—he will be here in a few minutes—"

Locke gave a low groan.

"Thank you, my boy!" His voice was faint. "He cannot help me, but let him come. Inspector, there is no need for you to delay—your duty calls you."

"But, my dear Locke, I cannot leave you like this—"

"You cannot help me; and I am in good hands. You are not a specialist in toxicology."

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"Toxicology!" ejaculated the inspector. "You do not mean to say that you are poisoned, Locke?"

The detective smiled instead of replying.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the inspector blankly. "Locke, you—"

"The wariest bird is caught at last!" said Ferrers Locke faintly. "Good-bye, Heath, and good luck, in case we do not meet again. Drake, you will help me to my bed-room."

Inspector Heath went out of the house in Baker Street with a pale and troubled face. The tragedy he left behind him stirred him deeply, in spite of his professional hardihood. Ferrers Locke, the terror of evil-doers, laid low at last—and by the basest means—the victim of some cunning and ruthless criminal! It was not like the Scotland Yard inspector to display emotion; but his face was white now, and his features far from calm. And a man who lounged by the railings glanced at his face, and looked after him as he went down the street slowly, like one who has received a stunning blow. And the man—a man with a dark complexion and strangely gleaming eyes—smiled, and lounged by the railings and lighted a cigarette. And he smiled again when a car dashed up to Ferrers Locke's door and Dr. Buxton leaped out and ran into the house with a haste that was almost undignified in so great a man.

Jack Drake met the doctor in the hall.

"Mr. Locke—"

"In his bed-room, sir," said Jack in a choking voice. "I—I'm afraid he is bad—"

Drake's voice broke. There were tears in his eyes which he had held back with an effort; but now they escaped him and ran down his cheeks. He was hardly aware of it.

"Take me to him at once!"

"This way, sir."

Sing-Sing was by Locke's bedside. He glided silently away when the doctor stood by Ferrers Locke.

The door closed softly, leaving Dr. Buxton alone with his patient. Sing-Sing joined Drake downstairs.

"Massa Locke go die!" he whispered.

Drake trembled.

"There may be hope yet—"

"No tinkee. If Massa Locke die, Sing-Sing, too!" whispered the Chinese. "No livee if Massa Locke no livee!"

Drake felt a sob in his throat. It seemed to him, too, that life would be blank and dreary with his chief gone—the man he almost worshipped. But his eyes blazed as another thought came into his mind.

"It is poison! Ferrers Locke is being murdered! If he should die, there is the poisoner to find and punish."

Drake hurried up the stairs again. He could hear a faint murmur of voices from behind the closed door of Ferrers Locke's room.

He waited with an aching heart.

The door opened at last, and Dr. Buxton came out on the landing, with a grave, set face.

"I shall send a nurse immediately," he said. "You may go in, Drake."

"Is there hope?" panted Drake.

"While there is life there is hope, my boy. I can say no more than that."

Drake tried to calm himself.

"Remain with Mr. Locke till the nurse arrives," said Dr. Buxton. "You may give him a little water to drink—nothing else. He is, of course, to see no one."

And the doctor hurried back to his car.

Drake entered the bed-room.

Locke lay still, with his face turned to the wall. He made no sound, no movement, and Drake wondered if he slept. He sat down silently, and waited and watched.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Unexpected!

**B**UZ-Z-Z!

It was a ring at the bell below, but Drake did not heed it. But a few minutes later Sing-Sing peered into the room, and signed to the boy detective.

Drake crept out silently to the landing.

"Man wantee see Massa Locke."

Drake made a gesture of impatience.

"He can see no one. Tell the man he is ill!"

"Mo tellee. He say must see Massa Locke—he cure him!"

"Nonsense!"

"You speakee."

"Very well."

Drake gave a last glance at Ferrers Locke; the still figure stretched in the bed had not moved. Then the boy detective hurried down the stairs.

A man was waiting in the hall, and at the first glance, Drake noted something familiar in the dark face and bright eyes. The man turned to him with a strange smile.

"You are Drake?" he asked.

"Yes."

"I have heard of you." His eyes scanned the boy's white, drawn face, the eyes heavy with unshed tears.

"Mr. Locke is ill, and can see no one," said Drake. "You must go at once!"

"My name is Stapleton."

Drake started back.

That name told him all; he understood the familiarity in the man's appearance now. He resembled the visitor of a few weeks before—it was the third brother.

"Stapleton!" Drake's eyes blazed and his teeth came hard together. "I understand! You—villain—dastard—poisoner—and—!" He made a spring towards the visitor.

"Fool! I can cure your master!"

Drake stopped.

"Cure him?"

"I—and I alone!"

"You have poisoned him!" said Drake tensely. "I know now—your brother failed, and you—you—" He broke off. The third man had succeeded—Ferrers Locke lay in the shadow of death, at the mercy of the third brother.

"It is not for you to ask questions," said Maurice Stapleton easily. "Let me see your master!"

"The doctor has ordered that no one shall see him," said Drake.

Stapleton's lip curled.

"Fool!" he said again. "Do you think that the doctor can save him? What does he know of the poison of the Java adder? Your master is dying while you are babbling here."

Drake's brain was in a whirl. His tortured feelings showed in his face, and Stapleton watched his varying expressions with a cool, cynical smile.

"I—I will speak to him!" panted Drake at last. "Sing-Sing, if I call, bring this man upstairs."

"Yes, Massa Drake!"

Drake hurried up the stairs again, and into Ferrers Locke's room. He bent over the motionless form on the bed.

"Mr. Locke, can you understand me?"

"Yes," came a faint whisper.

"You remember—you remember what you told me of the Stapletons—the Third Brother?" muttered Drake.

"Yes."

"Maurice Stapleton has come. Shall you see him? He—he says he can save your life," breathed Drake.

The still figure stirred.

"Let him come up, Drake! It can do no harm." Ferrers Locke turned his head, and the ghastly white of his face startled Drake, and brought a sob to his throat. "Calm yourself, my dear boy! Only Maurice Stapleton knows the secret of the Java poison—let him come."

Drake hurried away. That ghastly face was still before his eyes as he went, and he made no effort to keep back the tears that rolled down his cheeks.

"Sing-Sing!" he called softly over the banisters.

"Yes, Massa Drake?"

Maurice Stapleton ascended the stairs. He gave Drake a look.

"Your master will live yet, if he hears reason!" he said. "Take me to him. There is no time to lose."

"Follow me."

Maurice Stapleton followed the boy detective into the bed-room. He stood by the bedside and looked down at the prostrate detective, and an evil smile deepened on his dark face. He seemed to be taking in the scene with deep enjoyment as he looked. Drake's eyes burned at him; but the boy stood back silent. This was the man who had brought his chief into the shadow of death—but this was the man who could save him.

"Locke! So this is you!" said Stapleton at last.

The ghastly face looked up at him from the shadows of the bed.

"You are Maurice Stapleton."

"Yes."

"You have done this!"

"Send the boy away and we can talk."

Drake looked at his chief.

Locke made him a sign to go. The door closed behind Jack Drake, and he waited outside in an anguish of apprehension.

Maurice Stapleton looked down on the detective and smiled again. Then he looked round the room. Locke's eyes watched him from the bed.

"I am making sure, my dear Locke, that there are none to overhear," grinned Stapleton. "I do not forget how you trapped my brother Albert."

Locke said no word. Satisfied at last the man came back to the bedside.

"You know what has happened to you?" he said. "The Java poison is in your veins."

"So you say!" muttered Locke.

"Fool! What do you think is the matter with you, then? What has your doctor found?"

"He could find nothing."

"Except that you are dying?" grinned Stapleton. "Fool! Yesterday you received by post a box of chocolates."

"That is true," said Ferrers Locke faintly.

"The oldest, commonest trick!" grinned Stapleton. "I scarcely believed that it could succeed. But the sharpest of us are caught off our guard sometimes."

He laughed. "By its very simplicity, I suppose, it succeeded. Not that you would have escaped. If the chocolates had failed, I had a score of devices in store—I tried the simplest first,



that was all. And you fell to the first attempt!" He chuckled like a ghoul. "So simple a trick—to deceive the greatest detective of the age! Ah, Locke, you are loosing your keenness!"

"You are wasting time!" said the detective in a hollow voice. "Tell me—how long have I to live?"

"That depends. If you ate more than one of the chocolates—"

A feeble shake of the head.

"Only one? Then you might linger for forty-eight hours. But nothing can cure you—only the antidote known only to me. It is in my pocket now. I am ready to administer it. Mind, you will be ill—nothing can prevent that. But I can save your life—on the same terms that my brother offered. You must save them both from prison, and give me your written promise so that you will not dare to break your word. Is it a bargain?"

"You sent the chocolates—for this?"

Stapleton laughed.

"Naturally! I scarcely hoped that you would fall to so palpable a snare! It is time you went out of business, my dear Locke! But we are wasting time! Do you consent?"

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing else."

"If I refuse you will leave me to die of the poison you have administered?"

"Without pity!"

"Call Drake! Tell him to bring writing materials!" groaned the detective, and he turned his face to the wall.

Stapleton stepped to the door and opened it. Jack Drake, who was leaning against the banisters, started forward.

"Your master requires writing materials!" grinned Stapleton.

Drake drew a deep breath. Ferrers Locke had surrendered, then, to the demand of the poisoner—to save his life! Drake pushed past the man into the bed-room.

"Mr. Locke—"

"Tell the young fool!" said Stapleton roughly.

"One word first, Maurice Stapleton!" muttered the Baker Street detective.

"One word—" His voice sank into a whisper.

"Well?"

Stapleton bent over him.

What followed made Drake wonder whether he was dreaming. The dying man on the bed made a sudden movement, there was a click of metal, and Maurice Stapleton staggered back with the handcuffs fastened on his wrists. Ferrers Locke sat up in bed and smiled at him.

"Well caught, you scoundrel!" he said.

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

#### Trapped!

JACK DRAKE gave a cry.

"Mr. Locke, you are not ill! You—" He stared blankly at the smiling face of Ferrers Locke.

"Not at all!"

A loud oath rang out from Maurice Stapleton.

He dragged furiously at the handcuffs on his wrists, and then, manacled as he was, he flung himself at the Baker Street detective. Jack Drake struck him back.

"Show yourselves!" called out Ferrers Locke.

A hidden door in the wall opened with a click, and two men stepped out—one in a police-inspector's uniform, the other in plain clothes. The latter had a notebook in his hand.

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"Inspector Pycroft!" ejaculated Drake blankly.

The inspector grinned.

"Well done, Locke! Well done, by Jove! The last of the Stapleton poisoners under lock and key at last!"

His heavy hand gripped the shoulder of Maurice Stapleton.

Stapleton panted with rage.

"Tricked!" he muttered. "Yet—And witnesses! You were prepared for this, Ferrers Locke!"

"I am seldom caught unprepared," said the Baker Street detective coolly. "Your man has taken down every word, Mr. Pycroft?"

"Every syllable!"

"Then you may as well take your prisoner away. Perhaps you will be kind enough to explain to Inspector Heath and relieve his mind?"

"Leave it to me, Mr. Locke!" chuckled Pycroft.

Jack Drake went down the stairs and watched the white-faced, desperate man taken away. Ferrers Locke, fully dressed, came down in a few minutes. Sing-Sing's almond eyes almost started from his head as he gazed at his master.

Locke signed to them to follow him into his study. Drake's brain was still in a whirl.

"I have to ask your forgiveness, my boy!" said the Baker Street detective remorsefully. "And yours, Sing-Sing!"

"Me savvy now!" grinned the Celestial.

"But—" stammered Drake.

"But I could leave nothing to chance in dealing with so desperate and determined a villain!" said Ferrers Locke gravely. "The poisoned chocolates came yesterday. I analysed them in the laboratory, and found that they contained the Java poison. It was the first blow struck by Maurice Stapleton. I knew that."

"But you might have warned me, Mr. Locke!" said Drake reproachfully.

"I could not, Drake! The man was too cunning to be deceived by a pretence," said Ferrers Locke. "That sudden illness—it was necessary. After sending me the chocolates, I knew, of course, that he would be watching the house, to learn whether he was successful—though he would not venture into it, after the warning he received from

the fate of his brother. Inspector Heath felt what had happened to me. I could not spare him, for it was the signs of the shock he had received as he left the house that deceived the spy."

"I—I see!"

"Then—the doctor came in a tearing car." Locke smiled. "The spy watched that, also. Dr. Buxton I could not deceive; a medical man cannot be taken in as to the condition of his patient. I explained to him, and he willingly consented to help me all he could. When he went I expected momentarily to hear that Stapleton had arrived. Your face, Drake, almost broke down my resolution. I knew that you suffered." Locke pressed the boy's hand. "But I remained firm. The man was as watchful as a cat. He read in your face that the illness was genuine. If he had had any doubts—even the slightest—he would not have betrayed himself."

"I—I understand—"

"Your looks, my poor boy, were more than enough to convince him. He came to my room fully believing that I had eaten of the poisoned chocolates, and a little white powder carefully rubbed into my face helped him to that belief—"

"Oh!" exclaimed Drake.

"I had already posted Inspector Pycroft and his shorthand man behind the secret door. They came here overnight, and have been ready since. And Maurice Stapleton kindly gave them a full confession of having sent poison by post to take my life—a confession that will send him to join his two brothers."

Drake smiled. He could smile now.

"It was the only way," said Ferrers Locke. "But when I saw how you felt, my dear boy, I would have drawn back had it been possible. It was a cruel experience for you."

"That's nothing!" said Drake. "All in the day's work, sir! It's right as rain—and we've got the Third Brother!"

THE END.

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