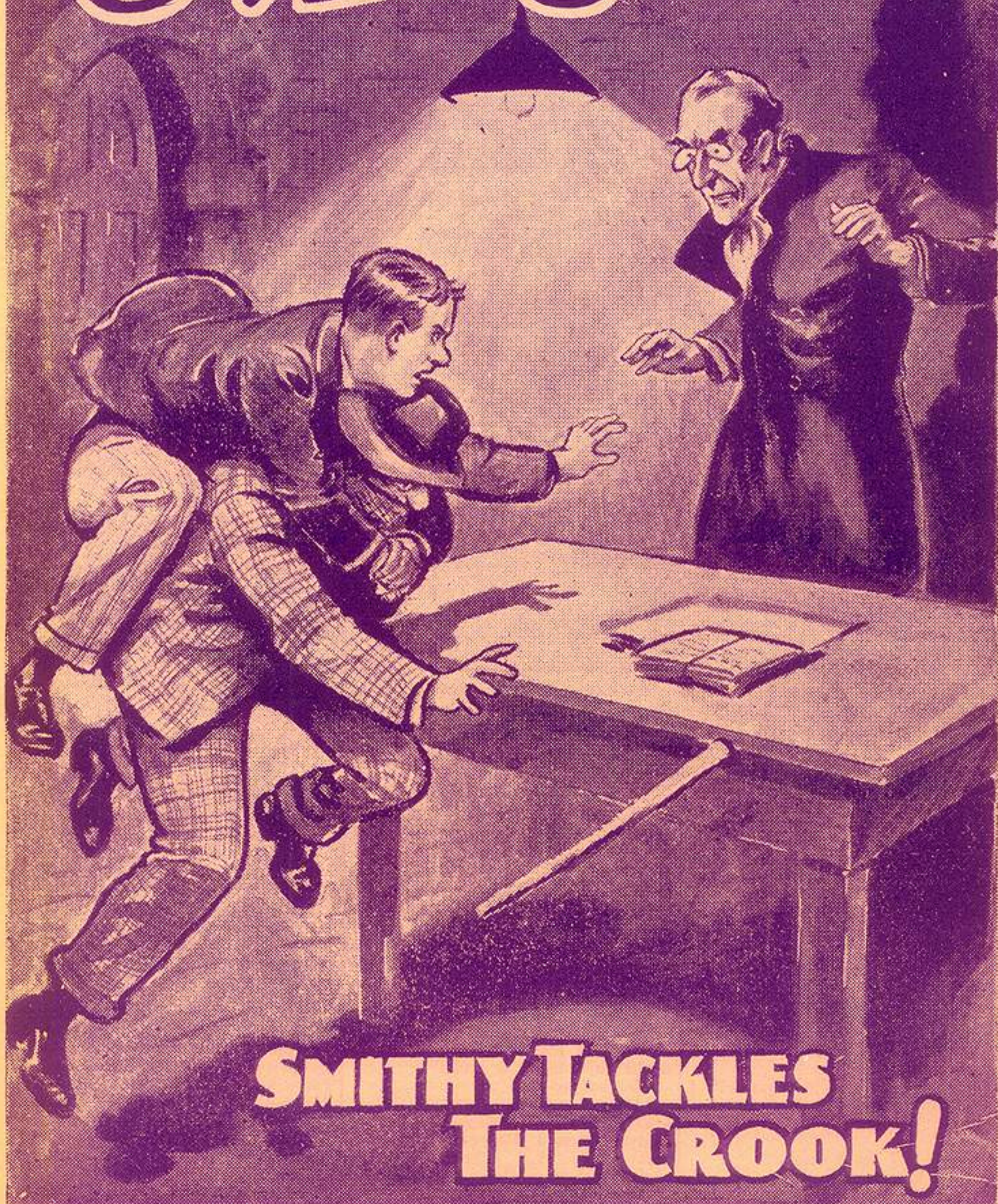


**THE
MAGNET**

"THE BOUNDER'S TRIUMPH!" Grand School and Detective-
Adventure Yarn of Greyfriars

The Magnet ^{2^D}



**SMITHY TACKLES
THE CROOK!**



The GREYFRIARS HERALD



EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON

By TOM BROWN

DEMAND and SUPPLY!

I REALLY couldn't believe my ears. It was the most astounding thing I had ever heard, and I thought I must be suffering from grave defects of the ear-drums.

I mean to say—I was loitering in the quad. Wingate and Gwynne were chatting near by. Presently Lord Mauleverer drifted up like an autumn leaf, and spoke to Wingate.

"Excuse me, Wingate, but would you do a fellow a favour?"

Wingate stared grimly.

"That depends," he said, "on what sort of favour a fellow wants done, and whether I can do it."

"You can do it quite easily," said Mauly. "Would you mind givin' me six?"

"Wha-at?"

"Six!" said Mauly.

I nearly fell down. Wingate and Gwynne gazed at him blankly.

"Is that a joke?" demanded Gwynne.

"Far from it," sighed Mauly.

"Then why d'you want six, you young ass?"

"I don't! I should simply hate it! But a fellow always gets six for cuttin' games practice, and I'm goin' to cut it this afternoon. I'm feelin' tired. So if you'll give me the six now, I can get over it durin' dinner, and go to sleep this afternoon with a clear conscience. That's the idea!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" I yelled, till Wingate turned and withered me with an eye.

"Well, Mauleverer," said the captain, "I think I can oblige you. I'm an obliging sort of fellow. Bend over!"

Mauly sighed again and leaned over gracefully. Wingate started work with the ashplant, while Gwynne and I looked on, grinning.

Mauly emitted a couple of Yoops and an Ow, and then, after thanking Wingate politely, he turned to hobble away.

"Not so fast!" said Wingate. "I shall expect to see you on the footer ground at three o'clock sharp. Don't be late, or I shall come and look for you!"

"But—but, begad, that's not fair!" complained our born-tired aristocrat. "You've just punished me because I shan't be there!"

"Not at all! I punished you as a favour. You asked me to give you six, and I did so. Nothing to do with games practice. I hope," said Wingate quietly, "I shall never punish a junior for something he has not done—unless he asks me to, as a personal favour, of course. You haven't cut practice yet, so I can't punish you for it. Now clear off—and don't forget to turn up at three!"

He walked away with Gwynne, who was laughing loudly. Poor old Mauly! He had to turn up at practice after all.

But, at any rate, he got what he asked for!

"Scandalous!" I said, trying not to sneeze as cigar-smoke curled round my nose.

"Only last week I went up to London on purpose to interview a man at the War Office. I told him he was an incompetent fool. My plans, I said, provided for the instant annihilation of Germany and any other country that might be thought necessary. He raised some trivial objection about the cost—said it would take a thousand million pounds to cover the expense. In short, he pooh-poohed the whole scheme, and I— Why, what the dooce!"

I could not contain the sneeze. Out it came like the blast of a shell, and blew my moustache slap into Popper's face. I myself went out by way of the french window. I could hear Popper roaring.

"Good Gad! Disguised, by Jove! The man's a spy! Stop him—hold him! A spy after my plans, by Gad!"

"Oh crumbs!" I gasped, as I hit the wide open spaces.

Luck was with me, and I got away.

Poet's Parade

COKER'S PROBLEM!

(NOTE: Instead of letting Penfold bag this space, we are giving another poet a chance SKINNER is the guilty party. Judging by his rhymes, he deserves a life sentence.—Ed.)

Our Great Scoop!

POPPER ON THE WAR!

By Our Special Reporter

WILLIAM WIBLEY

At great personal risk, I obtained an interview with Sir Hilton Popper this week. The effect of a Greyfriars junior on Sir Hilton is that of a red rag on a bull, so I stuck a moustache on my upper lip and donned a tweed suit. Looking about forty, I asked the Lord of Popper Court for an interview on "behalf of a world-famous paper."

"Certainly, certainly, certainly!" he said affably, leading the way into the library. "Delighted to give the public my views—what? Will you have a whisky?"

"Grooh! I mean, no thanks!" I replied hurriedly. "I don't drink!"

"Gad! Is that so? Well, have a cigar!"

"Nunno! I don't smoke!"

Popper breathed hard.

"Well, is there anything you would like?" he asked.

"I—I suppose you haven't a doughnut?" I asked, not very hopefully.

"A dud-doughnut? Good Gad! No, sir, I have not!"

"Quite so! H'm!" I felt a bit flustered, and made a note in my book to conceal the fact.

"My dear sir," exclaimed Popper, "you surely do not propose to tell the public my views on the matter of doughnuts? So trivial. I would prefer to talk about the war."

"Oh, do!" I said, grateful for the hint. (The fact is, I was so scared of the old bean, that I wanted to dodge every time he moved. It was unnerving to be so close to him, without room to retreat.)

"Ah, yes, indeed—the war! My dear sir, I can assure you that if they would leave this war to me, I could finish it in a week!"

"Is that so?"

"Definitely. I have plans of action. I have the whole thing mapped out. And yet," said Popper, lighting a cigar, "the War Office has pooh-poohed my suggestions. Pooh-poohed them, sir. That's the way this country is governed!"

When Coker was a child
It made his parents wild
To try and get the fool
Accepted at a school!
The mistress of St. Bridget's
Refused to take in idjits!
The Board of St. Cecilia's
Could not accept gorillias!
"We're sorry," said St. Harriet's,
"We cannot take poll-parriots!"
"His features," said St. Lydia's,
"For us are far too hideous!"
The Head of St. Valeria
Was stricken with hysteria,
And also at St. Miriam
He gave them all delirium!
The College of St. Vivian
Consigned him to oblivion.
They jabbed him at St. Reynolda's
With pencils, pins, and penholders!
The doorway of St. Rosabel
He swiftly found was closable!
The scholars at St. Barbara
Pursued him all round Scarborough!
The School of Gloria Domine
Refused him with ignominy.
Then Greyfriars, out of charity
(Though not without hilarity),
Reluctantly accepted him,
And ever since have kepted him!

FOR SOME WEEKS FERRERS LOCKE HAS BEEN WORKING TO TRAP "SLIM JIM," THE MYSTERY CRACKSMAN, WITHOUT SUCCESS. BUT WHERE THE BAKER STREET DETECTIVE HAS FAILED, VERNON-SMITH SUCCEEDS!

The BOUNDER'S TRIUMPH!

By
FRANK RICHARDS



HOT STUFF!

"BUNTER!"
"Oh! Yes, sir!"
"Be silent!"

"I wasn't speaking, sir! I was only asking Cherry for a pen nib——"
"Silence!"

Billy Bunter, in the Remove Form room at Greyfriars School, was silent—for about a minute!

But it seemed impossible for Bunter to remain in repose that afternoon.

The Remove were busy with Latin papers. Mr. Lamb, sitting at the high desk where Mr. Quelch had been accustomed to sit, glanced occasionally at his class over the gold-rimmed glasses that slanted on his nose.

Several times his attention had been drawn to the fattest member of the Greyfriars Remove.

Billy Bunter seemed unable to keep still or to keep silent.

First of all, he had leaned over his desk and poked Harry Wharton in the back, apparently to draw his attention. A few minutes later he had reached out with a fat leg and given Frank Nugent a jab, causing Nugent to utter a startled "Oh!" Then he had made signs—unfortunately incomprehensible—to Johnny Bull. Then he had given Hurrec Jamsat Ram Singh a nudge. Now he had been whispering to Bob Cherry.

Vernon-Smith, from the high tree, watched Mr. Lamb dart in at the gate of Sea View and make for the direction of the air-raid shelter!

From all of which Mr. Lamb naturally supposed that Billy Bunter wanted help with his Latin paper, to save giving his own fat intellect any unnecessary exertion.

But that was a little error on the part of the art master, who was taking Quelch's place in the Remove room.

Bunter was not thinking of his Latin paper.

Bunter's Latin paper was, so far, a beautiful blank. A much more engrossing matter occupied Bunter's mind.

Skinner, when he sat down a few places away from Bunter, had dropped a whipped-cream walnut. It had rolled towards Bunter—but not near enough for him to pick up.

Skinner did not seem to have noticed his loss. But Billy Bunter's eyes, and spectacles, were on that whipped-cream walnut at once.

Unfortunately, it was out of his reach.

Billy Bunter did not want to draw Skinner's attention to it. Bunter had his own nefarious designs on that whipped-cream walnut. Half a dozen other fellows were near enough to give it a shove with a foot and push it within Bunter's reach. Hence the antics of the fat Owl of the Remove.

He was anxious not to let Skinner discover that he had dropped that cream walnut; he was anxious that Mr. Lamb should not observe it; he was anxious to get hold of it and park it in the largest mouth in the Remove. In such a state of anxiety, Bunter was not likely to give much heed to a Latin paper.

He sat and blinked at Mr. Lamb through his big spectacles.

Lamb, at the master's desk, was giving some touches to a pen-and-ink drawing, while the Form worked at the Latin papers. Billy Bunter wished that he would concentrate on it a little more.

About a minute having elapsed, a fat whisper again broke the silence of the Form-room.

"I say, Wharton——"

Mr. Lamb looked up again. The Pet Lamb was in a good temper that

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of GREYFRIARS.

afternoon; but Bunter seemed to have an irritating effect on him.

"Bunter!"

"Oh dear! I mean yes, sir!"

"If you speak in class again, Bunter, I shall cane you!"

"I wasn't——"

"Silence!"

Billy Bunter sat and breathed hard. Lamb was getting annoyed—and all the fellows knew what Lamb's temper was like when he was annoyed. He was liable to change all of a sudden from an amiable Pet Lamb to an extremely bad-tempered man, with a heavy hand with a cane.

Billy Bunter realised that he had better not whisper again.

He went so far as to dip his pen in the ink to give Mr. Lamb an impression that he was getting busy.

But it was a sheer impossibility for Bunter to bestow any attention on Latin with sticky sweetstuffs in sight.

His eyes and his spectacles lingered on that whipped-cream walnut on the Form-room floor—so near, yet so far.

He had to have that cream walnut. Any minute Harold Skinner might look round and spot it—it was really surprising that he had not noticed it already.

Billy Bunter's fat brain worked at full pressure.

He could not leave his place and grope after that cream walnut without an excuse. He had to invent an excuse. Five minutes of severe intellectual exercise evolved one.

Bunter gave his Latin grammar a bang with a fat elbow, sending it whizzing off his desk.

Thud!

It dropped to the floor.

"Bunter!" Mr. Lamb looked up again. "Is that you, Bunter? You——"

"My—my grammar's fallen off the desk, sir!" gasped Bunter. "M-m-may I—I pick it up, sir?"

"You may do so, Bunter, and if you disturb the class again I shall cane you!"

"Oh yes, sir! I mean no, sir!"

Bunter rolled out of his place. He stooped among the desks. With his right hand he picked up the school book; with his left he grabbed the whipped-cream walnut.

It was his, at last. It had been Skinner's, but it was Bunter's now. Possession was nine points of the law, and Billy Bunter did not bother his fat head about the tenth point.

Lamb's eyes were on him—he knew that. But the fat Owl of the Remove knew how to be strategic. He turned his back to Lamb to get back to his place.

With his back to Lamb Billy Bunter opened a large mouth and popped the whipped-cream walnut into it—whole!

It would have been rather a large mouthful for any other fellow; it was, in fact, rather large even for Bunter. But Bunter liked large mouthfuls of that kind. The whipped-cream walnut disappeared from sight. Bunter's capacious mouth closed over it.

There was no sign of it when he sat

at his desk again and met the eyes of Mr. Lamb.

The art master gave him a severe look, and dropped his eyes again to his drawing.

Billy Bunter bent his head over his Latin paper, with a happy, fat face—his mouth full.

Crunch!

Ecstatic enjoyment for a moment was depicted on Billy Bunter's fat face as he crunched that large mouthful.

The next moment enjoyment vanished. A strange and startling change came over Bunter's fat face.

He had wondered why Skinner had never noticed dropping that cream walnut. Now he knew! He had forgotten that Skinner was the practical joker of the Remove. Now he remembered—as he crunched that cream walnut. He had had no time to notice that there was a hole in it by which cream had been carefully scooped out and replaced by mustard. He had not thought for a moment of mustard, or anything like it. He thought of it now.

There was a sudden yell in the Remove Form Room.

"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter bounded to his feet.

Lamb started up and stared at him; the whole Form stared round in astonishment. Bunter did not heed them; he heeded nothing but the mustard that had been packed so carefully and iniquitously inside that whipped-cream walnut.

"Ooooooh!" spluttered Bunter. "Groooh! Atchooh! Beast! Woooooh! Ow! I'm bib-bob-bub-burning! Yaroooooooh! Ow! Oooh! Gerrroooooh!"

"Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb.

"Yoooooooh!"

"What the thump!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Yoooooooh!"

"Anything the matter, Bunter?" asked Skinner blandly.

"Gurrrooooooh! Beast! Oooh!"

Mr. Lamb picked up Quelch's cane and came away from his desk. Every eye in the Remove was fixed on Billy Bunter.

Bunter heeded none of them. He stood spluttering, yelling, gasping, snorting, and sneezing, clawing at his mouth, gurgling mustard, and feeling as if the top of his head was being blown off.

A ROW IN THE REMOVE

"A Y T I S H O O O O!"

"Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb.

"Oooooh! Oooooh! Aytishooo!" sneezed Bunter. "Atchooh! Atchoop!"

Bunter sneezed frantically.

The mustard was getting into his little fat nose—attacking it in the rear, as it were. He coughed and spluttered and sneezed.

Mr. Lamb, cane in hand, stared at him blankly. All the Remove stared at him. They could not make out what was the matter with Billy Bunter. Only Harold Skinner knew—and, of course, Bunter. Bunter knew only too well.

"Urrgh! Oh crikey! Urrgh! Aytichoooh!" Bunter's frantic sneeze fairly roared through the Form-room. It was a Gargantuan sneeze! It was a Brobdingnagian sneeze! It was an outsize in sneezes.

"What——" exclaimed Mr. Lamb.

Fragments of whipped-cream walnut, hastily ejected, surrounded Bunter. But he could not get rid of the mustard.

"What is the meaning of this, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Lamb.

"Atchoo—chooop!"

"Will you explain yourself?"

"Yurrooogh! Groooh! I'm bib-bob-bub-burning—my mim-mum-mouth's on fif-fuf-fire!" gurgled Bunter. "It's mim-mom-mum-mustard—groooh!"

"Mustard!" repeated Mr. Lamb blankly.

"Yurrrgh! Oh gum! Oh scissors! Oh crikey! Oooh! That beast, Skinner—oooooh! Atchooh! Aytishoooh! Oooh!"

"But what——" shrieked Mr. Lamb.

"Oh crikey! Sus-sus-somebody fetch me some water!" howled Bunter. "My mim-mom-mouth's full of mim-mom-mustard—ooooh!"

"Mustard!" repeated Mr. Lamb, peering at him over his glasses. "Did you say mustard, Bunter? My goodness!"

"Groooh! It was in that whipped-cream walnut!" wailed Bunter. "That beast, Skinner, dropped it on purpose for me to pick up—I jolly well know that now——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And it was stacked with mustard!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Remove.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb. "You have been eating in class again, Bunter! You greedy, foolish boy——"

"Oooh! Ow! My mouth's all burnt!" howled Bunter. "I didn't know there was—groooh!—mustard in it—ooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You utterly absurd boy!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb. "Take your place at once! I shall cane you if you disturb the class again! Skinner, you should not play such tricks, if you have done so. Bunter, sit down at once!"

Mr. Lamb turned to go back to his desk.

Billy Bunter gave Skinner a glare through his spectacles, that almost cracked them.

This was one of Skinner's practical jokes—what Skinner called a joke! He knew that Billy Bunter could not resist a whipped-cream walnut—or anything else of a sweet and sticky nature.

Judging by the howl of laughter in the Remove, the other fellows seemed to think it funny. It did not seem funny to Billy Bunter.

Skinner grinned in reply to Bunter's glare.

The fat Owl shook a fat fist at him. "Beast!" he hissed.

Mr. Lamb turned back.

"Bunter! Be silent! Sit down at once!"

"Urrgh! Yes, sir! Yurrrgh!" Billy Bunter sat down at his desk

and Lamb turned away again. But that grin on Skinner's face was too much for Bunter.

He grabbed up his Latin grammar and hurled it.

That Latin grammar, landing in the middle of Skinner's features, would give him something else to grin at, Bunter considered.

Whiz!

Unfortunately, Billy Bunter was no marksman.

If he wanted to land his missile on Skinner's features, Bunter really should have aimed at something else, a few yards off. Then he would have had a sporting chance, at least, of getting Skinner.

But he aimed at Skinner—and missed the mark by a couple of feet. The Latin grammar flew high over Skinner's grinning face—and flew on! The aim was bad; but there was plenty of force behind that missile—Bunter had put all his beef into hurling it.

Crash!

Every bullet has its billet. That Latin grammar, whizzing high over Skinner's head, caught Mr. Lamb in the back of the neck, as he was returning to his desk.

It caught him hard.

"Oh gum!" gasped Bob Cherry, as the volume landed, fairly crashing, just over the back of the art master's collar.

"Oh!" howled Mr. Lamb.

The unexpected crash from behind threw him quite off his balance. He tipped forward and fell on his hands and knees.

Bump!

"Man down!" murmured Peter Todd.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

For a second Mr. Lamb remained there, on his hands and knees, in a state of great astonishment. Then he leaped up.

Up to that moment the Pet Lamb had been good-tempered. But that painful bang on the back of his neck, and the crash on the floor, had made a startling change.

Lamb had been nearly a term at Greyfriars, in the place of the absent Remove master, and all the Remove knew that his temper was very uncertain, and that, when it was roused, it was a very bad temper indeed. His face was quite furious as he whirled round at the yelling class.

"Who——" he roared.

"Oh scissors! It—it wasn't me, sir!" howled Bunter. He almost forgot the mustard, as he blinked at the terrifying expression on Lamb's face. "I—I never—I—I say—yaroooh!"

Lamb made one jump at him.

With his left hand he hooked the fat junior out of his place—with his right, he laid on the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

Billy Bunter roared. He quite forgot the mustard now. The cane fairly banged on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars. Bunter wriggled and squirmed and roared with anguish.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Ow! Oh! Stoppit! Yarooop! Help! Leave off! Oh crikey!" roared Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Yow!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Lamb laid it on as if he was beating a carpet.

Laughter died away in the Remove now. All faces were serious; some of them contemptuous. The Bouncer of Greyfriars had always said that Lamb's amiable temper was only a pose—that he was in reality a hard, harsh man, with a savage and cruel temper. The Remove had had some samples of it—now they had another.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Ow! Oh! Stoppim!" yelled the unhappy Owl. "I say, you fellows, stoppim! I say—yaroooh!"

Tom Redwing jumped up and caught hold of Mr. Lamb's arm. Bunter had had a dozen—but Lamb seemed bent on going on.

"Let Bunter alone, sir!" exclaimed Redwing.

"What!" roared Mr. Lamb.

He was nothing like the mild, amiable, fluffy Pet Lamb now. His face was crimson with rage. But he seemed to realise that he was letting his temper go too far.

He released Bunter's collar and the fat Owl staggered away, yelling on his top note. Lamb turned his attention to Redwing, dragging his arm fiercely away from the junior's grasp.

"Redwing! How dare you!" he panted.

"You've no right to cane a fellow like that!" retorted Redwing. "Mr. Quelch would never have done anything of the kind. The Head would not allow it, if he knew."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. "Ow!" he added, as Mr. Lamb's cane came with a swipe across his shoulders. "Oh gum! Ow!"

"Look here, sir——" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Silence! Redwing, bend over that desk! You appear to be bent on following the mutinous example of Vernon-Smith, who has been expelled from this school. I shall cane you severely."

Tom Redwing set his lips. Quite unlike his chum, Herbert Vernon-Smith, who had been expelled from Greyfriars, Redwing was the quietest and most orderly fellow in the Form. But he scemed, for the moment, bent on following the example of the expelled rebel of the Remove.

Then, slowly he bent over the desk and took his six. But this time Mr. Lamb stopped at six.

Redwing went back to his place with a set face.

"Ow! Yow! Wow! Yow! Ow!" came from Billy Bunter.

"Bunter!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

"Ow! Wow! Yes, sir! Ow!"

"If you make another sound, I shall cane you again!"

"Oh crikey! Ow! Yes, sir! Wow! Oh lor'! Yes—ow!"

Mr. Lamb went back to his desk. Billy Bunter strove hard to repress the sounds of woe.

"What a bargee!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"Rotten brute!" muttered Johnny Bull.

"Terrific toad!" murmured Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh.

Mr. Lamb looked up.

"If there is not silence in this class, the whole Form will be de-

tained on Saturday afternoon!" he snapped.

And there was silence in the Remove, and the juniors gave their attention to Latin papers again. But never had the Greyfriars Remove wished so much that their old Form-master was back at the school. They had had more than enough of the Pet Lamb.

DEEP!

INK!

"Yes! About a gallon!"

"Which!" ejaculated Bob Cherry in amazement.

"Well, a pint would do!" said Billy Bunter. "But a gallon would be better. I'd like to give him a gallon!"

The Famous Five of the Remove blinked at William George Bunter.

It was the day following the row in the Remove Form Room—Friday, to be exact. The Famous Five were in Study No. 1, at tea, when the fattest figure at Greyfriars School rolled in at the doorway with a large tin bowl, apparently pinched from the kitchen quarters, in a fat hand.

Harry Wharton & Co. were not surprised to see Billy Bunter roll in at tea-time. Indeed, as they had a cake for tea, they would have been rather surprised had he not. Bunter had a really wonderful scent for such things.

But they were surprised by the sight of the tin bowl—and still more by the fat Owl's request for ink! What Billy Bunter wanted with a gallon of ink was a mystery—even if such quantities had been obtainable in junior studies.

Bunter, it seemed, was not after cake—he was after ink! He did not seem even to notice the cake on the table! He was concentrated on ink!

"Thirsty?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Eh? Don't be an ass, you know!" squeaked Bunter. "I say, you fellows, let me have all the ink you've got! It doesn't matter about the colour—red ink will do just as well. Marking-ink, too—anything! Marking-ink will be best, really—the beast won't get it off very easily, see?"

"What beast?" inquired Frank Nugent.

"Lamb!"

"Oh!" said the Co. all together. They understood now! The ink was required for the art master—the Owl of the Remove was on the trail of vengeance.

"You know how he whopped me yesterday!" breathed Bunter. His little round eyes gleamed behind his big round spectacles. "I've been thinking it over ever since—how to pay the beast out! Well, now I've got it!"

"You'll get it all right, if you swamp a gallon of ink over a beak!" said Johnny Bull, staring at the fat Owl. "It won't be a licking—it will be the sack—you'll be sacked like poor old Smith!"

"He, he."

To the surprise of the Co., Billy Bunter emitted a fat giggle.

"Think it's funny to be sacked?" asked Harry Wharton, mystified. "Do you want Wingate of the Sixth to take you to the station, like he did Smithy?"

"He, he, he! That's all right!" grinned Bunter. "I'm not going to be copped! I've got it all cut and dried! You see, I've got brains——"

"You have?" ejaculated Bob, in astonishment. "First I've heard of it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Well, if you've got any, why haven't you ever used them all the time you've been at Greyfriars?" asked Bob.

"Look here, don't be a silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "I've thought this out, and I can tell you it's a winner. Of course, I don't want to be sacked like Smithy. But they won't spot me! They'll think it was Smithy did it."

"Eh?"

"What?"

Bunter had surprised the Famous Five again. It was a week since Herbert Vernon-Smith had been expelled from the school. So how anyone was to suppose that it was Smithy was quite a puzzle.

"I tell you I've got it all cut and dried," said the fat Owl. "I've got a feud on with Lamb now, just the same as Smithy had. Only he ain't going to get me sacked like he did Smithy! I'll watch it! You fellows know that Smithy came back here to get on with his feud—he stuck in the garret next to the box-room, and nobody knew he was in the school——"

"He's gone now, fathcad!" said Harry.

"Yes—but suppose he came back again!" grinned Bunter. "He stayed in that garret for days, and got out every now and then to jape Lamb! Well, he might do the same again, see?"

"He couldn't, ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Smithy had to clear when he was spotted—and the beaks will take jolly good care that he doesn't play a game like that over again. I've noticed that Lamb's come up to the box-room once or twice since—and that shows that he's got an eye open."

"That helps!" grinned Bunter.

"Eh? How?"

"If you'd listen a minute, instead of jawing, I'd tell you!" said Bunter. "I've fixed it up with my minor, Sammy, to say something for Lamb to hear——"

"What the dickens——"

"Sammy is going to say—where Lamb can hear him—I wonder who that was looking out of the Remove box-room window? He will say it to another fag, see, where Lamb can hear him! What do you think Lamb will do?"

"He will pop up to the box-room like a shot, to see whether that ass Smithy is at his games again!" said Bob.

"Just that!" chuckled Bunter.

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"And I shall be waiting on the landing with a gallon of ink to mop on his head over the banisters as he comes up." Billy Bunter grinned from one fat ear to the other. "And then," he added impressively, "I shall shout out: 'Look out, Smithy!'"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And what will Lamb think?" giggled Bunter. "Of course, he will hear, and he will think that Smithy's here again and has got him with the ink! What!"

"Well, my hat!" said Bob.

The chums of the Remove gazed at the happy Owl! Evidently Billy Bunter had been setting his fat wits to work to some purpose!

Really and truly, this was a deep-laid scheme.

It was a fact that the Bounder of Greyfriars, after he had been sacked, had got back secretly into the school and kept doggo in the garret for days and nights—emerging occasionally to jape his old enemy Lamb!

Now he was gone, and it was known that Lamb was keeping a sharp eye open lest he should attempt to play the same game over again. It was quite possible that the expelled Bounder might make such an attempt—Smithy was well known to be a sticker.

If Bunter carried out this masterly scheme, there was no doubt that Lamb would think that the Bounder was back again—and the fat Owl would have the happy satisfaction of drenching him with ink, and getting off absolutely scot-free!

"It won't hurt Smithy!" grinned Bunter. "He's a hundred miles away—they can't get old Smithy for it! They'll think he did it—same as he painted Lamb's study one night, and chucked an old boot on his napper one day! See? They'll be hunting all over the shop for Smithy—they won't even think of me. I've thought this out!"

"What a brain!" said Bob.

"The brainfulness is truly terrific!" declared Hurrce Jamsset Ram Singh.

"I'll make him sit up!" said the vengeful fat Owl. "Pitching into a fellow like that, you know! He jolly well knew I meant that book for Skinner—and he got shirty simply because it hit him in the back of the neck and knocked him over——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can still feel that whopping, though it was yesterday!" said Bunter, with a reminiscent wriggle. "I'll show him! I say, you fellows, let me have all the ink you've got! I've got about a pint already—up and down the studies. I'd like a gallon!"

"Better chuck it, old fat man!" said Harry Wharton, shaking his head.

"I'm going to—over Lamb! Look here, don't jaw—gimme all the ink you've got! It's time I was waiting on the landing."

The Famous Five were rather dubious.

It was true that Bunter's scheme was deep—in fact masterly. And it

was true that Lamb deserved all that Bunter could give him for that tremendous whopping the day before. But inking a beak was a fearfully serious enterprise. There was no doubt that if the perpetrator was spotted, he would go the way the Bounder had gone.

But argument was wasted on Bunter. Bunter knew what he was going to do—and he was going to do it!

He emptied the study inkpot into his tin bowl. He annexed a bottle of gum, and emptied that in also. Then he blinked round the study.

"Got any more?" he asked.

"No. That's more than enough to get you sacked!" said Frank Nugent.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

And he rolled off with the tin bowl—in search of further supplies in other studies. Lamb, evidently, had got it coming!

INKY!

"I SAY, you fellows! Is he coming?"

"Not yet!"

"Blow him! Just like the beast to keep a fellow waiting!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Half the Remove, at least, were gathered on the landing. News of Billy Bunter's intended exploit had spread in the studies, and quite a number of fellows were curious to see the vengeful Owl get on with it.

Billy Bunter stood near the banisters, the big tin bowl in his fat hands.

It was nearly full; Bunter's search for ingredients had been successful. It was not all ink. There was a good deal of ink, of various colours; but there were also gum, and liquid glue, and a spot or two of blacking, and odds and ends like tea-leaves from study teapots, and coffee grounds. Altogether, Bunter's mixture was not attractive, and it was quite certain that anyone getting it on the head was not to be envied.

Five or six fellows were glancing over the banisters, down into the deep well of the staircase.

They were ready to give the fat Owl the tip at the sight of Lamb coming up.

The question was, whether he would come. If Sammy Bunter played the part assigned to him by his major there was little doubt that he would. The merest hint that the expelled junior, Vernon-Smith, was on the scene again would be enough for Lamb.

Six or seven fellows were ready to shout "Look out, Smithy!" as soon as the ink went, to back up Bunter's masterly strategic scheme.

Really, it seemed quite a safe stunt! Lamb would hear that shout as he got the ink, and would be absolutely convinced that the Bounder was on the scene again. What else was he to think?

"I say, you fellows, ain't he coming yet?" asked Bunter anxiously. "I say, I can hear somebody."

"It's Redwing!" said Bob Cherry, who was peering over the banister.

"Blow him!" trunted Bunter,

Tom Redwing came up. He glanced at the grinning crowd on the Remove landing, but did not pause. He went on up the Remove passage to his study.

Since his chum, Vernon-Smith, had left, Redwing had not tea'd in Study No. 4. He did not care for tea in the study on his own, and at such times he missed his absent chum sorely. Smithy had been a bad hat, and even Tom could not deny that he had asked for the sack—as he had asked for it many a time before. But Tom missed him as much as if he had been the best fellow breathing, instead of the wildest young rascal at Greyfriars.

"Here's the giddy Baa-Lamb!" chuckled Bolsover major.

"Ready, old fat man?" gurgled Wibley.

Bunter was ready! He moved a little nearer to the banister and rested the tin bowl on the rail. Between the banisters he blinked down.

Other fellows backed away from the banister. Nobody wanted to catch Lamb's eye, if he looked up.

Between the banisters, Bunter had a glimpse of a head! Lamb did not wear a mortar-board, like other masters; he wore his hair rather long, as became an artistic gentleman, a soft collar, a blue tie, and

There was a sudden startled frantic yell from the art master.

He staggered on the stairs and clutched at the rail, yelling! Inky mixture streamed over his face, down his neck, over his velvet coat, and his blue tie—and no doubt his long hair got a full share, with the inky bowl upside down on it! He yelled and yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh gum!"

Then there was a roar:

"Look out, Smithy!"

A dozen fellows shouted all at once.

Dozens of cars below heard that



"What is the meaning of this, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Lamb, picking up his cane. "Oooogh! I'm bib-bob-bub-burning!" spluttered the fat Removite, clawing at his mouth.

"I say. Redwing!" squeaked Bunter.

Tom turned back in the passage.

"What—"

"Did you see Lamb downstairs?"

"Lamb? Yes. I think he's coming up," answered Redwing. "He was coming towards the staircase."

"Oh, good!"

Redwing went on to his study. He could see that some sort of a jape was on, but he was not interested. Since Smithy had left, Redwing's heart had been heavy, and he was in no mood for joining in japes. He went into Study No. 4 and shut the door.

Billy Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. Lamb was coming—and Bunter was ready for him.

"By gum! Here he comes!" whispered Skinner.

a velvet coat. Being artistic, no doubt he liked to look arty. There was no possibility of even the short-sighted Owl of the Remove making a mistake. Lamb was unmistakable.

At the turn of the staircase he was directly below the Remove banister.

Bunter tipped the bowl over.

He had intended to tip the contents—about three quarts of varied fluids—over Lamb's nut. It was like Bunter to let the tin bowl slip, and tip over, along with its contents.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter as it went. Swoosh! Bang!

Even Bunter could not miss, when he merely had to drop the flood on a head directly below.

Three quarts of fluid descended on Mr. Lamb's head in a drenching shower. The bang of the bowl immediately followed. It fell fair and square on Lamb's head, and fitted like a tin hat!

shout! Lamb, as he staggered, and spluttered, and yelled, heard it!

"Look out, Smithy!" squeaked Bunter.

"Look out, Smithy!" shouted a dozen other fellows.

Then they scudded.

Nobody wanted to be caught on the landing. Nobody remained there—or in the passage. Study doors closed swiftly on grinning juniors.

Nobody was going to know anything about that startling happening. Smithy—no doubt seventy miles away, at the family mansion in Courtman Square, London—was safe enough from reprisals; as Bunter said, it would not hurt Smithy! Lamb could put it down to Smithy, and no harm done.

The Remove landing swiftly cleared. But the staircase below, at the same time, was getting crowded.

Lamb's yells drew a large audience. Wingate of the Sixth ran up the stairs. Coker of the Fifth ran up after him. Mr. Prout and Mr. Capper came hurrying up. A score of others followed. They all gazed in amazement at the art master, clinging to the banisters, streaming with ink, and wearing what looked like a tin hat!

"What—?" boomed Mr. Prout. "What—who—what—who is that?"

"Is—is—is that Lamb?" gasped Mr. Capper.

"Lamb!" gurgled Coker. "Oh my hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, Coker, you ass!" breathed Wingate.

Clang!

Lamb clawed off the tin bowl and hurled it on the stairs. It rolled, and clanged, and banged from stair to stair till it found a resting-place in the hall below.

The removal of the tin hat revealed a face as black as that of the darkest inhabitant of Central Africa.

Lamb was scarcely recognisable. His face, his ears, his hair, were drenched in ink. Ink streamed all over him. Through the curtain of streaming ink he gibbered with rage.

"Mr. Lamb!" exclaimed Wingate. "Who—?"

"That young scoundrel!" Lamb clawed at ink and panted. "Vernon-Smith—he has done this!"

"That boy!" boomed Prout. "Is it possible—is it imaginable—that he has had the audacity to return here again—?"

"I think I heard his name called," said Mr. Capper, glancing up. "Yes, I am sure I heard his name called, and—"

"He is here—he is in the school again!" Lamb choked with fury. "I will deal with him. I—I—"

The enraged art master made a step up. But he paused. Even to root out the Bounder and deal with him, he could not carry on as he was. First of all, he needed a wash and a change.

In the Remove studies fellows listened for Lamb's step. Billy Bunter, in Study No. 7, listened most anxiously of all! But Lamb's step was not heard! For the next half-hour Mr. Lamb was busy with soap and hot water—and he peed plenty of both.

While he rubbed and scrubbed, and scrubbed and rubbed, Mr. Lamb was thinking of Herbert Vernon-Smith, and did not bestow a single thought upon William George Bunter. Billy Bunter, as a rule, was no strategist, but this time his strategy had worked like a charm.

SMITHY AGAIN!

"REDDY, old man!" Tom Redwing fairly jumped.

He had expected to find Study No. 4 empty when he entered it, and it had appeared to be so. He shut the door and threw himself into the armchair, and sat with a clouded brow.

The study looked just the same as

of old; none of the Bounder's expensive furnishings had been removed. But it was not the same to the eyes of the Bounder's chum.

Smithy had had his faults—more faults than Tom cared to remember—but he had had his good qualities, too, plenty of them, and, whatever he was, Tom had liked him better than any other fellow in the school. Redwing was friendly with almost every fellow in his Form, but he knew that the Bounder's place would never be filled.

He was thinking of his chum, wondering what Smithy was doing in London. He could not have seen his father yet; Mr. Vernon-Smith was in the United States. It was going to be unpleasant enough for Smithy when he met his pater.

It was true that Lamb had been glad to get him sacked; that the man had watched and waited for chances. But that did not alter the fact that Smithy had asked for it. A fellow who had a letter from a racing man, and who busted a master's desk to get it after that master had found it, could not expect anything but the sack.

Lamb was the master concerned, and no doubt he had done his worst for the junior he disliked and perhaps feared. But Smithy had been booked, anyhow. Tom knew that Dr. Locke could have done nothing else. He could not blame the headmaster, who had done his duty; he could hardly blame Lamb, much as he disliked and distrusted him. But he wished from the bottom of his heart that Smithy's luck, proverbial in the Remove, had held good once more—whether he deserved to be bunked or not! Even yet he could hardly realise that the old Bounder was gone for good, that he would never barge into that study or tread the old quadrangle again.

The voice of the fellow of whom he was thinking made Redwing bound from the armchair.

For a moment he thought it was fancy. He stared round the study blankly.

A grinning face looked over the screen in the corner.

Redwing stared at it.

"Smithy!" he gasped.

The Bounder of Greyfriars lounged out from behind the screen. He laughed at Tom's astonished face.

"Surprised you?" he grinned.

"Yes!" gasped Tom. "Smithy, you're back again!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith threw himself into the armchair from which Tom had risen. He leaned back, crossed one leg over the other, and smiled at his chum.

"I thought I'd dodge out of sight when the door opened," he drawled. "Can't be too careful, Reddy, old bean!" He chuckled. "Glad to see me?"

"You know I'm glad to see you, Smithy, old man!" said Redwing. His face was brighter, but he was anxious. "How—?"

"Easy enough! I got in while you were in class. I've been waiting here ever since for you to come up. You've got to help me, old man!"

Redwing's face became very grave. "Does that mean—?" he began.

"It means that I've come back," said the Bounder of Greyfriars coolly. "I'm not through with Lamb yet!"

Redwing stood silent. He was glad to see his chum—glad to see him at any time and in any circumstances. But he was uneasy and a little alarmed.

"I came back after I was sacked!" drawled the Bounder. "I thought I could get Robinson to put me up at the garage—I'd have tipped him pretty high—but he refused! I parked myself in the garret, and but for that fat owl Bunter I should have stuck it out and never been spotted—till I had spotted Lamb! Well, I had to go—now I've turned up again, like a bad penny!"

He laughed at Redwing's grave face.

"No news of Quelch yet?" he asked. "No news while I've been away?"

"No," answered Tom.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"And Ferrers Locke's in search of him all this time, and he hasn't spotted him," he said. "I fancy that jolly old detective is overrated. And they haven't got that cracksman, Slim Jim, who's been cracking cribs around here for weeks on end. No news of that, either?"

"Not that I've heard," said Tom. "Never mind all that, Smithy."

"But I do mind," grunted the Bounder. "It's well known that it was that crook they call Slim Jim who kidnapped Quelch because our jolly old beak saw his face one night with the mask off. If they got Slim Jim they'd find out where he has parked old Quelch. And if Quelch was back—"

Tom Redwing read the thought in his chum's mind. He shook his head slowly and sadly.

"Quelch wouldn't like a man in his Form being sacked while he was away," argued the Bounder. "He wasn't a bad old bean, though I had trouble enough with him when he was here. He might put in a word for a fellow—like me to come back next term, if it were possible?"

"You know I would, Smithy. But—"

"But you don't think Quelch would butt in if he were here?"

"Well, I don't see how he could," said Tom honestly. "Lamb was down on you, old chap, I know; but look what you did. If it had been Quelch instead of Lamb you would have been sacked all the same."

"Only it wasn't Quelch," said Smithy, "and he mightn't like a dashed substitute master getting one of his boys sacked while he was away. That's human nature! Might be a spot of a chance—if Quelch were back!"

He shrugged his shoulders again.

"But he isn't—and that's that!" he said. "That man Ferrers Locke must be a real dud. Fat lot of use as a detective! I'd like to get a word with him, all the same, and ask him his opinion of Lamb."

"He hasn't been here all the term, that I know of," said Tom. "Looks to me as if he's dropped the case."

"Well, I'm here," said Smithy, "and I'm sticking. I can't camp in the garret again; they're wise to that! But I'm sticking. Lamb got me sacked. You needn't tell me I asked for it—I know that! That wasn't Lamb's reason. He'd have got me sacked, if he could, for nothing. He was afraid of letting me stay on here."

"But——"

"I tell you he was afraid!" snapped the Bounder. "I'd found out too many things about him. Where does he go, Reddy, when he sneaks out of the school quietly at midnight? I've proved that he does! What's his connection with that gangster Nobby Parker at Sea View? Why does he go there? And why does he go down into the air-raid dugout when he goes? I've watched him—I know!"

"But——" said Tom again.

"I tell you he's up to something—something shady," said Vernon-Smith. "He's got secrets—dangerous secrets! That's why he wanted to get shut of me; he's tried it on two or three times, and he jumped at the chance when I was fool enough to give him one. That man's breaking the law, Reddy!"

"Smithy!"

"He's breaking the law," said Smithy quietly. "I don't know how, but I know that! I found out something more while I was keeping doggo here. 'Member how I busted his desk to get at that letter? Well, there was a leather wallet in that desk, with a lock on it and something in it that clinked when it was moved. He was as mad as a hatter at that wallet being seen. What the deuce was in that wallet, Reddy?"

"What does it matter, old chap?"

"I fancy it matters a lot—I've seen it again! He had it hidden behind the ivy in the Cloister. He must have fancied it would be safer there. He ran into me in the dark one night near the spot, and the next day I spotted him—getting it away! He never saw me—I saw him! I'd like to know what was in it. Something he wouldn't care to have a fellow see, I fancy!"

Redwing did not speak. It seemed to him that Smithy, in his intense dislike of the art master, was letting his imagination run riot. Redwing knew that the Bounder had rooted out many strange and seemingly suspicious circumstances connected with Mr. Lamb. But it was not easy to picture the art master as a breaker of the law.

"What's his game?" went on Vernon-Smith. "Whatever it is, I'm here to spot it, Reddy—to show him up and to get him sacked, as he got me sacked. I'm not quitting till I've done that. Greyfriars won't see the last of me till it sees the last of that ruan—a rogue and a rascal of some kind, Reddy."

"I don't like him," said Redwing. "Mauly says that he's not pukka—and I think Mauly's right. But——"

"I tell you the man's a rogue! I can't make him out, but I know

that!" said Vernon-Smith between his teeth. "And I'm going to spot him and show him up, Reddy. And I've got to stay here to do it! And you're going to help me to keep doggo!"

"I'll stand by you, Smithy—anything I can. But——"

"Here I am, anyhow," said Vernon-Smith. "Nobody knows I'm in the school again, except you. Nobody's going to know. And Lamb——"

The Bounder broke off suddenly. There was a footstep in the Remove passage, stopping at the door of Study No. 4. Vernon-Smith knew that footstep!

In a split second he was out of the armchair and behind the screen in the corner again.

He was only just in time. He had hardly disappeared when the door was flung open, and Mr. Lamb stood in the doorway, staring into the study.

SPOTTING SMITHY!

MR. LAMB glared at Redwing, and then glanced round the study.

He scanned the room, and then his keen, angry eyes returned to Tom Redwing's startled face.

READERS PLEASE NOTE
that owing to the Easter
Holidays next week's issue of
the **MAGNET** will be on sale
THURSDAY, March 21st.

Redwing's heart was beating quickly. Of what had happened on the Remove landing he knew nothing, but he could see that Lamb suspected that the Bounder was there. The art master's first words proved it:

"Redwing, where is Vernon-Smith?"

"Vernon-Smith, sir?" stammered Redwing.

"You are aware of what he has done!" thundered Mr. Lamb.

"I—I don't know that he's done anything, sir!" stammered Redwing. "What——"

"You were not one of the boys who shouted a warning to him?" snapped Mr. Lamb sarcastically.

"I? No, sir! I don't understand. I've been in this study for the last half-hour. What——"

Redwing could see that something had happened, though he did not know what.

"Vernon-Smith is in the House!" snapped Mr. Lamb. "I have been drenched with ink—flung over me from the landing by Vernon-Smith, and——"

"Wha-at?"

"His presence here is known to a number of the boys!" exclaimed the art master. "Five or six, at least, called out his name, warning him, when the ink was flung over me."

Redwing stared at him in sheer bewilderment.

Whatever Smithy might have done, Redwing knew that he had not flung ink over the art master from the Remove landing. He had last seen Lamb at the foot of the staircase; since then he had been in his study, and the Bounder had been there.

"You were not on the landing?" asked Mr. Lamb.

"Oh, no, sir! I've been in this study."

Lamb gave him a sharp glance. Then he turned to glance into the passage.

Several Remove fellows were looking out of their studies.

"Wharton!" rapped Mr. Lamb.

"Yes, sir!"

"Have you seen Vernon-Smith here?"

"Vernon-Smith? No, sir!"

"Are you aware that he is in the school again, Wharton?"

"Not at all, sir. I've seen nothing of him," answered the captain of the Remove.

"Cherry, have you seen Vernon-Smith?"

"No, sir."

"Have you, Mauleverer?"

"No, sir."

"He is certainly in the House," said Mr. Lamb, through his closed lips. "He is concealed in one of the studies, or in the garret above as before. He is certainly here—What are you laughing at, Cherry?"

"Oh, nothing, sir!" stammered Bob.

Mr. Lamb scanned the faces in the passage. He was assured that several, at least, of the Removites knew that Herbert Vernon-Smith was in the House.

Billy Bunter's strategy had worked. Not for a moment did the art master think of the fat Owl; he was quite certain that that shower of ink had come from the expelled Bounder.

He could see signs of suppressed merriment in a good many faces. None of the fellows in the passage had the faintest suspicion that the Bounder really was in the House. They were amused to see Lamb following the wrong trail, as planned by the strategic fat Owl.

Certainly it had never occurred to Bunter that Vernon-Smith might be anywhere near the spot. So far as Bunter knew, the Bounder was at home. Quite unconsciously and unintentionally, the Owl of the Remove had set Lamb on the track.

"Some of you," said Mr. Lamb, savagely, "know that Vernon-Smith is here! I heard his name called distinctly by several boys!"

"Did—did you, sir?" murmured Wharton.

"He, he, he!" came from the half-open doorway of Study No. 7. Billy Bunter was rejoicing in the success of his deep-laid scheme.

"Bunter!" rapped Mr. Lamb.

"Oh! I—I wasn't laughing, sir——" gasped Bunter.

"Have you seen Vernon-Smith, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I'd forgotten all about him!"

"Very well!" said Mr. Lamb. "I

shall search every study in this passage! I shall begin here, Redwing, as this was Vernon-Smith's study, and you, I have very little doubt, are acting in collusion with him!"

Redwing made no answer to that. He was utterly dismayed.

Somebody had played a trick on Lamb, and Lamb supposed it was Smithy, and that had set him searching for the Bounder, whose presence he certainly had not hitherto suspected.

Smithy's game was up now.

Lamb stepped into the study.

He glanced to and fro, and then stepped to the screen in the corner. A dozen fellows gathered round the doorway.

Not having the faintest suspicion that Smithy was there, they were entertained to see Lamb searching Smithy's old study.

Bob Cherry winked at the other fellows, and there was a suppressed chortle.

But, as Lamb grasped the screen and jerked it away, there was a general exclamation of astonishment.

"Smithy!" gasped Bob.

There, in the corner, revealed by the removal of the screen, stood the Bounder of Greyfriars, his brow black, his eyes glinting, his fists clenched.

The Removites stared at him blankly. That discovery was utterly unexpected, so far as they were concerned.

"Smithy!" stuttered Harry Wharton.

"The esteemed and absurd Smithy!" breathed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh crumbs! Then he was here!" murmured Nugent.

Only Mr. Lamb was not surprised. He had been assured that Vernon-Smith was in the house. And there he was!

"So I have found you, Vernon-Smith!" said the art master grimly.

The Bounder's eye glittered at him.

This was a sudden and unexpected ending to Smithy's latest scheme. His return was to have been kept a deep and dark secret. Billy Bunter, all unknowingly, had put paid to that.

"You rotter!" muttered Vernon-Smith. "How did you know?"

"How did I know?" repeated Mr. Lamb. "I could hardly fail to know, you insolent young rascal, when you drenched me with ink on the staircase!"

"I did nothing of the kind, you fool!" snarled the Bounder.

Lamb's lip curled. He did not, of course, believe that statement; he was not likely to do so, in the circumstances.

"Redwing," he snapped, "you have been hiding this expelled boy here! You will answer for it to your headmaster!"

Redwing did not speak.

"He has been doing nothing of the sort!" said Vernon-Smith. "He found me in this study when he came up, and never knew I was here till I showed up."

"That will do, Vernon-Smith!"

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Mr. Lamb had a cane under his arm. He had brought it with him in his search for the Bounder, ready for use. Now he slipped it down into his hand.

"This is the second time, Vernon-Smith, that you have had the audacity to enter this school from which you have been expelled!" he said. "This time I shall give you so severe a lesson that I think you will not repeat the exploit!"

"Will you?" said the Bounder, between his teeth. He clenched his fists hard. "I shall hit back, you rat!"

"Bend over that table, Vernon-Smith!"

"You fool!" retorted the Bounder. "I don't belong to Greyfriars now! Do you fancy you can give me orders? Think again!"

"You will learn not to enter a school to which you do not belong, Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Lamb grimly. "If you do not immediately bend over that table——"

"Go and eat coke!"

Mr. Lamb said no more. He made a stride at the Bounder and grasped him.

The next moment the cane was lashing.

But the Bounder was desperate now. All his plans had fallen to fragments like a house of cards; his game was up, and he had to go. He was not, at all events, going to be thrashed before he went, if he could help it.

Lamb's grasp on him was like iron. Slight as he looked, the little art master was very strong.

Vernon-Smith did not struggle in that grasp; it was useless. He hit out, and his clenched fist came with a crash on the point of the art master's chin.

It was a crashing blow, and it caused Lamb to stagger and lose his grasp.

In an instant the Bounder sprang away from him.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Hook it, Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith did not lose time. Lamb staggered against the wall, but in hardly more than a moment he was whirling back at the Bounder, with a face of fury. That moment was enough for Vernon-Smith! The crowd at the door opened to give him room, and he flew.

"Stop that boy!" panted Mr. Lamb. Not a hand was raised to stop the fleeing Bounder. He raced down the Remove passage, towards the stairs.

Lamb, gripping the cane, shot out of the study in pursuit.

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"Come on!" gasped Bob.

Smithy, with the enraged art master almost at his heels, raced across the Remove landing.

The juniors followed at a rush, to watch the breathless chase.

From the landing they saw Smithy descending the stairs—three at a time.

Lamb, close behind, lashed with the cane.

"Put it on, Smithy!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows! Is that Smithy? I say, was he really here? Oh crikey!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Go it, Smithy!"

"He's got him—no, he hasn't! Oh crumbs, there's Prout!"

Mr. Prout appeared at the foot of the staircase, staring up.

Prout, no doubt, wanted to know what the disturbance was. He learned, quite suddenly! He had a glimpse of the Bounder, for a second—then Vernon-Smith crashed, like a thunderbolt, and Prout went over backwards.

"Ooooh!" gasped Mr. Prout.

He landed on his portly back with a heavy bump. The Bounder jumped over him and flew on. Lamb was only a moment behind—and he stumbled headlong over the Fifth Form master.

"Oooh!" repeated Prout, in an anguished gurgle. "Wooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from above.

Lamb, gritting his teeth, scrambled up. Leaving Prout prostrate and spluttering, he rushed on!

But that brief delay had been enough for the Bounder! He was already out of the House, and sprinting across the quad.

There was a roar of astonished voices as he was seen—a crowd of Greyfriars fellows stared at him, and at Lamb! But Lamb did not get near enough to handle the cane again. He halted, panting, in the school gateway, and stared after the Bounder, vanishing down the road towards Friardale.

Smithy was gone!

NOTHING DOING!

"ROBINSON!"

Ferrers Locke started.

"John Robinson," the Head's chauffeur, was coming out at the side door of the school garage, early in the sunny spring morning. There was a shade of deep thoughtfulness on the olive-skinned face of the chauffeur—his brows were knitted, and his eyes had a glint in them.

John Robinson—otherwise Ferrers Locke, the detective—was usually the most observant of men; but in that mood of grim and disagreeable reflection, he did not immediately notice a figure in the garage yard.

It was that of the Bounder of Greyfriars—and Herbert Vernon-Smith looked very curiously at the chauffeur, rather wondering what was the cause of that dark and thoughtful frown on the usually impassive and almost expressionless face of John Robinson.

Ferrers Locke had, in point of fact, plenty of food for thought.

He had just come off the telephone. Over the telephone he had learned from Inspector Grimes, at Courtfield, that Slim Jim had been at work again, this time at the Courtfield and County Bank.

Once a week, at least, there was news of a raid by Slim Jim, who was working that neighbourhood in his well-known thorough style—cracking crib after crib, and snapping his

ingers at the police and at the Baker Street detective.

It was irritating enough to Locke! He knew, at least he was sure, that he was on the track of the mystery cracksman. Yet the man, with infinite cunning, still beat him at the game.

He had proved, to his own certainty, that Slim Jim was an inmate of Greyfriars School. He was convinced that he was no other than Mr. Lamb, the new art master. And surely he had an advantage, as he knew so much, and Lamb, on his side, had no suspicion that the Head's new chauffeur was a detective on the watch for him.

Yet that advantage had not served Ferrers Locke.

He had watched with infinite patience—in vain! Twice, at least, Slim Jim had had a narrow escape, but he had escaped!

And then, when Locke had discovered the wallet of cracksman's tools hidden in the old ivy in the Cloister, success had seemed certain—he had only to watch that spot, till the secret crook came for the wallet! But again fortune had been against him—the mystery man had taken the alarm, and the wallet had been removed—it was useless to watch longer in the Cloister.

Since then the Baker Street detective's vigilance had been unsleeping—yet now he knew, from the Court-field inspector, that he had failed again.

Even while he had been on the watch the previous night, the secret crook must have crept out in the darkness, cracked the crib at Court-field, and returned unseen, undiscovered.

Locke's feelings were bitter enough.

He had as much proof as satisfied himself—he had none to justify an arrest. And he knew, though Dr. Locke said nothing, that the Head's faith in his relative, the Baker Street detective, was wavering. And all this time Mr. Quelch was a prisoner—hidden in some unknown spot, to keep his knowledge of the cracksman's identity a secret.

Quelch had seen the midnight prowler with his mask off. That was why he had been kidnapped. One word from Quelch, had he been at liberty, would have been enough to lock the handcuffs on the wrists of Mr. Lamb—if, indeed, Lamb was the man! But Quelch was not likely to be found until Slim Jim was taken—and Slim Jim was not taken yet. Would he ever be taken?

With such reflection in his mind, it was no wonder that John Robinson's face looked dark and grim as he came out of the garage, in the sunshine of a windy March morning.

He did not notice the schoolboy in the yard till Vernon-Smith suddenly spoke, and then he started, and glanced quickly round.

His frown deepened at the sight of the Bounder of Greyfriars.

"You!" he snapped.

"Little me!" smiled the Bounder.

Locke gave him a grim look.

He had not forgotten that it was from the Bounder of Greyfriars and

owing to his feud with Lamb that he had picked up his first clue, which had concentrated his attention on the art master. But the strange game the expelled junior was playing was awkward and disconcerting for the detective.

More than once the Bounder had, quite unconsciously, barged in and disconcerted his plans—Smithy, of course; having not the slightest suspicion that John Robinson was anything but a chauffeur, or had any duties outside the garage.

"What are you doing here again, Master Vernon-Smith?" asked John Robinson sharply. "I heard that you had been found in the school and turned out."

"Right on the wicket!" agreed the Bounder. "Did you think you had seen the last of me, Robinson?"

"I think that you are a very foolish and headstrong boy, and that the sooner you go home the better!"

"Thanks! Is that all?" asked the Bounder sarcastically.

"Leave this yard, at all events!"

"Any hurry?" drawled Smithy. "Look here, Robinson, I've dropped in early, to have a word with you before anyone is about. I asked you more than a week ago to put me up in your garage—"

"That will do!"

"Tired of my conversation?" grinned the Bounder. "I'm going to ask you again, Robinson."

"It is useless. Please go."

"I'll go when it suits me!" said Herbert Vernon-Smith coolly. "Not too much check, Robinson, please! Look here, I told you why I came back—I've told you that I suspect that man Lamb of being some sort of a rogue. I've told you that I'm going to spot him, and get him sacked as he got me sacked—"

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"You need not tell me again, Master Vernon-Smith!" said John Robinson.

"I've tried to plant myself out in the House—twice!" said the Bounder, unheeding. "That game's up now—no good trying again. Look here, Robinson, is a tenner any good to you?"

"Thank you, no!" said Ferrers Locke dryly.

The Bounder set his lips.

"Name your own figure, then!" he said savagely. "I've got plenty of money, and I can get as much more as I want! I'd throw away every quid to get a chance at that rat! If you want to do your duty to your employer, you ought to be glad of a rogue being shown up, who must have taken the Head in, to be here at all. Nothing to worry your precious conscience in that, Robinson! Look here, if you'll fix it up for me to keep doggo in the garage, I'll stand you anything you like! I've only to ask for fifty pounds if I want it."

The Bounder watched the chauffeur's face eagerly.

It was his last chance of remaining in the precincts of Greyfriars, and, as he had said, he had plenty of money and could get more if he wanted it—and he was prepared to spend it like water to carry out his obstinate purpose.

But if any other chauffeur ever employed by Dr. Locke might have fallen to the offered bribe, Ferrers Locke was not likely to fall.

He did not even answer the Bounder.

He crossed the yard to the gate on the lane and threw it open. Then he looked back at Vernon-Smith.

"Please go!" he said.

"Will you answer me, you cheeky rotter?" snarled the Bounder, his eyes blazing with anger.

"I have answered you, Master Vernon-Smith! Will you go this moment, or shall I take you by the collar?"

"Do so, if you dare!"

The next moment a lean hand was on the Bounder's collar.

With a flaming face, Vernon-Smith struck full at the dark-complexioned face of the Head's chauffeur. All his rage and disappointment were put into that angry, savage blow.

But it did not reach the mark: The grip on his collar swung him back even as he struck, and his fist swept only the empty air.

Ferrers Locke smiled faintly. With a swing of his sinowy arm he hooked the Bounder to the gate. With another swing he tossed him into the lane, and Vernon-Smith sat down there with a bump.

"Oh!" he panted. "You rotter—oh!"

"You had better go, Master Vernon-Smith," said John Robinson calmly. "I warn you now that if you return here I shall report your presence to Dr. Locke."

The gate slammed shut.

The Bounder of Greyfriars staggered to his feet. His face was red with rage.

His last hope of remaining within the precincts of the school had failed

him—this was the finish of his intended campaign at Greyfriars. With a black and bitter brow he tramped away down the lane.

And John Robinson hoped that he had seen the last of him. The Bounder's strange campaign in the school from which he had been expelled was altogether too much in the way of Ferrers Locke.

SMITHY ON THE WATCH!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"
"Smithy!"

Five cyclists slowed on the cliff road.

On Saturday afternoon, Harry Wharton & Co. were pedalling along the road from Friardale to Pegg, in a cheery bunch, when they suddenly sighted the Bounder.

Their way lay past the gate of Sea View, the chalet facing the cliffs, where the man Nobby Parker was caretaker. But they had not intended to stop. Mr. Lamb had been so exceedingly severe upon trespassers at that spot that Remove fellows were careful by this time to give it a wide berth.

But they slowed down at the sight of Vernon-Smith standing at the gate and looking across it towards the chalet—a good distance back, the grassy mound which covered the air-raid dug-out being still farther back.

"Smithy, turning up like a bad penny again!" grinned Frank Nugent.

The Bounder looked round. His face wore an angry frown, but it cleared at the sight of the Famous Five. He gave them a nod and a grin, and they jumped down.

"So you're still about, Smithy," said Harry Wharton, with a curious look at the expelled Removeite. "Look here, we're going to Cliff House—trot along with us, old bean. We'll wheel the jiggers from here."

"The esteemed and beautiful Marjorie will be terrifically pleased to see you, my absurd Smithy," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"And I believe there's going to be a cake for tea," added Bob Cherry.

The Bounder grinned.

"Thanks!" he said. "I won't come—but thanks all the same! I've got something on—here!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Another row with that man Parker?" he asked. "Well, Lamb can't get on your track now for butting in at Sea View, Smithy."

"Not coming back to Greyfriars again?" asked Bob, with a grin.

The Bounder shook his head.

"That chicken won't fight," he answered. "I believe I should have nailed that rat if I could have stayed on—but my luck was out."

"You gave Lamb a high old time while it lasted," said Bob.

"Do you think I came back simply to jape Lamb?" grunted the Bounder. "I gave him all I could—but that wasn't why I got back to the school. I came back to keep an eye on him and catch him at his game—whatever it is!"

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton. "But what—"

"You know as well as I do that that man Lamb is a rogue and a rascal of some sort," said Vernon-Smith.

The Famous Five did not answer that. They knew that there were many peculiar circumstances connected with Mr. Lamb, but, like Redwing, they rather thought that Smithy's bitter hostility coloured his opinion of the art master.

"He got me sacked," said the Bounder. "I'm going to get him sacked before the school sees the last of me!"

"That's a big order, Smithy," murmured Bob.

"What's he up to?" said the Bounder bitterly. "What's his game here, with that low-browed gangster, Nobby Parker, who plays at being caretaker at this place? Not another chalet or bungalow along this road has a resident caretaker in the winter—it's only a pretext for the man being here."

"Um!" said Bob.

"Why does Lamb come here—why does he go down into the air-raid dugout when he comes—as I've watched him do?" sneered Smithy.

"Goodness knows," said Harry. "But—"

"What secret have they got hidden there—Lamb and his gangster pal?" went on Vernon-Smith. "Nobody's ever let into that shelter. You remember that afternoon when Mauleverer was along here, with Bessie Bunter in tow, and there was an air-raid alarm. There might have been bombs falling any minute—but Parker refused to admit them into the dugout—one of them a scared schoolgirl! Well—why?"

"It's queer," said Harry slowly.

"The queerfulness is terrific," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"You remember, too, the day I led the paperchase across here," said the Bounder.

"Just to worry the Pet Lamb," grinned Bob.

"Yes—just to worry him! You fellows had a row with Parker, and chased him down into the dugout. Some of the fellows said there was a room in the dugout with a locked door."

"That's so," said Harry. "What about it, Smithy?"

"I'm going to know what's behind that locked door," said the Bounder.

"I shall get a chance sooner or later—and then I may spot what Lamb's game is. He doesn't sneak out of the school at midnight for nothing, and he doesn't come here for nothing. What's the secret?"

The Famous Five could only shake their heads.

It was puzzling enough, but they had not given the matter much thought, not being spurred on by bitter animosity like the Bounder. In fact, they had almost forgotten about it by this time. The Bounder had forgotten nothing—every strange incident, every suspicious circumstance, was treasured in his vengeful mind.

"I'm going to know," he muttered. "And when I know Lamb will get

what I got—the boot out of Greyfriars."

"Better chuck it now, old man, and come along to Cliff House to tea," suggested Bob.

"Don't be a goat!"

"We passed Lamb as we biked through Friardale," said Bob. "He was walking this way. You don't want him to catch you here, Smithy."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Bounder. "Thanks for the tip!"

"Come on, then, and—"

"Rats! You fellows get off. Next time I see you I may have some news," said Vernon-Smith. "Clear off before that rat comes in sight—you'll get into a row if he spots you about here."

"Oh, all right!"

The Famous Five remounted their machines and pedalled on in the direction of Pegg and Cliff House School.

The Bounder stood looking down the road towards Friardale. Lamb, if he was coming, was not in sight yet. No doubt the cyclists had left him a good distance behind.

Having scanned the road, Vernon-Smith looked over the gate. Nothing was to be seen of the man Parker at the chalet, though doubtless he was there. If he was expecting Lamb, it was likely enough that he might be at a window, and that he had seen the juniors on the road.

Vernon-Smith walked on, as if intending to follow the disappearing cyclists to Pegg. Out of sight of the windows of Sea View, he stopped.

At the end of the fence that enclosed the chalet grounds was an un-built lot, open to the road, where several trees grew among straggling bushes. The Bounder left the road and stopped under a tall tree near the fence, already thick with the green of spring.

He gave a quick glance round him and clambered into the tree.

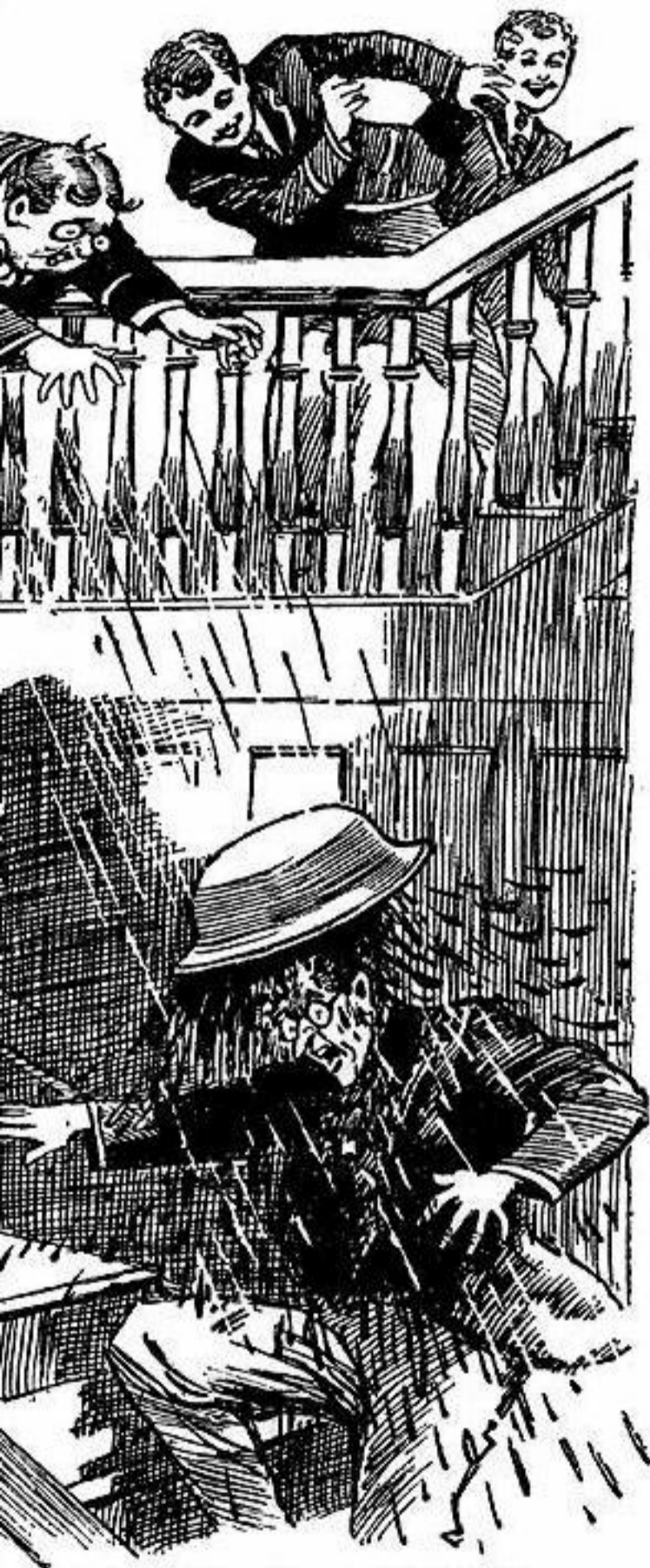
From a high branch, he had a



"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Swoosh! Bang! The Bounder is in a drenching shower, head, an

bird's-eye view of the chalet, the unkempt field that surrounded it, and the big, grassy mound that covered the air-raid dugout.

It was half an hour later that he saw Mr. Lamb coming up the sea road from the direction of Friardale. He caught the gleam of the spring sunshine on the art master's gold-rimmed glasses.



as the bowl slipped out of his fat fingers. Four quarts of fluid descended on Mr. Lamb while the bowl fell fair and square on his head, fitted him like a tin hat!

Lamb was walking slowly, as if taking a casual stroll on a half-holiday. Every now and then he stopped and looked out over the sea, where, in the blue distance, several vessels were to be seen—among them a trawler, probably engaged on mine-sweeping.

The Bounder, watching him, sneered.

He did not believe that Lamb was

interested in scenery, or in mine-sweepers. He believed that the man was on his guard, taking care that he was not followed, or observed going to Sea View. When a pedestrian passed on the road, Smithy noticed that Lamb gave him plenty of time to get clear before he proceeded. Lamb did not want to be seen going to the chalet.

That leisurely stroll brought the art master, at last, to the gate of Sea View. He stood near the gate for a few moments, once more admiring the scenery, to all appearances—making sure that the coast was clear, in the Bounder's opinion.

Then, with surprising suddenness, Mr. Lamb darted in at the gate. When he moved, he moved quickly.

The Bounder, from the high treetop, watched him with a sour smile on his face. All Lamb's actions were suspicious—from the point of view of a suspicious watcher!

The art master crossed the field swiftly and disappeared behind the grassy mound of the air-raid shelter. The entrance, as Smithy knew, was on the other side.

At the same time, a stocky man, with a pimply face, came out of the chalet and went in the same direction. It was Parker—and evidently he had been expecting Lamb, and had been watching for him.

Both disappeared behind the grassy mound.

Vernon-Smith slithered down from the tree. He had seen what he wanted to see—Lamb had come there, that afternoon, for one of his mysterious visits to the dugout! Smithy would have given much for a glance into that deep retreat.

He walked away—his brows wrinkled in perplexed thought. He was going to know—he was determined on that; and he was assured that, once he knew, Lamb's number would be up at Greyfriars.

But what was the secret? Keen as he was, the Bounder had to admit that he did not know—that he could not guess. Keen as he was, suspicious as he was, he did not dream of any connection between Lamb's visit to the dugout and the cracked crib at the Courtfield and County Bank the night before!

LAYING THE SNARE!

"MY dear Ferrers—"
"Robinson, sir!"
"Yes, yes, Robinson!"
said the Head. "Is there news? Is there news at last of my old friend Quelch?"

Dr. Locke's tone was eager. It was on Monday, after third school. Dr. Locke was in his study. A word on the telephone had told him to expect Ferrers Locke, and he was waiting when the chauffeur discreetly tapped at the study door and entered.

He waved his hand to a chair. But John Robinson did not sit down. John Robinson was always careful to play his part to perfection. Anyone glancing in at the window, or unexpectedly entering at the door, would have seen John Robinson

standing respectfully at attention—like a chauffeur listening to instructions from his employer. Ferrers Locke was not the man to leave the minutest point unguarded.

"As yet, no, sir!" said John.

Dr. Locke's face fell.

His faith in his relative, the celebrated detective of Baker Street, was unbounded. But he was disappointed—he had long been disappointed. It seemed that even Ferrers Locke was no match for the cunning crook, whose face was unknown, whose name was unknown, who was called Slim Jim because the police had no other name for him.

"I must not expect too much!" said Dr. Locke slowly. "The man has baffled the authorities for years—and it is only a matter of weeks since you have taken the case in hand, my dear fellow!"

"I shall not, at all events, abandon the case until Slim Jim is laid by the heels!" said Ferrers Locke. "And when he is in the hands of the law, there will be every hope of finding Mr. Quelch, sir!"

"The rascal, surely, will confess what he has done with him, when he has nothing further to gain by keeping him a prisoner!" said the Head.

"No doubt—but even if he does not, there will be every hope of tracing Mr. Quelch and discovering him."

"Quite so! It is amazing," said Dr. Locke slowly, "that the man keeps up his depredations and continually escapes discovery. You still hold to your belief that in his daily life he is a man who follows some normal and respectable avocation, above suspicion?"

"I am quite sure of it."

"And that he takes some post, of an open and unsuspecting kind, in a neighbourhood that he has marked out for plunder?"

"Exactly—except that I think that the neighbourhood depends on the post!" said Ferrers Locke, with a faint smile. "Slim Jim has been at work for years, as you say—unsuspected! In his open life, under his own name, he follows some respectable calling—all we know of it is that it is of a temporary nature—as his work concentrates in one district for a few weeks or months, and then he disappears as suddenly as he came—to be traced again, later, in some other district, perhaps a hundred miles away."

"But what kind of post?" said the Head musingly. "The man might be almost anything in his outward life."

"Anything—from a grocer's assistant to a schoolmaster, from an extra clerk in a bank to a temporary postman!" said Ferrers Locke. "It is a wide field of search to cover, sir."

"It seems to me almost hopeless!" said Dr. Locke, with a sigh. "And you have no clue?"

"I will not say that, sir! I will say that I have hope! But I prefer to say nothing definite till the case closes," said Ferrers Locke quietly.

"But you have something to say to me, especially this morning—"

"No doubt you have heard of Slim Jim's latest exploit—the robbery

at the bank in Courtfield last Friday night?"

"I have heard of it—was that the same man again?"

"There is no doubt about that—the workmanship of Slim Jim is unmistakable," answered Ferrers Locke, "and the night-watchman had a glimpse of him—a slim man in black with a masked face—there is no doubt on that point, sir!"

"And Mr. Quelch is the only man who has seen that face unmasked!" said the Head.

"That is why he is a prisoner!" said Ferrers Locke. "Now, sir, your bank in Courtfield is the Capital and Provincial."

"That is so," assented the Head. "Fortunately, it has not yet attracted the attention of Slim Jim."

"It may be the next on his list!" said Ferrers Locke.

The Head set his lips a little.

"If you think so, Ferrers," he said, "I keep a considerable number of securities at the bank. If you think so—" He paused uneasily. "There are a number of bearer bonds, very difficult to trace if lost—"

"I suggest, sir, that those securities should be taken from the Capital and Provincial, and placed in your safe here."

"You think they will be safer here?" asked the Head doubtfully. "The man made one attempt here, Ferrers, before you were called in. Surely a safe in a school is less secure than a bank?"

"I have a reason for what I suggest, sir, apart from the safety of your bonds!" said the Baker Street detective. "I have certain reasons for thinking that such a change may be useful to me. As for the securities themselves, you need have no misgiving—I shall take care of that."

"I shall, of course, do as you suggest!" said Dr. Locke. "Everything is in your hands, Ferrers. I will go to the bank to-day, if you wish—"

"Not at all, sir! In this matter, I must ask you to follow my instructions to the very letter."

"You have only to state them!" said the puzzled headmaster.

"I suggest, then, requesting a master in the school to call at the bank for the parcel of bonds," said Ferrers Locke. "He will, of course, carry your written authorisation for the manager to hand them to him."

"If you think it best—I will ask Mr. Prout—"

"I suggest Mr. Lamb, sir!"

"Lamb!" repeated the Head. "The art master? It shall be exactly as you say, Ferrers, but Mr. Lamb is not the man I should myself have selected for such a mission. He is an excellent master—a very capable man in many respects—perhaps you know that he has obliged me by taking the Remove, during the absence of Mr. Quelch—"

"I am aware of that, sir."

"A very capable and very obliging man," said the Head. "I have a high opinion of him—indeed, I shall regret his leaving when Mr. Woosey returns. It is not often that an art master is capable of taking a junior Form and giving satisfaction as a

Form-master. He is very clever at pen-and-ink work also, and I believe makes quite a little income by work for the illustrated papers. A gifted man, Ferrers, but—" The Head paused.

"But what, sir?" asked Ferrers Locke, with a very curious look at the headmaster of Greyfriars.

"But a little thoughtless and absent-minded," said the Head. "The only fault I could find with him, as a master, is a somewhat too easy-going and unsuspecting nature. But like so many artistic men, he is a little absent-minded—a little careless in the common matters of life—and, really, Ferrers, I should not like him to leave my parcel of bonds in a taxicab or anything of that kind."

Ferrers Locke suppressed a smile.

If Mr. Lamb was indeed, as the Baker Street detective believed, Slim Jim, the mystery cracksman, there was no doubt that he played his outward part well.

This was the impression he had made on the headmaster of Greyfriars—a very observant and sagacious old gentleman. It was no wonder that he had followed a career of crime undetected for so many years—if he was indeed Slim Jim.

"In every other respect an admirable man!" said the Head. "I shall give him the very best and most cordial recommendations when he leaves here on Mr. Woosey's return. Indeed, I hope to be able to obtain for him an immediate post to follow his leaving—I have already made some inquiries, and think that it will be an easy matter, he is so very satisfactory in every respect. But to tell you the truth, Ferrers, he is not the man I should select to carry a parcel of bonds worth several thousand pounds. A moment or two of absent-mindedness might have very serious results."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"I quite understand, sir. But he will go to the bank in the car, and I shall be with him the whole time, and there will be no danger of Mr. Lamb's absent-mindedness causing any disaster."

"If you really wish this, Ferrers—"

"I do, sir!"

"Very well; it shall be as you say. Mr. Lamb will be glad to oblige me in the matter; he is the most obliging of men."

"Naturally, sir, you will not make the slightest reference to the fact that this has been suggested to you," said Ferrers Locke. "A single hint—a single syllable—might do irreparable damage. It is more important than ever that no one should suspect that there is a detective in the school."

Dr. Locke smiled.

"You may rely on my discretion, Ferrers. I shall simply ask Mr. Lamb to go to the bank for me. Naturally, I shall say no more."

"Very well, sir; that is all."

Ferrers Locke opened the study door.

Mr. Prout was coming up the corridor, and he glanced at the chauffeur.

"Very good, sir, the car will be

ready at two!" said John Robinson, for Mr. Prout to hear.

And the chauffeur respectfully departed:

JUST LIKE BUNTER!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"What's up?"

"Got any ink?" asked Billy Bunter eagerly.

"Wha-at?"

The Famous Five were in the Rag when Billy Bunter rolled into that apartment, with an excited, fat face. They were looking from the window at the Head's car, which had come round from the garage, and was waiting at the door of the House.

John Robinson, standing like a ramrod, with expressionless face, waited with the car—evidently for a passenger to come out of the House. The juniors supposed that the Head was going in the car, and were mildly interested; when Billy Bunter rolled into the Rag, and drew their attention.

"Ink!" repeated Bob Cherry.

"At it again, you fat ass?" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows, don't waste time! Lamb may come out any minute—"

"Lamb!" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Lamb's going in the car!" explained Bunter. "I asked Robinson whom he was waiting for, and he said that Mr. Lamb was going to Courtfield! I say, you fellows, you know how I got Lamb the other day? I'm going to get him again!"

"Fathead!" said the Famous Five, with one voice.

"I want some ink!" hooted Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, cut off and get me all the ink you can! Don't waste time! Safe as houses, you know—I'm going to shout out 'Look out, Smithy!' same as last time, and Lamb will think Smithy's back again—see? He, he, he!"

"You howling ass!" hooted Bob Cherry. "You got away with that once—think you can get by with it a second time?"

"Eh? Yes! That's all right!" assured Bunter. "You see, I shall get him from the window over the doorway. When he comes out to the car, you know. Couldn't be better, could it? Then I shout out 'Look out, Smithy!' and—"

"You blithering ass, chuck it!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter was not to be denied. A few days ago he got by with that inky stunt, with absolute success. Success encouraged Bunter. He was going to do precisely the same thing over again.

Once more he was going to drench that beast Lamb with ink! Once more Lamb was going to think that Smithy had come back and was at his games again.

It seemed a sure thing to Bunter!

It did not seem at all sure to the Famous Five. Bunter had had luck last time—and even then he might not have escaped, but for the unexpected and unforeseen circumstance that Herbert Vernon-Smith actually had been found in the House at the

time. Harry Wharton & Co. did not think that history was likely to repeat itself. They thought it far more likely that Billy Bunter was heading for a large spot of trouble.

"Look here, you fat ass——" began Wharton.

"Will you scrounge me some ink from somewhere, without wasting time jawing?" hooted Bunter.

"No, ass! No, fathead! No, blitherer! You——"

"Then I'll make this do!" said Bunter. "I can't waste any time—that beast may pop out to the car any minute, and I can tell you I'm jolly well going to get him on the nut, same as I did before, and shout out: 'Look out, Smithy!' and make him think Smithy's back again! You just wait!"

Bunter grabbed the inkpot from the inkstand on the table in the Rag.

It was a large inkpot, and it was nearly full of ink! It was not so much as Bunter would have liked, but it was quite enough to make Mr. Lamb feel sorry for himself, if it descended upon him from above. That was what it was going to do—if Bunter repeated his success.

"Stop, you fat chump——" shouted Bob.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter, over a fat shoulder, and he shot out of the Rag, with the inkpot in a fat paw.

Billy Bunter ascended the staircase at unusual speed.

On the middle landing was a large window, which overlooked the spot where the car waited. There was a wide, old oaken window-ledge, where fellows sometimes sat. It was easy for the fat Owl to clamber on that window-ledge, push open a casement, and whiz down the contents of the inkpot, when Mr. Lamb emerged below.

What, indeed, could be simpler? Then that strategic shout "Look out, Smithy!" would put Lamb on the wrong scent again—as before. It seemed an absolutely safe and sure thing to Bunter.

The fat Owl panted up to the middle landing. He planted the inkpot on the old oak ledge, which was more than a foot wide, and then clambered up after it. Then his fat paw grabbed the inkpot again.

Squatting there, the fat Owl blinked round, to ascertain that no eye was on him, before he opened the casement.

It was necessary, of course, for Bunter not to be seen hurling the ink. Even Bunter understood that, if he was seen hurling the ink, it would not be believed that Smithy was the ink-hurler!

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter, as he blinked round, and his eyes almost popped through his spectacles.

For the first object he noted as he gave that cautious blink round was Mr. Lamb coming down the upper staircase!

Lamb glanced at him.

Bunter's fat hand slid behind him, with the inkpot in it! He hoped fervently that Lamb would not spot that inkpot.

The sight of Lamb, at that moment, was frightfully disconcerting to the fat japer

He had not expected to see Lamb there! Really, there was nothing surprising in Mr. Lamb having gone up to his room, probably for a coat or a hat, before going in the car! But Bunter had not thought of it. A fellow could not think of everything! Bunter had been thinking of ink!

Mr. Lamb came to a stop on the middle landing and fixed his eyes, over his gold-rimmed glasses, on the fat Owl squatting in the window.

"Bunter!" he rapped. "What are you doing there? You are well aware that boys are not allowed to climb on that window-ledge. Take a hundred lines, Bunter, and get down immediately!"

"Oh, yes, sir! Sus-sus-certainly, sir!" stammered Bunter.

Lamb had not seen the inkpot! That was luck, so far! But he was certain to see it, if Bunter jumped down in his presence. Bunter hoped that he would go on his way without further delay.

Lamb did not go on his way. He frowned at Bunter.

"Get down at once!" he snapped.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I'm just going to, sir! I—I say, sir, the—the car's waiting—the

—the chauffeur's waiting, sir——"

Bunter hoped that that hint would cause Lamb to pass on down the lower stairs. It did not.

"What are you hiding behind you, Bunter?" asked Mr. Lamb.

"Oh crikey! I mean, nothing, sir! I—I haven't anything in my hand, sir, and it ain't an inkpot!" stut-

tered Bunter.

"An inkpot!" ejaculated Mr. Lamb.

"No, sir! Nothing of the kind! It ain't the inkpot from the Rag, sir—I haven't been in the Rag since dinner—and I wasn't going to open this window. Why should I?" gasped Bunter. "I never asked Robinson who was going in the car, sir, and I never knew it was you."

"What?" roared Mr. Lamb.

"I—I—I didn't, sir—I mean, I wouldn't—I mean to say—yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as the art master grasped him by a fat arm and hooked him off the window-ledge down to the landing.

Bump!

Billy Bunter stumbled and rolled. From the inkpot, still tightly clutched in a fat hand, the contents shot in a stream! That stream landed in the middle of Bunter's features.

"Ooooooogh!" spluttered Bunter.

He sat up. The inkpot was still clutched in a fat paw—but it was empty now!

The ink was streaming over Bunter! He blinked through a veil of ink! Ink was all over his fat face—it blotted his big spectacles—it ran down his fat neck and in at the corners of his mouth! Bunter was of the ink, inky!

"Gurrgh!" gurgled Bunter.

Mr. Lamb stared down at him.

"Bunter——"

"Yurrgh! Urrgh!"

"You intended to throw that ink from the window——"

"Wurrrgh!"

"You intended to repeat the miserable trick played by Vernon-Smith last week——"

"Groooooogh!"

"I shall cane you when I return from Courtfield, Bunter!"

"Woooooogh!"

Mr. Lamb went down the stairs. Bunter sat on the landing and gurgled and gasped.

He was gurgling, gasping, spluttering, and clawing at the ink when the car drove away.

He was still thus happily engaged when the Famous Five came up the lower staircase, interested to see how Bunter was getting on.

From the window of the Rag they had not seen any inky shower descend on Lamb as he went to the car—they had heard no shout of "Look out, Smithy!" Bunter had not, after all, got by with it a second time! When they arrived on the middle landing they could see why. They stared at the inky object that was gurgling and guggling and clawing ink!

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Is that Bunter? Having a black-out all on your own, old fat man?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Urrgh! I say, you fellows—gurrgh! That beast Lamb copped me—gurrgh! I say, I'm all inky!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" yelled Bunter. "The beast says he is going to whop me when he comes back!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrgh! I've got some in my mouth—and some in my ears!" gasped Bunter. "I'm all—gurrgh!—inky! What are you cackling at, you beasts?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the five.

"Beasts!"

Billy Bunter tottered away—for a wash! Even Bunter realised that he needed a wash! He left a trail of drops of ink as he went—and left the Famous Five howling with merriment!

AT LAST!

CLICK!

Herbert Vernon-Smith caught his breath.

The key turned in the lock.

The Bounder's eyes danced in the darkness.

It was success—at last!

It was Wednesday, and a misty evening had closed in. That day had been a half-holiday at Greyfriars School. It was the day of the St. Jim's match, and the Remove footballers had been playing Tom Merry & Co. from St. Jim's—the Bounder missing from his accustomed place in the last big football fixture of the season. His thoughts that afternoon had been on Little Side at Greyfriars—whence he was now for ever banished.

He had long looked forward to that big match—in which, after all, he had not played. The Easter holidays were coming, and he would not be there when the school broke up! Next term, the cricket would be on,

but the Bounder of Greyfriars would never wield the willow again at a Greyfriars wicket.

He had deserved what had come to him, and he did not deny it! But if the headmaster had done his duty, Lamb had not—Lamb's motives had been personal. Lamb had feared what he had found out, what he might yet find out. Lamb's motive was his own guilty secret, whatever it was. Lamb had got him sacked—and Lamb was going to leave Greyfriars in disgrace, in his turn, as soon as the vengeful Bounder had spotted his secret.

And now he was going to spot it! In the darkness, he stood before the door of the air-raid shelter at Sea View. And the key in his hand had turned the lock!

It was not his first attempt! Not by many a one! Every night, of late, the Bounder had stood in the same spot—trying key after key on that lock.

How many keys he had accumulated, at the shops in Courtfield where such things were sold, he hardly knew—but he was sure that, sooner or later, he would find one that would turn the lock—and now he had done it!

What secret lay hidden in that dugout he could not guess. He had cudgelled his brains in vain on that subject. But he knew that there was a secret—something that would tell the hidden meaning of Lamb's mysterious visits to the place, of his strange acquaintance with the ruffian at Sea View, perhaps of his mysterious midnight excursions.

Whatever that secret was, the Bounder of Greyfriars was going to know—and, when he knew, everybody was going to know. Whatever strange and guilty game Lamb was playing, it was going to be found out, and proclaimed far and wide—that was going to be the last blow of the expelled Bounder.

And now, at last, he had succeeded—the door was unlocked, and he was free to enter.

The hour was late—darkness enwrapped sea and land; the chalet was hidden in gloom. Parker, it was likely, had gone to bed at that hour, but the Bounder was cautious; he had not made a sound as he crept across the field and round the grassy mound that covered the shelter. No sound—till the click of the key in the lock told that he was successful at last!

He pushed the door open.

There was dense blackness within. Feeling his way, Vernon-Smith crept softly in and closed the door behind him—the spring lock clicking shut of itself.

He stood in blackness, listening.

It was not likely, but it was possible, that the man Parker was there. He might visit that secret den at night for all the Bounder knew. If he was there, by chance, the Bounder had to be cautious.

He felt—he was sure—that it was a guilty secret that he was going to unearth; and if he was found there, he might have to deal with a desperate man.

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There was no sound. From what the Remove fellows had told him, of what had happened on the day of the paperchase, he knew that there was a wooden stair leading down into the depths of the earth. At the foot was a sort of passage, with a small room at one end, and another room of which the door was kept locked.

He groped his way to the edge of the stair, and stood looking down in the dark and listening intently.

No sound came to him—not a glimmer of light! Parker was not there—unless he was in a room with a shut door.

The Bounder ventured to turn on a spot of light from a flashlamp.

It glimmered on the long, steep, wooden stair leading downward.

Vernon-Smith stepped cautiously down.

He stood, at length, at the foot of the stair, silent, breathing softly, his heart beating.

Close at hand was a door set in a concrete doorway. He knew that this must be the door that the juniors had found locked on the day of the paperchase.

He had no doubt that it was locked now. But, to his surprise, as he concentrated the light on it, he saw there was also a bolt—and the bolt was shot into the socket.

The bolt was at the bottom of the door, hardly noticeable. Probably the juniors, on the day when they had chased Parker, and rolled down the stair with him, had not noticed it. Smithy would not have noticed it had he not been examining the door with his flashlamp.

Now he noticed it, and stared at it blankly.

His heart gave a jump.

The door might be locked, to keep out an intruder. But why was it bolted? A bolt on the outside of a door would not keep anyone out—it could only keep someone in.

"Oh gad!" breathed the Bounder.

He knew that there was, that there must be some secret in that locked room in the dugout. He had been unable to guess what that secret was. Now it seemed to him that he had a glimmering of it.

What—or rather who—was in that hidden room?

For what purpose could a bolt be placed on a door, unless to reinforce the lock, and if it was placed on the outside of the door, it could only be to defeat an attempt on the lock—from within!

Was someone inside that locked and bolted room? It could not be Parker—Parker must have bolted the door on the outside. Who could it be? What did this mean?

Was it possible—was it imaginable—that a prisoner was kept hidden from sight in the dugout—that that was the secret that Nobby Parker guarded at Sea View?

The Bounder's brain was almost in a whirl.

His suspicions of Lamb and his associate had been deep—but they had never been able to take definite shape. He had never thought of anything like this.

For a long minute he stood staring at the bolted door.

Then at last, he moved along the concrete passage. It led to a room, of which the door was ajar.

He flashed on the light, and scanned the interior.

Some articles of furniture, and a number of cases and boxes, stood there on the floor of bare, wooden planks.

The Bounder lifted the lid of one of the boxes and saw that it contained tins and packages of foodstuffs. The room was used as a store-room.

He might have supposed that he had come upon a secret food hoard. But since he had seen the bolt on the other door he could guess why foodstuffs had been accumulated there.

If there was a prisoner in the dugout, that prisoner had to be fed. No doubt that store had been accumulated a good time ago, at the time that Sea View had been taken over from the estate agents, and the air-raid shelter constructed. Smithy guessed now that it had been constructed less as a refuge in time of air-alarms, than as a secret prison.

He turned away at length and returned on tiptoe to the bolted door at the foot of the stair.

He stood there and listened.

If that room was occupied, who was there? If it was not, why was the door bolted on the outside? Was it occupied?

There was no sound from within. But at that hour the occupant, whoever he was, might be asleep. It could be no confederate of the stocky man at the chalet—or why should he be bolted in?

There was a metal cap over the keyhole.

Silently the Bounder moved it aside, revealing the keyhole, and a thin trickle of light came from within.

There was electric light in the hidden room in the dugout, and it was on. The occupant was not asleep then.

A faint sound reached the Bounder's ears. It was the rustle of paper as the page of a book was turned.

Someone was there. That was certain now. Until he was assured who and what the occupant was, the Bounder could not venture to make his presence known. He stooped, to apply his eye to the keyhole.

But even as he did so he straightened up again, his heart fairly thumping at the sound from above.

It was the click of an opening lock.

The outer door of the air-raid shelter, at the top of the stair, had opened. That could only mean that Parker was coming—or Lamb—perhaps both.

The Bounder instantly shut off his light, and stood with thumping heart in the darkness.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH hardly breathed.

For a moment he stood as if dumbfounded.

He was on the verge of a discovery—and he was caught. There was no fear in the Bounder's heart—fear was

unknown to the reckless scapegrace of Greyfriars.

But he knew that he was in danger—and he knew that he was no match for the muscular ruffian, Parker—still less for Lamb, if it was Lamb. And he knew, with terrible distinctness, that if he was found there, he would never be allowed to go again to carry away the news of what he had already discovered.

There was a tramp of heavy boots on the little landing at the top of the stair. It was not Lamb's light and springy tread; it was the thickset, stocky ruffian Parker who was coming.

Only for a moment the Bounder stood dumbfounded. Then he moved swiftly—but still silently, cautiously. His liberty—for all he knew, even his life—depended on remaining unseen.

He groped swiftly along the concrete passage, to the little room with the open door. It was the only place out of sight when the man came down.

He was only just in time. There was a sudden blaze of light in the passage behind him.

The man above had pressed a switch turning on the electric light, to light his way down the stair.

But even as the light blazed out Herbert Vernon-Smith groped into the store-room, and backed behind the half-open door.

Heavy boots clumped on the bare, wooden stair.

The man was descending. Certainly he could not know, could not suspect, that anyone was there. He had found the upper door locked, as he had left it—he had had to unlock it to enter. If Smithy could keep out of sight he was safe.

A glimmer of light from the passage came into the room where he stood. He stared round him, with almost desperate eyes. Behind the door he was unseen—but if the man came to that room—

In a further corner stood a packing-case—and the Bounder swiftly squeezed himself behind it and crouched down. Unless the man searched the room he was secure there. And why should he search it?

The heavy tramp came along the bare, wooden planks of the passage flooring. The man was not stopping at the bolted door—he was coming on to the room where the Bounder had taken refuge.

Vernon-Smith suppressed his breathing. But it seemed to him that the loud beating of his heart must betray him.

His fists clenched desperately. If he was found, he was going to do his best. But he did not stir—he did not make a sound as the heavy tramp came along and stopped at the doorway.

A switch clicked, and a light was turned on in the store-room. If, by chance, the man looked behind that packing-case—

But the man did not cross the room. Obviously not the faintest suspicion crossed his mind that anyone was there.

The Bounder heard a sound of fumbling in one of the boxes. He

could guess what the man was doing, though he did not think of peering out from his hiding-place.

Parker was taking food from one of the store-boxes.

Smithy heard a clink of a tin knocking against another.

He knew what it meant—what it must mean. Parker, who was caretaker at the chalet, was in reality gaoler to some unknown prisoner in the air-raid dugout. He made regular visits to provide him with the necessaries of life—and, doubtless, to make sure that he was still safe.

No doubt he came every night—probably once or twice by day also. Parker was now merely carrying on as usual; there was nothing unusual about his visit to the dugout at that late hour; he had no suspicion of any kind.

The man remained in the room only a few minutes.

Vernon-Smith, with intense relief, heard the heavy tread in the doorway again, and the light in the store-room was shut off. It was still on in the passage outside. The heavy tread went back towards the stairs.

Breathing hard, the Bounder emerged silently from his cover.

The man had left the store-room door ajar, as before. A moment more, and Vernon-Smith was peering cautiously out.

Then he saw Parker—stopping at the bolted door at the foot of the stair. He had a basket in one hand—evidently containing the food he had taken from the store-room.

He set the basket on the floor. Then the Bounder watched him as he drew a thick muffler across his face and knotted it behind his head, half-hiding the unprepossessing pimply face.

He was about to enter the locked room—and he was first concealing his face. Whoever was in that room was not to see him! It could only mean—all that he had done could only mean—that there was a prisoner there!

There was a scraping as the bolt on the door was withdrawn. Then Parker inserted a key into the lock and turned it.

He pushed the door open.

The basket was in his left hand now. Before entering, the stocky man took a short loaded stick from his pocket. That, obviously, was to guard against some desperate act on the part of the man within.

Then he stepped into the hidden room and disappeared from Vernon-Smith's sight. The door closed after him.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stood staring into the empty passage. The electric bulb filled it with bright light and illumined the stair. Parker was alone—there was no sign or sound of the other man. The outer door above was locked—and Vernon-Smith knew that, if it opened, he would hear it and be put on his guard. He crept out of the store-room on tiptoe.

Without a sound, he reached the closed door of the hidden room—unlocked and unbolted now. From within, he detected the sound of a

grunting voice—Parker's. Who else was there?

He bent his head to listen. Another voice came to his ears—the voice of the unknown occupant of the secret room.

With difficulty, the Bounder repressed an exclamation of utter amazement.

Clearly, distinctly, he heard that voice—a voice once very familiar to his ears—a voice he knew as well as he knew his own.

Petrified with amazement, Herbert Vernon-Smith stood as if thunder-struck—in his ears the well-known voice of the kidnapped Remove master of Greyfriars School!

UNEXPECTED!

MR. QUELCH laid down his book and rose to his feet as the door of the locked room in the dugout opened and the stocky man with the muffler across his pimply face entered.

The man closed the door after him and dumped down the basket on the table.

The Remove master stood looking at him, his eyes glinting under his knitted brows.

Parker gave him a nod and a grin.

"'Ere's your rations, mister!" he said. "And you're lucky to get them, if you come to that, the way things are going. You don't 'ave to 'and over a coupon for them!"

He chuckled.

"You rascal!" said Mr. Quelch, in a low, tense voice. "You scoundrel! It is you again—always you!"

"Did you think it was anybody else, old covey?" asked Parker, grinning. "You ain't likely to see visitors 'ere. Did you expect to see a peeler, when you heard me coming?"

He chuckled again.

"I hoped!" said Mr. Quelch quietly. "This cannot continue, you villain! You and your confederate cannot carry this on without discovery! It must come—it is sure to come!"

"It ain't come yet, old covey!" grinned Parker. "Nor I reckon it won't come, so long as it ain't safe for Jim to have you loose. You saw more than was good for you, that night at Popper Court."

"This cannot go on!" repeated the Remove master.

But there was little conviction in his tone.

Long and weary weeks of imprisonment had sapped away his hope.

It was only weeks—but it seemed to him years since that night when, by the wall at Popper Court, he had seen the face of the escaping cracksman with the mask off. Day after day, night after night, had crawled by, endless.

Ferrers Locke was seeking him—he knew that much! But even the celebrated Baker Street detective had failed, so far.

Hope had come on the day of the Greyfriars paperchase when, how and why he did not know, the Remove fellows had been mixed up in a row with Parker, and had chased him

down into the dugout. One cry, then, would have brought him aid, but the masked man had been there, and had held him silent, and the locked door had been between. Yet, knowing now that he was near Greyfriars School, he had hoped that Greyfriars fellows might come that way again, and that by some happy chance they might discover their imprisoned Form-master.

That hope had died.

It had revived again the day that Lord Mauleverer and Bessie Hunter had sought shelter in the dugout when the sirens were sounding. But the knocking on the upper door had ceased—and nothing had come of it.

Since then, the kidnapped school-master had heard nothing from the outer world—seen no one but the stocky man who came regularly once a day and once at night; and the masked man—Slim Jim—whose visits were rare.

Masked as he always was, Mr. Quelch knew the face under the mask—and he was the only man who knew it! He was the only man who could have identified Slim Jim. And the price of his knowledge was imprisonment—and hope of release was almost dead.

And he knew that he was near the school in which he had been a master—near, but as hopelessly lost to Greyfriars as if he had been hundreds or thousands of miles away.

He clenched his hands as he looked at the ruffian with the muffler over his face.

Parker grinned, and made a gesture with the loaded stick in his hand.

Often and often had the Remove master calculated the chances of a struggle. He would have taken the chances, but for the fact that his gaoler always came armed—and one blow of the loaded stick would have struck him senseless.

"Forget it!" grinned Parker. "You

won't be any better off with a cracked nut, mister! And if you lift so much as a finger, I'll crack your nut as soon as look at you—and you can lay to that!"

"Wretch!" muttered the Remove master.

"You ain't such a lot to grouse about, mister!" grinned the stocky man. "You got good quarters 'ere—better than where you was parked at first, in an old vault, with Ratty looking after you. You got electric light, an electric stove, and plenty of grub—and I ain't asking you for your food tickets!" The ruffian chuckled at his own joke.

"Will this ever end?" breathed Mr. Quelch.

"Mebbe!" said the stocky man. "So long as Slim Jim is working this district, it ain't safe for him to have you back at your school, mister. You know too much to be let loose. But when Jim moves on—it depends! But you can bank on it that Jim won't run any risk of you spotting him—not if it means keeping you parked here for the rest of your natural!"

He moved back to the door.

But he did not turn his back on the prisoner of the dugout. He could read the desperate gleam in the sunken eyes of the Remove master, and he was taking no chance of a sudden and desperate spring.

He backed to the door, grinning, the loaded stick ready in his hand—only too plainly prepared to strike the prisoner senseless, if he made an attempt at an attack.

"Good-night, mister!" grinned Parker.

He opened the door with his left hand, still facing the Remove master, and backed out into the passage.

Mr. Quelch watched him with burning eyes.

Suddenly he gasped, his eyes starting with amazement. Behind the ruffian, as he backed out, a figure

suddenly appeared—at the sight of which the Remove master wondered whether he was dreaming.

Even as he glimpsed that figure, the Bounder's clenched hand struck, crashing in the back of Parker's neck and sending him spinning into the room again, headlong.

Crash!

Parker, taken utterly by surprise by the blow from behind, sprawled headlong on his face on the plank floor. The stick flew from his hand as he crashed.

The Bounder, with blazing eyes, leaped in. He landed on the sprawling ruffian, his knees crashing into Parker's back.

"Mr. Quelch!" he shouted. "Back up!"

For a second, the Remove master stood like a man in a dream.

The sudden sight of Herbert Vernon-Smith, in that place, at that hour, seemed to him a vision—a wild delusion.

But, as the spluttering ruffian heaved under the Bounder and attempted to rise, the Remove master woke to reality.

He sprang forward and grasped the sprawling man. And in a moment the three of them were mixed up in a wild and furious struggle on the plank floor of the dugout.

SLIM JIM'S LAST CRIB!

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL lay silent and dark under a moonless sky.

The March wind wailed round the old red chimney-pots, and rustled branches of the old elms and clustering ivy on ancient walls. But there was no other sound in the night—and no gleam of light in the blackness of the black-out.

There was no sound either as the side door of the garage opened, and John Robinson, the chauffeur, stepped out into deep gloom.

John Robinson was rather tall, and he was sinewy and muscular; but he trod as lightly as a cat.

The Head would not have recognised his own chauffeur, had he been able to see him then. He would have seen a lean man with a sandy beard and shaggy moustache, in a dark overcoat and dark cloth cap—no more like John Robinson than he was like Ferrers Locke of Baker Street.

Never for one moment did Ferrers Locke forget caution. Not till the handcuffs were safely locked on the slim wrists of Slim Jim was there to be the remotest suspicion that Ferrers Locke was anywhere near Greyfriars, or that John Robinson was anything other than he seemed.

Soundless in his rubber shoes, the detective slipped away from the garage in the darkness.

Five minutes later he was letting himself into the House with a key. Once within, he was in blacker darkness than before. But he did not think of turning on a light. As if he could see like a cat in the dark, he moved silently through the sleeping House.

He stopped at length at the door of the headmaster's study.

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Dr. Locke glanced first at Ferrers Locke, and then at the masked figure standing by the open safe, with handcuffs on his wrists. "This is the man!" said the Baker Street detective. "Caught in the very act, sir!"

That door was locked. It opened silently to a key in the detective's hand.

He entered with soft tread, and closed and relocked the door behind him.

The windows were covered with the black-out blinds. The darkness was almost solid. It was unlikely that a glimmer would have escaped, had he turned on a flash-lamp. But he did not do so. If Slim Jim was on the prowl that night, Locke was not taking the slightest chance of giving him the alarm.

Silent, soft-footed, the Baker Street detective moved in the darkness of the Head's study.

By the fireplace was a deep alcove, in which a large leather armchair was backed.

Behind the high back of the armchair Locke dropped on his knees, hidden, if the study was entered.

Who was likely to enter it when all Greyfriars slept?

But was all Greyfriars sleeping? Was there one wakeful, as well as the man who had crept silently from the garage?

Locke wondered. This was the third night that he had waited and watched in the headmaster's study—the third night since a parcel of bearer bonds, worth seven thousand pounds, had been placed in Dr. Locke's safe.

How long would it be before the suspected man fell to that temptation? Would he fall to it at all, or

would he be too cunning to let his work be done so near to his den?

Ferrers Locke could not tell. He had laid his plans, neglecting no detail. He could only hope that the mystery cracksman would fall into the snare that had been laid for him. Why should he not?

If Lamb, as Locke believed, was Slim Jim, the cracksman, he knew what was in the safe. What was easier than to lift it? And the prize was a very valuable one. Slim Jim sometimes made hundreds in a single haul. Now he had a chance of making thousands! Was he likely to let it pass him by?

Locke did not think so.

But he could not be sure. This was not the way he would have chosen had the crook been less cunning and wary. Night after night, for many a long and weary night, he had watched for the secret crook. Twice or thrice he had been on the very heels of success, but he had failed.

To shadow a man of mystery when he left the school in the dark hours, to track him to the scene of his depredations, to catch Slim Jim in the act, and clap on the handcuffs—that had been Locke's plan and hope. But fortune had not befriended him.

Now he had thought out this new plan.

The Head did not know why Locke had desired that Mr. Lamb should be requested to convey the bonds from the bank to the school. He had acceded to Locke's wish without ques-

tion or demur; and without question or demur he had handed him a key to the study. He would have been startled if he could possibly have known the detective's reason.

Lamb had been selected to convey the bonds to the school—so that Slim Jim would know that the Head's safe was a crib worth cracking. Certainly no such idea crossed the Head's mind.

On Monday night Ferrers Locke had watched, as he was watching now. On Tuesday night he had watched! Now, on Wednesday night, he was on the watch again—with tireless patience.

Seven thousand pounds—for the taking! Surely the crook would fall for it—if, indeed, Lamb was Slim Jim. There was no proof—nothing on which the police could have acted—only the deep certainty in Ferrers Locke's own mind. Certainly from a hundred different circumstances, many of them trifling, but all pointing to the same conclusion.

Surely Slim Jim would crack that valuable crib! For what had he to fear? He could not have the remotest suspicion that he was suspected.

The Head liked and trusted him; the other masters were friendly in a rather patronising way, taking Lamb in the character he chose to assume. of an artistic, absent-minded sort of harmless ass! Nobody in the school could suspect or dream of what he was!

The junior who had a bitter hostility towards him, who vaguely

suspected him of he hardly knew what, certainly never dreamed of anything like the truth; and that junior, too, was gone. Lamb was safe from Herbert Vernon-Smith, if ever he had been in danger from him.

Of the Head's chauffeur he never thought at all—he hardly ever saw him, and certainly never gave him any attention.

If the Head's safe was cracked, no one in the school would dream of Mr. Lamb in connection with it. It would be one more on the long list of Slim Jim's nocturnal depredations in that district—that was all.

He would come—either this night, or a later night. Sooner or later he would surely come! He might leave it for a night or two—for two or three nights, so that the robbery should not follow too closely on the placing of the bonds in the safe—the bonds that had been conveyed by Mr. Lamb. But he would not leave it too long, lest the headmaster should change his mind and decide not to keep such valuables in the school. He was too cunning to act at once; but, if he acted, his action would not be very long delayed.

Locke, patient and tireless as a Red Indian watching for his game, waited in the darkness in the alcove, and listened.

If the cracksman came, he had no doubt that he would come from without! The window was fastened, but the fastening was child's play to a cracksman like Slim Jim! He would steal down from his room and quit the House by door or window at a

distance—he would enter by the window of the study, leaving clear sign of his entry.

Locke was sure of that! The man was too cunning to risk leaving the remotest hint that it was an inside job. Everything he did would be done to give an impression that the thief in the night came from a distance. He would not risk leaving the faintest clue within the House.

But would he come?

Midnight had passed. Only the wail of the wind came to Locke's listening ears—once a faint burst of distant gunfire from the sea. Would the man in the mask—the man whose face was known only to the kidnapped Remove master—come?

Locke stiffened suddenly.

A faint creak at the window came to his ears, and his eyes glinted in the dark.

That was not the wind. That was a hand on the window from without! The window was almost soundlessly opening.

Ferrers Locke listened.

Intent as his ears were, he could hardly catch a sound made by the soft-footed man who had entered.

But he heard a faint rustle, as the black-out blind was carefully rearranged over the window. Then there was a spot of light.

Locke's face set hard and grim.

The man had come! The trap had worked. Slim Jim had come to gather in seven thousand pounds in easily negotiable bearer bonds. What Mr. Lamb knew, Slim Jim knew, and he was there to lift the plunder.

The spot of light crossed the room to the door.

The faintest of sounds told Ferrers Locke that the unseen man had tried the door handle, and satisfied himself that the study door was locked.

The spot of light moved back. It came to a standstill; the detective knew where. He knew that Slim Jim was now at work on the safe; and silently he rose to his feet in the alcove behind the armchair, and looked over the high back.

The safe door was already open; Slim Jim was a quick worker. The flashlamp had been placed on a chair to show him light.

The light gleamed into the open safe, and gleamed on the figure that stood before it; a slim figure dressed in black from top to toe; black from the close-fitting cap to the shoes. Masked in black also, Locke knew; though he could not see the mask, as the cracksman's back was to him.

The thievish hand was groping in the safe. There was a rustle of thick, heavy papers.

Ferrers Locke soundlessly stepped out from the alcove. He was directly behind the man who stood at the safe.

A bundle of papers was in the hand of the cracksman. As he drew it out a sudden grasp was laid on him from behind.

There was a startled gasp from Slim Jim. The bundle of bonds went to the floor. The man in black turned like a tiger on the man who had grasped him. He twisted desperately in the grip of Ferrers Locke. But he had no chance—not the ghost of a chance—the surprise was too complete for that. Even as he turned and twisted, his arms were pinioned, his wrists dragged together, and there was a sudden snap of steel.

Snap!

From two eyeholes in the black mask on the slim man's face, two eyes burned and shone with maddened rage. Like a trapped wild animal Slim Jim wrenched at the handcuffs on his wrists.

In all the years that he had levied toll on his many victims, in all the years that he had been known only by the nickname that the police had given him, Slim Jim had never felt a hand on his shoulder, or the cold contact of steel on his wrists. But it had come at last. It had come—and the mystery crook was trapped and taken.

He panted and panted.

Ferrers Locke stepped back. The man was handcuffed—he was safe now. The detective stepped to the lighting-switch and turned on the electric light in the study. From under the mask came a panting breath. The burning eyes from the eyeholes were watching him like a tiger's.

"Who are you?" The cracksman's voice came hissing. "You were watching for me—you knew—who are you?"

"That is no secret now!" said Ferrers Locke quietly. "Probably my face is known to you, my man."

With a movement of the hand he swept off the sandy beard and shaggy

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moustache; disguise was no longer needed, now that he had his man. The light shone on the cool, clear-cut face that was revealed; a face that, evidently, the cracksman knew. From under the mask came a hoarse exclamation.

"Ferrers Locke!"

"Exactly!" said the Baker Street detective.

And as the desperate man wrenched again in vain at the handcuffs, the detective stepped to the telephone to ring up Dr. Locke in his house, and then to ring Inspector Grimes at the police station in Courtfield.

THE FACE UNDER THE MASK!

DR. LOCKE stepped into his study.

His glance went first to Ferrers Locke, then to the masked figure in black, standing by the open safe, the handcuffs on his wrists.

He glanced from one to the other.

"Ferrers!" he exclaimed. "This—this is the man!"

"That is the man, sir!" answered the Baker Street detective. "Caught in the very act, sir! You will guess now why I desired you to send for the bonds, to be placed in this safe."

A hissing breath came from under Slim Jim's mask.

"Trapped!" fell from his lips.

"Precisely!" said Ferrers Locke. "The trap was baited for you."

"This—this is the man—the man who has defied the police for years!" The headmaster gazed at the handcuffed crook. "My dear Ferrers! I could hardly believe what you said on the telephone—this is the man—the man who kidnapped Mr. Quelch?"

"Slim Jim, sir!" said Ferrers Locke.

"You have informed the police?"

"Inspector Grimes is already on his way here, to take the man into official custody!" answered the Baker Street detective. "The case has taken long, sir—the man was as wary as a wolf; for weeks, since I have suspected him, he has beaten me; but it is success at last."

"You have suspected him—"

"I have watched him for weeks, sir!" answered Ferrers Locke. "I expected him, to-night, when he came."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head. "I understand, of course, why you have told me nothing of this, Ferrers—it was for you to keep your own counsel. But do you mean that you knew the man—that the face under that mask is no secret from you?"

"I think so, sir!"

"You watched for him here!" said the Head. "It is not clear to me, Ferrers, how you could have known that he would be likely to come. Certainly he can have known nothing of the valuable plunder to be found in that safe."

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"That was known only to four persons," said the Head. "The bank manager, Mr. Lamb, yourself, and myself! It seems to me impossible, Ferrers, that even that cunning knave can have learned—"

"You must prepare yourself for a shock, sir!" said the Baker Street detective gravely. "When that mask is removed, the face under it, I think, will be familiar to you."

"Is it possible?" The headmaster of Greyfriars gazed at the black-masked face, from which the eyes burned and glittered. "You mean that I have seen the man before, in his outward person?"

"You have seen him many times, sir. It will be a somewhat painful shock to you to see that man's face revealed. The man, sir, was an inmate—a temporary inmate—of this school."

Dr. Locke started violently.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed.

"I am sorry that it is the truth, sir!" said Ferrers Locke.

"My dear Ferrers, you are dreaming!" exclaimed the Head. "There is no inmate of the school with whom I am not well acquainted—the only recent arrival is Mr. Lamb—"

"Quite so, sir! Now you will realise why I asked you that Mr. Lamb should be selected to convey the bonds here from the bank."

"Why?" exclaimed the Head.

"So that Slim Jim would know that the plunder was here, sir."

The Head looked bewildered.

"I fail to understand," he said. "Mr. Lamb certainly cannot have allowed any information to escape him—he understood quite clearly that nothing was to be said on the subject. Absent-minded as he is in many matters, he could not be so indiscreet—"

"Mr. Lamb's absent-mindedness, sir, was a pose—a part of the character he chose to assume to conceal his real character, as effectively as that mask conceals the face of Slim Jim!" said Ferrers Locke. "Mr. Lamb has deceived you, sir, as he has deceived others, during a long course of years."

"Ferrers!"

"Mr. Lamb's profession, sir, is that of an art master," said Ferrers Locke. "His custom is to accept temporary engagements—as he has done here, in the place of Mr. Woosey. It has long been known that Slim Jim takes up some unsuspected and respectable post in the districts he plunders. That post, sir, is the post of art master in a school."

The headmaster gave a gasp.

It was dawning on him now—but he could not realise it.

"Ferrers! You do not mean—you cannot mean—"

"Look!" said Ferrers Locke.

He stepped to the handcuffed man and unfastened the black mask that hid his face. The mask was jerked away.

The face of the mystery cracksman—the face hitherto only known to the kidnapped Remove master—was revealed.

Dr. Locke gazed at it.

"Lamb! he said faintly.

It was not the dreamy, amiable face of the Pet

Lamb that the Remove fellows knew. It was pale and distorted with bitter rage; the face of a human wolf that had been trapped. But it was the face of Mr. Lamb—the face of the art master of Greyfriars.

For a long minute the headmaster gazed at it, in silence.

Mr. Lamb—alias Slim Jim—hardly looked at him. His bitter, malevolent gaze was concentrated on Ferrers Locke.

The Head spoke at last.

"I understand now!" he said, very quietly. "I understand, Ferrers!" He drew a deep, deep breath. "It was to keep this secret that my old friend and colleague, Mr. Quelch, was kidnapped!"

He paused a moment.

"Mr. Lamb—if that is your name—"

The captured crook gave him a black and bitter look.

"That is my name!" he sneered. "My name and record are open to the world—a safe cover under which I have worked, and which has never been penetrated—till now! And now—even now I cannot understand. I have seen nothing of your detective here, yet he has said that he has suspected and watched me—"

"Dr. Locke engaged a new chauffeur this term!" said the Baker Street detective dryly.

The man in black started.

"A chauffeur! Are you telling me that you have been in this school all the term—that it was Ferrers Locke who drove me to the bank on Monday?" he panted. "Tricked—tricked and trapped! If my hands were free—" He broke off, with a shrug of the shoulders. "You have beaten me, Ferrers Locke—and I did not believe that there was a man living who could beat me. Perhaps, some day, my turn will come."

"Perhaps!" said Ferrers Locke tranquilly. "But not for ten years at least, Slim Jim!"

"From here," said the Head, "you go to the prison you have long deserved. Before you go, tell me where Mr. Quelch is to be found. You have nothing to fear from him now—your secret is known—all is known that Mr. Quelch could have told, if he had seen you. He has not harmed you—do him no further harm."

The crook's lip curled bitterly.

"I will tell you nothing!" he said. "Ferrers Locke has triumphed so far—he has laid me by the heels. But he has not found the man he seeks—and he will not find him! That power, at all events, remains in my hands. I will tell nothing, but this—this! Quelch is a prisoner, hidden deep, and will never be found! Let Ferrers Locke find him—if he can! I do not think he will succeed."

(Continued on next page.)

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"Wretch!" exclaimed the Head indignantly.

The man in black shrugged his shoulders again.

"Say what you like!" he retorted. "Ferrers Locke has defeated me—in that, at least, I can defeat him. Quelch will never again see the light of day—that is my revenge on Ferrers Locke."

The Head stood looking at him with scorn and loathing. There was a deep silence in the study.

It was broken, suddenly, by a loud knocking at the door of the House.

Ferrers Locke gave a start. Knock, knock!

"That cannot be Inspector Grimes!" said the detective. "He cannot have reached the school yet—"

Knock!

Ferrers Locke left the study and hurried to the door.

THE BOUNDER'S LUCK!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH grinned breathlessly.

"We win!" he panted.

The struggle on the floor of the air-raid dugout had been brief. With every ounce of his strength the stocky man resisted—resisted to the end, till he was exhausted and could struggle no more.

But he had no chance. The Bounder's knee in his back pinned him down, and Quelch's grasp was strong. Not till he could resist no

longer did the ruffian yield; and then he lay breathless, panting, at the end of his tether, secure in a grasp that did not relax for a moment.

Then the Bounder jerked the muffer from the pimply face.

"Hold his paws, sir!" he said.

Mr. Quelch grasped the rough wrists and held them, and Vernon-Smith bound them together with the muffer, knotting it again and again. Then he rose to his feet, breathless, but gleeful:

"All right now, sir!" he said.

"My dear boy!" said Mr. Quelch.

The Remove master's pale, worn face was very bright.

It was liberty at last—freedom after long, weary weeks of imprisonment. The way was open now—locks and bolts no longer barred him from escape. It was difficult for the kidnapped Form-master to believe it—the Bounder's presence seemed to him almost miraculous. Herbert Vernon-Smith—the worst boy in the Remove—had saved him!

Mr. Quelch stood leaning on the table, recovering his breath after the struggle. Nobby Parker lay on the floor, his hands safely bound, his eyes snapping like a rat's.

The tables were turned now—with a vengeance! The prisoner of the dugout was free—and it was Nobby's turn to face imprisonment. From where he lay, he would go to a prison cell.

Vernon-Smith glanced round, and picked up a sheet from the bed in the corner of the room. He tore it into strips and bound the man's ankles, and then knotted another fastening round his wrists. Nobby was to have no chance of getting loose when he was left.

"Vernon-Smith!"

Mr. Quelch's voice was calm now. And there was a note of the Form-master in it. Miraculous as his rescue seemed, deeply grateful as he was to the Bounder of Greyfriars, he was master of the Remove, and a Remove boy was there—out of the House, out of the school, at midnight!

"Yes, sir!" said Smithy.

"I need not say," said Mr. Quelch, "how glad I am to see you here, Vernon-Smith—how grateful I am for what you have done. I shall never forget this, my boy! But what were you doing here—what reason can you have had for leaving the school at such an hour—what excuse—"

Quelch broke off at that. Severe Form-master as he was, he realised that this was not, perhaps, the time for excuses!

The Bounder breathed rather hard.

"I have not left the school to-night, sir—I left the Anchor Inn, in Pegg," he answered. "I don't belong to Greyfriars now."

"What!"

"I'm sacked!" muttered the Bounder.

"You have been expelled!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch blankly.

"Yes, sir!"

"Expelled!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "If you have been expelled from Greyfriars, Vernon-Smith, I am afraid I cannot doubt that you have

deserved it. But why, then, are you not at your home?"

"I'm not denying that I deserved it, sir!" said the Bounder meekly. "I've no complaint to make of the Head. But Mr. Lamb—"

"Mr. Lamb?"

"The new art master, sir—he has been taking the Remove while you were away. I know that he was a bad egg, and that was why he got me sacked—and I stayed on to show him up and get him sacked in his turn! And that's what I'm going to do!" said the Bounder of Greyfriars between his teeth. "He won't stay at the school after this—he will go to chokey as a kidnapper—"

The Bounder's eyes danced.

He had known that there was some secret—he had been sure that it was a secret of guilt—hidden in the dugout at Sea View! Now he knew the secret—the dugout was the hiding-place of the kidnapped Remove master. That was Lamb's secret—a deeper and darker one than the Bounder had dreamed of suspecting! He had the man now—and it was more than the sack that Lamb had to expect for this!

Mr. Quelch stared at him blankly.

"What can you mean, Vernon-Smith? I have never seen Mr. Lamb—but what—"

"He had a hand in this, sir."

"What?"

"I know he had some secret here—I never knew what! I've watched him come here more than once. Now I've found it out—and found you, sir! Lamb is that ruffian's master—"

"Good heavens!" said Mr. Quelch. "I cannot understand this, Vernon-Smith. How could Mr. Lamb—whoever Mr. Lamb may be—have any connection with that lawless ruffian—with my imprisonment in this dreary place—"

"I know that he had, sir! I tell you, I was after his secret here when I found you! I couldn't believe my ears when I heard your voice! I never dreamed there was a prisoner here, till I got in—to-night! But as soon as I knew you were here, sir, I knew what I was going to do—"

"My dear boy!" said Mr. Quelch. "You have saved me—we are free to go! My dear, dear boy, I am sorry—deeply sorry—to hear of what has happened to you at the school. Perhaps, when Dr. Locke hears of what you have done for me, he may take a more lenient view. You may rely upon it, Vernon-Smith, that every endeavour I can make will be made. Some act of recklessness—"

"I'd better tell you the truth, sir! I had a letter from a racing man—"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Lamb found it, and locked it in his desk. I forced the desk to get it back—"

The Remove master's face was very grim.

"I'm making no excuses, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "I deserved what I got, and I'm not whining about it. But—Lamb knew that I suspected him, and he was keen to get me sacked—he wasn't bothered about any sense of duty, the rat! Now I know what his game was, I know why he was afraid—and why he wanted to

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clear me out of the school! It's Lamb who kept you here, sir."

"That seems scarcely possible, Vernon-Smith! I was kidnapped by the cracksmen who is called Slim Jim—because I had seen his face, and could have identified him—"

"I know, sir! I can't make that part out, but I know that Lamb came here, and it was because of that that I came. Lamb was that brute's master, and gave orders here."

"I shall see this Mr. Lamb as soon as I return to the school," said Mr. Quelch. "And I repeat, Vernon-Smith, that if you desire to return to Greyfriars, I shall use my influence with the Head on your behalf to the utmost extent in my power."

"Oh, sir!" gasped the Bounder. "If you'll do that—"

"I shall certainly do so," said Mr. Quelch. "Now let us go, Vernon-Smith. I am aware that we are not far from the school—"

"Only a couple of miles, sir!" said the Bounder, his eyes dancing. "Do you want me to come with you?"

"Most decidedly!"

"Here's your coat, sir! That brute's safe enough—and I'll lock him in and take the key! The police will pick him up before morning."

Nobby Parker breathed a string of oaths as the Remove master and the expelled Removite left the hidden room together. The door shut on him, and the Bounder locked it on the outside, and put the key in his pocket.

The Bounder—by his own fault—had landed in deep trouble; and, quite unexpectedly, the clouds seemed to be rolling by. He was going back to Greyfriars with Mr. Quelch—and he knew that he was going to stay.

BACK AGAIN!

FERRERS LOCKE fairly jumped. It was not easy to surprise the Baker Street detective. But, for once in his life, he was taken utterly by surprise as he swung open the door and saw who had knocked.

He stood as if dumbfounded.

"Is—is—is that Mr. Quelch?" the Baker Street detective stuttered.

"Ferrers Locke, I think!" said Mr. Quelch, with a smile. "Yes, it is I—and I am very glad to see you here. I have much to tell you."

"Ferrers Locke!" repeated the Bounder. He looked very curiously at the famous detective, never dreaming that he was looking at John Robinson.

"Then—then you—"

Locke. "I am free again, Mr. Locke—and I owe it to this boy!" said the Remove master.

"To Vernon-Smith!" repeated the detective.

"Little me!" said Smithy, with a cheery grin. "Excuse me for buttin' in on your job, Mr. Locke!"

Ferrers Locke gave him a long look.

"I've something to tell you as well as Mr. Quelch," said the Bounder coolly. "Something about a master here: Mr. Lamb—"

"The Head is in his study, Mr. Quelch," said Ferrers Locke, "and

someone else whom you had better see."

"Is the Head up at this hour?" asked Mr. Quelch. "I shall be very glad to see him as quickly as possible—and he will be glad to know that I have returned. I conclude that something has happened here to-night, Mr. Locke?"

"Undoubtedly, sir! Please come to the Head's study."

Mr. Quelch followed him, and Vernon-Smith followed Mr. Quelch.

The door of the headmaster's study was wide open. Dr. Locke stood there, and, to the amazement of the newcomers, a man in black, with handcuffs on his wrists.

The Head's eyes almost bulged as the Remove master walked in.

"Mr. Quelch!" he exclaimed, like a man in a dream.

"Yes, sir!" said Mr. Quelch, as he grasped the hand of his chief. "I have returned, sir, thanks to this boy—Vernon-Smith."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head faintly. He wrung the hand of his old colleague. "Quelch, it really is you, Quelch? I had almost given up hope, my dear, dear fellow! Only a few minutes ago this wretch—this villain—had refused to tell where you were hidden—this rascal—"

Mr. Quelch looked at the man in black. The Bounder was staring at him with popping eyes.

That Lamb must have been concerned in the kidnapping of the Remove master, Smithy knew; but this was amazing to him.

"Who is this?" asked Mr. Quelch. Then, as his gimlet eyes fixed on the face of the man in black, he knew. "The cracksmen—the villain I saw at Popper Court—the man who kidnapped me. Dr. Locke, that man is the crook who is called Slim Jim—that man—"

"I know it—now!" said the Head.

The Bounder gasped.

"Slim Jim! Oh gad! Is that it? That's Mr. Lamb, sir—"

"Mr. Lamb!" repeated the Remove master. "What do you mean, Vernon-Smith? That man is a crook—a cracksmen—a man wanted by the police—"

"And he's Mr. Lamb, too!" grinned the Bounder. "By gum, I knew that he had secrets to keep, but I never dreamed of that one! By gum!"

"What does this boy mean?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "What—"

"It is true, sir!" said Ferrers Locke quietly. "This man, Mr. Lamb, is Slim Jim, the cracksmen—and he has been caught in the very act of breaking open the safe here."

Mr. Lamb—alias Slim Jim—did not speak! The bitter rage and disappointment that possessed him seemed to have deprived him of utterance. The prisoner of the dugout—the hidden man whom he had believed that even Ferrers Locke would never find—stood before him.

Ferrers Locke dropped a hand on the arm of the handcuffed man.

"Inspector Grimes will soon be here!" he said. "I will hand this man over to his custody when he comes, sir. Come, my man!"

The Baker Street detective led Slim Jim from the study.

Dr. Locke stood looking alternately at Mr. Quelch and at the Bounder. His kind old face told of his deep joy and satisfaction at seeing his old friend and colleague again. But his look at the expelled junior was dubious.

"This boy—" he said.

"It is he who saved me, sir!" said Mr. Quelch. "Perhaps you will allow me to speak on the subject of Vernon-Smith—later! The boy must remain here to-night, at all events."

"Certainly!" said the Head. "Certainly! I will give instructions—"

"If I may stay, sir, I can turn in with Redwing!" said the Bounder meekly. "Reddy will be glad to see me, sir."

"Very well!" said the Head.

Dr. Locke was anxious to be left with his old colleague—they had much to say to one another.

The Bounder was dismissed—with a light heart. As he went up to the Remove dormitory, he heard the sound of a car without. Inspector Grimes had arrived—and Mr. Lamb was going—Slim Jim, at long last, in the hands of the police who had so long wanted him!

O.K. FOR SMITHY!

HARRY WHARTON sat up in bed, blinking in sudden light. The door had opened, and the light flashed on in the Remove dormitory.

The captain of the Remove stared round him. He jumped at the sight of the fellow who had walked into the dormitory.

"Smithy!"

The Bounder grinned at him.

"Back again!" he drawled. "Turned up like a bad penny once more, old bean!"

"You ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton in alarm. "You'll be spotted—"

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

Eyes were opening up and down the dormitory now. Fellows sat up in bed and stared at the Bounder.

Tom Redwing jumped out of bed.

"Glad to see me, Reddy?" grinned the Bounder.

"Yes, yes—but—you'll be found here!" exclaimed Tom.

"Look out for Lamb!" said Bob Cherry.

"O.K.!" grinned the Bounder. "My dear chaps, sportsmen, and beloved carers, I'm not dodging Lamb this time! I've come back!"

"Come back!" repeated Redwing.

"Just exactly that! Can you make room for a fellow in your bed, Reddy—too bad to root them out to make up a bed for me at this time of night—half-past jolly old one in the morning! It's all right, you old fathead—the Head knows I'm here—special leave to stay from the Big Beak—"

"The Head knows!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Just left him!" drawled Vernon-Smith. "I'm here to stay—and to stay for good, if Quelch can work it, and I think he can."

"Quech!" yelled the juniors.
 "Quech is back, too—"
 "Quech back!" howled a dozen amazed fellows.
 "He came back with me—"
 "Pulling our leg you fathead?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Not the teeniest-weeniest little bit!" chuckled the Bounder. "You see, I've found Quech—"

"Found Quech!" roared Bob Cherry

"He will take the Remove in the morning, I expect! I shall be in Form with the rest of you! Rejoice!" chortled Smithy. "You haven't lost me after all! You feel pleased, Reddy?"

"Oh, Smithy!" gasped Redwing.

"If it's true—"

"True as a die!"

"But if you found Quech, where did you find him, and how?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"In that jolly old air-raid dugout at Sea View! That was Lamb's jolly old secret—and I spotted it!"

"Smithy!"

"And Lamb won't be after me again!" chuckled Vernon-Smith. "Lamb will be fearfully busy for the next ten years or so—in some palatial residence like Dartmoor! Did I tell you he had secrets to keep? Well, one of them was that he's called Slim Jim when he goes on business at night—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"And Ferrers Locke has copped him and they've got him safe and sound, together with the proceeds of the burglaries which have taken place since Lamb has been art master at Greyfriars. We shan't see the Pet Lamb any more."

The whole Remove stared at the grinning Bounder.

"Anybody goin' to lend me some pyjamas?" asked Smithy. "I'm travellin' light at the moment—like Bunter when he goes on a holiday—"

"Oh really, Smithy—"

"Is all that true, or are you talking out of the back of your neck?" howled Bob Cherry.

"Frozen truth, old man!" The Bounder sat on Redwing's bed and kicked off his boots. "Sort of surprised you, what?"

"Tell us all about it, then, fat-head"

Herbert Vernon-Smith turned in with Redwing, but it was long before the Remove allowed him to close his eyes. They had to hear all about it

before any fellow went to sleep. There was a buzz of voices for a good hour or more, before slumber reigned once more in the Remove dormitory.

Mr. Quech took his Form in the Remove Form room the following morning.

The Bounder of Greyfriars took his place with the rest of the Form. The Head had acceded to Quech's view: the sentence of expulsion had been washed out, and the scapegrace of the school had another chance. And—for that morning, at least—it was clear that Henry Samuel Quech did not regard Herbert Vernon-Smith as the worst boy in the Form.

And the Bounder was on his best behaviour, which—no doubt by a very great effort—he kept up till Greyfriars broke up for the Easter holidays.

THE END.

NEXT WEEK'S BIG ATTRACTION!

I'VE just been reading the school yarn for next Saturday's **MAGNET**, and I can say, without fear of contradiction, that you are booked for the greatest treat ever. It's the first of an extra-special series of Easter Holiday yarns, entitled

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By Frank Richards

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YOUR EDITOR.

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Saturday, March 23rd, 1940.

him—this was the finish of his intended campaign at Greyfriars. With a black and bitter brow he tramped away down the lane.

And John Robinson hoped that he had seen the last of him. The Bouncer's strange campaign in the school from which he had been expelled was altogether too much in the way of Ferrers Locke.

SMITHY ON THE WATCH!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" "Smithy!"

Five cyclists slowed on the cliff road.

On Saturday afternoon, Harry Wharton & Co. were pedalling along the road from Friardale to Pegg, in a cheery bunch, when they suddenly sighted the Bouncer.

Their way lay past the gate of Sea View, the chalet facing the cliffs, where the man Nobby Parker was caretaker. But they had not intended to stop. Mr. Lamb had been so exceedingly severe upon trespassers at that spot that Remove fellows were careful by this time to give it a wide berth.

But they slowed down at the sight of Vernon-Smith standing at the gate and looking across it towards the chalet—a good distance back, the grassy mound which covered the air-raid dug-out being still farther back.

"Smithy, turning up like a bad penny again!" grinned Frank Nugent.

The Bouncer looked round. His face wore an angry frown, but it cleared at the sight of the Famous Five. He gave them a nod and a grin, and they jumped down.

"So you're still about, Smithy," said Harry Wharton, with a curious look at the expelled Removeite.

"Look here, we're going to Cliff House—trot along with us, old bean. We'll wheel the jiggers from here."

"The esteemed and beautiful Marjorie will be terrifically pleased to see you, my absurd Smithy," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"And I believe there's going to be a cake for tea," added Bob Cherry.

"The Bouncer grinned.

"Thanks!" he said. "I won't come—but thanks all the same! I've got something on—here!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Another row with that man Parker?" he asked. "Well, Lamb can't get on your track now for butting in at Sea View, Smithy."

"Not coming back to Greyfriars again?" asked Bob, with a grin.

The Bouncer shook his head.

"That chicken won't fight," he answered. "I believe I should have nailed that rat if I could have stayed on—but my luck was out."

"You gave Lamb a high old time while it lasted," said Bob.

"Do you think I came back simply to jape Lamb?" grinned the Bouncer.

"I gave him all I could—but that wasn't why I got back to the school. I came back to keep an eye on him and catch him at his game—whatever it is!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,675.

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton. "But what—"

"You know as well as I do that that man Lamb is a rogue and a rascal of some sort," said Vernon-Smith.

The Famous Five did not answer that. They knew that there were many peculiar circumstances connected with Mr. Lamb, but, like Redwing, they rather thought that Smithy's bitter hostility coloured his opinion of the art master.

"He got me sacked," said the Bouncer. "I'm going to get him sacked before the school sees the last of me!"

"That's a big order, Smithy," murmured Bob.

"What's he up to?" said the Bouncer bitterly. "What's his game here, with that low-browed gangster, Nobby Parker, who plays at being caretaker at this place? Not another chalet or bungalow along this road winter—it's only a pretext for the man being here."

"Um!" said Bob.

"Why does Lamb come here—why does he go down into the air-raid dugout when he comes—as I've watched him do?" sneered Smithy.

"Goodness knows," said Harry. "But—"

"What secret have they got hidden there—Lamb and his gangster?" went on Vernon-Smith. "Nobody's ever let into that shelter. You remember that afternoon when Mauleverer was along here, with Bessie Bunter in tow, and there was an air-raid alarm. There might have been bombs falling any minute—but Parker refused to admit them into the dugout—one of them a scared schoolgirl! Well—why?"

"It's queer," said Harry slowly. "The queerfulness is terrific."

"The Nabob of Bhanipur agreed the paper chase across here," said the Bouncer.

"Just to worry the Pet Lamb," grinned Bob.

"Yes—just to worry him! You fellows had a row with Parker, and chased him down into the dugout. Some of the fellows said there was a room in the dugout with a locked door."

"That's so," said Harry. "What about it, Smithy?"

"I'm going to know what's behind that locked door," said the Bouncer. "I shall get a chance sooner or later—and then I may spot what Lamb's game is. He doesn't sneak out of the school at midnight for nothing, and he doesn't come here for nothing. What's the secret?"

The Famous Five could only shake their heads.

It was puzzling enough, but they had not given the matter much thought, not being spurred on by bitter animosity like the Bouncer. In fact, they had almost forgotten about it by this time. The Bouncer had forgotten nothing—every strange incident, every suspicious circumstance, was treasured in his vengeful mind.

"I'm going to know," he muttered.

"And when I know Lamb will get

what I got—the boot out of Greyfriars."

"Better chuck it now, old man, and come along to Cliff House to tea," suggested Bob.

"We passed Lamb as we biked through Friardale," said Bob. "He was walking this way. You don't want him to catch you here, Smithy."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Bouncer.

"Thanks for the tip!"

"Come on, then, and—"

"Rats! You fellows get off. Next time I see you I may have some news," said Vernon-Smith.

"Clear off before that rat comes in sight—you'll get into a row if he spots you about here."

"Oh, all right!"

The Famous Five remounted their machines and pedalled on in the direction of Pegg and Cliff House School.

The Bouncer stood looking down the road towards Friardale. Lamb, if he was coming, was not in sight yet. No doubt the cyclists had left him a good distance behind.

Having scanned the road, Vernon-Smith looked over the gate. Nothing was to be seen of the man Parker at the chalet, though doubtless he was there. If he was expecting Lamb, it was likely enough that he might be at a window, and that he had seen the juniors on the road.

Vernon-Smith walked on, as if intending to follow the disappearing cyclists to Pegg. Out of sight of the windows of Sea View, he stopped.

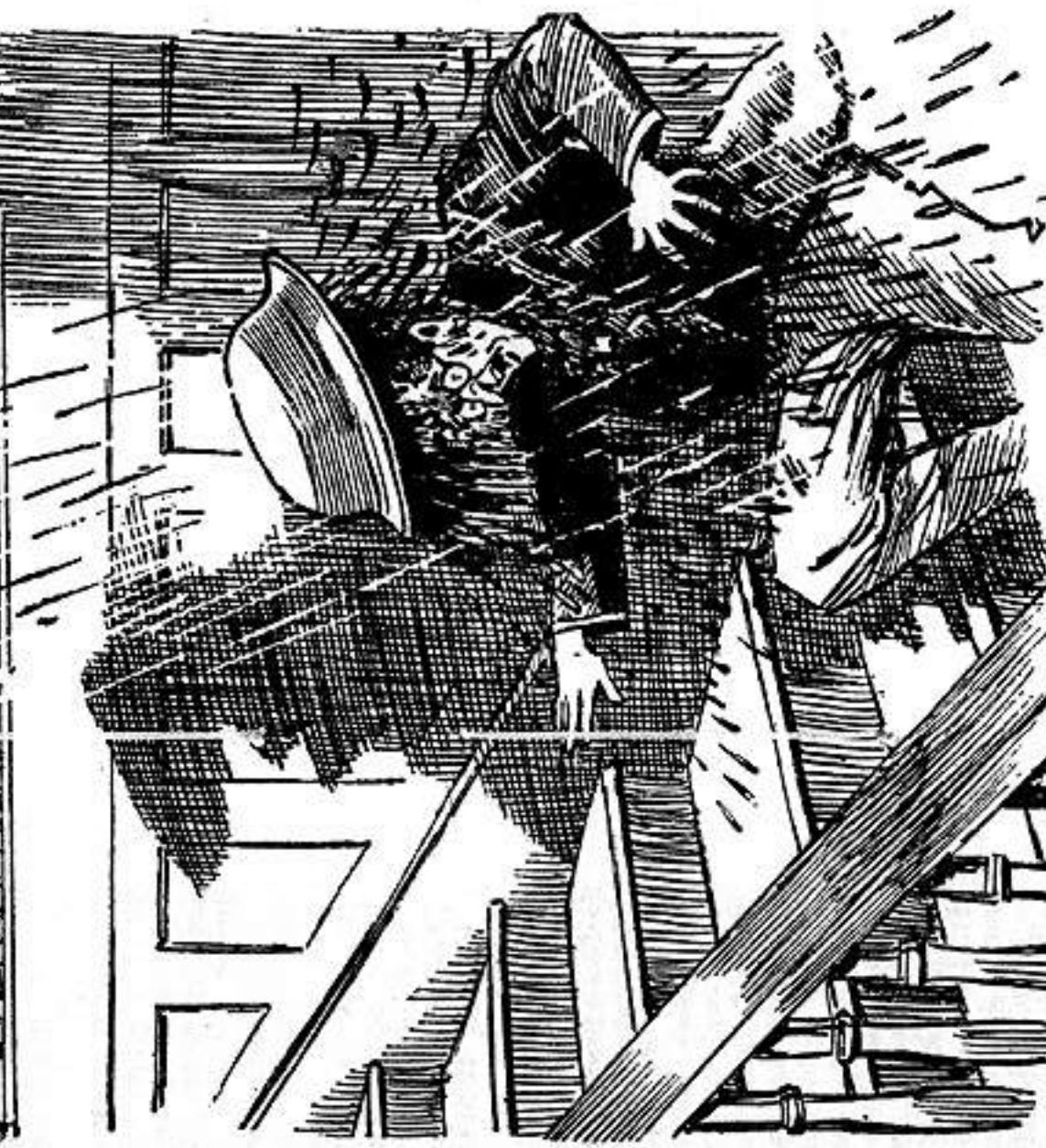
At the end of the fence that enclosed the chalet grounds was an un-built lot, open to the road, where several trees grew among straggling bushes. The Bouncer left the road and stopped under a tall tree near the fence, already thick with the green of spring.

He gave a quick glance round him and clambered into the tree.

From a high branch, he had a

bird's-eye view of the chalet, the unkempt field that surrounded it, and the big, grassy mound that covered the air-raid dugout.

It was half an hour later that he saw Mr. Lamb coming up the sea road from the direction of Friardale. He caught the gleam of the spring sunshine on the art master's gold-rimmed glasses.



"Oh!" gasped Bunter as the bowl slipped out of his fat fingers. Swoosh! Bang! The quart of fluid descended on Mr. Lamb in a drenching shower, while the bowl fell fair and square on his head, and fitted him like a tin hat!

Lamb was walking slowly, as if taking a casual stroll on a half-holiday. Every now and then he stopped and looked out over the sea, where, in the blue distance, several vessels were to be seen—among them a trawler, probably engaged on mine-sweeping.

The Bouncer, watching him, He did not believe that Lamb was

interested in scenery, or in mine-sweepers. He believed that the man was on his guard, taking care that he was not followed, or observed going to Sea View. When a pedestrian passed on the road, Smithy noticed that Lamb gave him plenty of time to get clear before he proceeded. Lamb did not want to be seen going to the chalet.

That leisurely stroll brought the art master, at last, to the gate of Sea View. He stood near the gate for a few moments, once more admiring the scenery, to all appearances making sure that the coast was clear, in the Bouncer's opinion.

Then, with surprising suddenness, Mr. Lamb darted in at the gate. When he moved, he moved quickly. The Bouncer, from the high treetop, watched him with a sour smile on his face. All Lamb's actions were suspicious—from the point of view of a suspicious watcher!

The art master crossed the field swiftly and disappeared behind the grassy mound of the air-raid shelter. The entrance, as Smithy knew, was on the other side.

At the same time, a stocky man, with a pimply face, came out of the chalet and went in the same direction. It was Parker—and evidently he had been expecting Lamb, and had been watching for him.

Both disappeared behind the grassy mound. Vernon-Smith slithered down from the tree. He had seen what he wanted to see—Lamb had come there, that afternoon, for one of his mysterious visits to the dugout! Smithy would have given much for a glance into that deep retreat.

He walked away—his brows wrinkled in perplexed thought. He was going to know—he was determined on that; and he was assured that, once he knew, Lamb's number would be up at Greyfriars.

But what was the secret? Keen as he was, the Bouncer had to admit that he did not know—that he could not guess. Keen as he was, suspicious as he was, he did not dream of any connection between Lamb's visit to the dugout and the cracked crib at the Courtyard and County Bank the night before!

LAYING THE SNARE!

"MY dear Ferrers—"

"Robinson, sir!"

"Yes, yes, Robinson!"

said the Head. "Is there news? Is there news at last of my old friend Quetch?"

Dr. Locke's tone was eager. It was on Monday, after third school. Dr. Locke was in his study. A word on the telephone had told him to expect Ferrers Locke, and he was waiting when the chauffeur discreetly tapped at the study door and entered.

He waved his hand to a chair. But John Robinson did not sit down. John Robinson was always careful to play his part to perfection. Anyone glancing in at the window, or unexpectedly entering at the door, would have seen John Robinson

standing respectfully at attention—like a chauffeur listening to instructions from his employer. Ferrers Locke was not the man to leave the minutest point unguarded.

"As yet, no, sir," said John.

Dr. Locke's face fell.

His faith in his relative, the celebrated detective of Baker Street, was unbounded. But he was disappointed—he had long been disappointed. It seemed that even Ferrers Locke was no match for the cunning crook, whose face was unknown, whose name was unknown, who was called Slim Jim because the police had no other name for him.

"I must not expect too much!" said Dr. Locke slowly. "The man has baffled the authorities for years—and it is only a matter of weeks since you have taken the case in hand, my dear fellow!"

"I shall not, at all events, abandon the case until Slim Jim is laid by the heels!" said Ferrers Locke. "And when he is in the hands of the law, there will be every hope of finding Mr. Quetch, sir!"

"The rascal, surely, will confess what he has done with him, when he has nothing further to gain by keeping him a prisoner!" said the Head.

"No doubt—but even if he does not, there will be every hope of tracing Mr. Quetch and discovering him."

"Quite so! It is amazing," said Dr. Locke slowly, "that the man keeps up his depredations and continually escapes discovery. You still hold to your belief that in his daily life he is a man who follows some normal and respectable avocation, above suspicion?"

"I am quite sure of it."

"And that he takes some post, of an open and unsuspecting kind, in a neighbourhood that he has marked out for plunder?"

"Exactly—except that I think that the neighbourhood depends on the post!" said Ferrers Locke, with a faint smile. "Slim Jim has been at work for years, as you say—unsuspected! In his open life, under his own name, he follows some respectable calling—all we know of it is that it is of a temporary nature—as his work concentrates in one district for a few weeks or months, and then he disappears as suddenly as he came—to be traced again, later, in some other district, perhaps a hundred miles away."

"But what kind of post?" said the Head musingly. "The man might be almost anything—from a grocer's assistant to a schoolmaster, from an extra clerk in a bank to a temporary post-man!" said Ferrers Locke. "It is a wide field of search to cover, sir."

"It seems to me almost hopeless!" said Dr. Locke, with a sigh. "And you have no clue?"

"I will not say that, sir! I will say that I have hope! But I prefer to say nothing definite till the case closes," said Ferrers Locke quietly.

"But you have something to say to me, especially this morning—"

"No doubt you have heard of Slim Jim's latest exploit—the robbery of the Magnet Library—No. 1,675.