

TOMMY DODD'S "GHOST!"

A Grand Long Complete Tale, dealing with the Early Adventures of
Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Raby's Birthday.

OCTOBER the tenth is next week," exclaimed Raby suddenly one evening as he was seated in the end study at Rookwood with his chums, Jimmy Silver, Lovell and Newcome.

The Classical juniors were reading, and not one of them took the slightest notice of Raby's remark.

"October the tenth—next week!" he said again meditatively.

"What's that ass mumbling about?" exclaimed Lovell, looking up.

Neither Jimmy Silver nor Newcome raised their heads, and Lovell bent over his book once more.

There was silence for the space of about two minutes, then Raby commenced to speak again.

"October the—Ow!"

He broke off suddenly, for Jimmy Silver's book had descended upon his worthy head with a crash.

"Now shut up!" exclaimed the leader of the Fistical Four.

"I wasn't speaking to you," replied Raby ruefully, rubbing his head vigorously.

"Well, if you want to talk to yourself buzz off into the quad," retorted Jimmy Silver. "Nobody in here wants to listen to you!"

"I only said it was October the tenth."

"Shut up, fathead! Who cares?"

"All right, then, if you don't want a feed—"

"Eh? What about October the tenth and a feed?"

At the mention of the magic word "feed," the members of the Fistical Four sat up and began to take notice.

"Come on! Let's have it!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, closing his book and throwing it down on the table.

"I've a good mind to say no more about it now," said Raby in an injured tone. "You don't deserve to—"

"You'd better say some more about it," declared Jimmy Silver emphatically, "or you'll get a thumping for interrupting us for nothing!"

"Well, as I was saying," remarked Raby, "October the tenth is next—"

"We've heard that before!" snapped Lovell impatiently. "Besides, we should have known October the tenth was next week, even if you hadn't mentioned it."

"Well, it's October the tenth—and my birthday!"

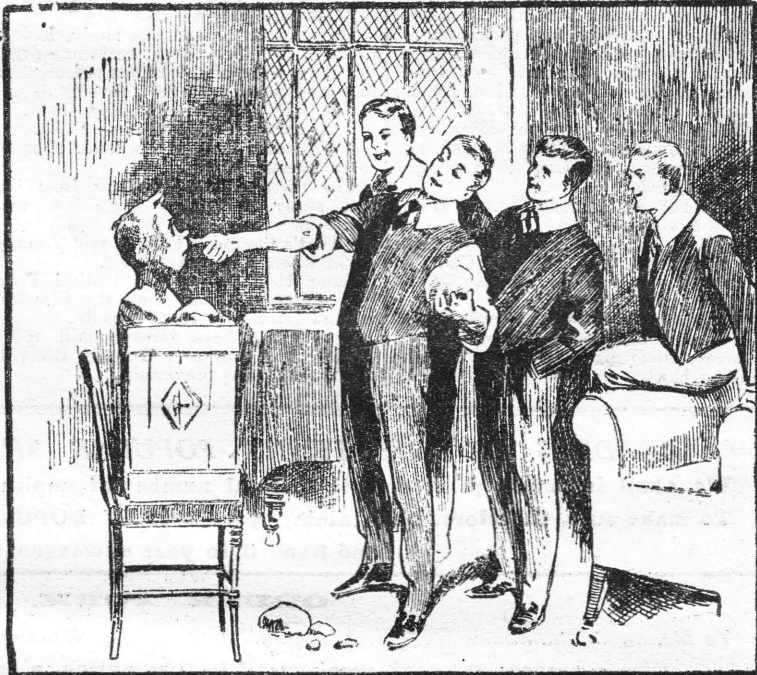
"My hat!" muttered Newcome. "He's made all this fuss over telling us that October the tenth is his giddy birthday!"

"Wait a minute, ass, till I've finished," said Raby, glaring at Newcome.

"Come on, then," urged Jimmy Silver. "What's this about a feed?"

"I had thought about suggesting a dormitory feed, at my expense, to celebrate the occasion," replied Raby loftily.

"Oh!"



"I think that'll do," said Jimmy Silver. "Just another touch for the nose, and then I've finished."

"In that case," remarked Lovell, "we apologise for jumping on you."

"Exactly," added Jimmy Silver; "but you might have got it out a little quicker. We'll overlook that, in the circumstances, though."

"It's certainly a very good idea of yours," said Newcome agreeably, "and I add my regrets to those of the others."

"Oh, turn it off!" exclaimed Raby.

"The question is, do you want the feed?"

"Rather!"

"What-ho!"

"Let's talk it over quietly," suggested Jimmy Silver, who, with the other members of the Fistical Four, was quite prepared to give the reading a miss for the pleasure of discussing a prospective feed. "Let's have your ideas on the subject."

"Well, I thought we might get in a supply of grub, and store it in the dormitory in readiness for the occasion," said Raby.

"Jolly good wheeze!" declared Jimmy Silver.

"He's a smarter chap than you'd take him to be at first glance," said Lovell, turning to Newcome.

"What's that?" asked Raby sharply.

"Oh, I was only saying that you are a smart chap for good wheezes," explained Lovell hastily.

"Then I suppose you'll want us to help

you get in the stuff," said Jimmy Silver pleasantly.

"Yes; but we've got to decide where to store it first," replied Raby.

"You can have my locker, with pleasure," suggested Newcome amiably.

"We should want the key as well," replied Raby drily.

"Are you meaning to suggest that I should wolf the grub before the night of the feed?" asked Newcome warmly.

"Not at all, but—"

"Peace, infants!" cried Jimmy Silver.

"We can transfer the clothes from one of the lockers, and distribute them among the other three for the time being, so as to leave it free for the grub," continued Raby.

"Good!" said Jimmy Silver. "As it's your feed, Raby, we'll have your locker and you can mind the key."

"Right-ho!" agreed Raby. "That completes the scheme, then."

The Fistical Four retired that night on very good terms with themselves, and full of their latest wheeze. A feed was always a great event; if it was held under unusual conditions, so much the better.

Two days before Raby's birthday, the Fistical Four sallied forth to commence laying in the provisions.

"We can get fruit and stuff like that to-day," said Jimmy Silver, "because it

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will keep all right; then we sha'n't have so much shopping to do to-morrow."

The juniors walked into Coombe, where they purchased apples, plums, bananas, and nuts, and so forth. Then they returned to Rookwood pretty well laden.

They reached the dormitory with their purchases, congratulating themselves on the fact that they had met no one. They had not seen three dim figures lurking in a shaded corner of the quad.

Tommy Dodd & Co., the Modern chums of the Fourth, and the rivals of the Fistical Four, had watched Jimmy Silver & Co. hurry towards the school doors laden with bags and packages.

"I wonder what in the dickens those fatheads are up to now?" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, as the Classical juniors disappeared through the door.

"It's a dead cert there's a wheeze on," declared Tommy Cook, "by the way they were hurrying; and they were bunged up with parcels."

"I've got it!" cried Tommy Dodd. "It's a study feed!"

"Well, I suppose they can have a study feed if they like," said Tommy Cook.

"Certainly; but we ought to be there."

"Oh, we're sure to get an invitation!" said Tommy Cook sarcastically.

Tommy Dodd made no reply. He was thinking hard.

morning Tommy Dodd & Co. hastened up to Fistical Four's study, entered, and closed the door.

"Now for it!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, making for the cupboard straight away.

To his surprise, the door was unlocked. He pulled it open quickly, and received a shock. There were no signs of food of any kind.

The faces of the Modern chums fell as they peered over Tommy Dodd's shoulder.

"What have they done with the giddy grub?" asked Tommy Cook perplexedly.

"Goodness only knows!"

They hunted round the study, looked in the desks, and turned everything over, but there was no trace of the parcels they had seen brought in the previous day.

"Done!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

"Absolutely!" said Tommy Cook.

"Without a shadow of a doubt!" muttered Tommy Doyle.

The three chums withdrew from the end study completely mystified, and made their way down to the quad.

"That's the giddy limit!" said Tommy Dodd when they got outside.

Later they passed the Fistical Four just going into class, and the Classical juniors grinned at them broadly.

They would have grinned still more broadly had they seen Tommy Dodd & Co. a short time previously.

quad, where they stood for a few minutes discussing what they had just seen.

They were about to move away when the Fistical Four emerged from the school door. They walked towards Tommy Dodd & Co., grinned as they passed, and continued on their way.

The Modern chums watched them disappear through the gates, then Tommy Dodd turned to his chums.

"Now's our chance!" he exclaimed. "They don't know we saw them going in just now."

"But supposing they come back suddenly?" suggested Tommy Cook anxiously.

"Oh, we must chance that!" replied Tommy Dodd. "I expect they've gone for a walk, though."

"Funny thing," he added, "but I've just come over quite peckish!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come to think of it, I'm a bit hungry myself," remarked Tommy Cook.

"Faith, an' it's the same here," said Tommy Doyle. "Must be catching!"

"Well, we'll just go and see if we can find something to eat," said Tommy Dodd. "I think the end study would be a likely place!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Modern chums, led by Tommy Dodd, hurried up the stairs to the study of Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Ah!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd as he

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"We sha'n't get an invitation," he said at length; "but there's no reason why we shouldn't have some of the grub."

"What d'ye mean?"
"Why, the feed can't be for to-day because it's too late now," said Tommy Dodd, "so it must be for to-morrow. I'll just try and find out for certain if it is a feed, and if so we'll buzz up to their study directly after breakfast to-morrow morning and help ourselves."

"Good egg!"
Tommy Dodd & Co. walked across the quad and entered the school door. The Fistical Four were just coming down the stairs, and they were talking excitedly in low tones.

Tommy Dodd just caught the word "feed" before the Classical juniors turned the corner.

"That settles it," said Tommy Dodd a moment later. "Raby was just saying something about a feed."

"To-morrow morning we make a raid on their study for grub, then," said Tommy Cook.

"That's the idea. We'll hurry over our breakfasts, and buzz up there before those rotters have finished!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Thus planning, the Modern chums retired to their study.

As soon as breakfast was over the next

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Feed.

AT the close of the day's work Tommy Dodd & Co. received another surprise. They had decided to keep a sharp eye on the Fistical Four, with a view to obtaining more information about the Classical chums' plans.

Once more they spotted Jimmy Silver & Co. coming across the quad, this time from the direction of the tuckshop. Each of them had their arms pressed tightly against their coats, which were bulging out, and in their hands they carried paper bags, evidently containing cakes of some description.

The Moderns hastily hid themselves, and immediately the Classical chums had passed into the school Tommy Dodd uttered a sharp command.

"Come on, kids! We'll follow them this time, and see where they're storing all this stuff."

They were soon hot upon the track of the Fistical Four, and reached the top of the stairs in time to see them entering the study.

"Well, that lot's gone in there, anyway," declared Tommy Dodd as they withdrew. "There's no doubt about that, because we've seen 'em going in with it."

They descended once more to the

closed the door. "The cupboard's locked this time!"

"I'm afraid we shall have to break the lock," said Tommy Cook, with mock concern.

"That would be a pity," agreed Tommy Dodd. "I've got a few keys here, though," he continued. "Perhaps one of 'em would fit."

He fumbled in his pocket, and produced a bunch of keys, which he began endeavouring, one by one, to fit into the keyhole of the cupboard.

Suddenly, with a click, the lock flew back.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Tommy Cook, as his chum pulled open the cupboard door.

"Ah, here we are!" cried Tommy Dodd, as he handed out a couple of paper bags.

"And something to drink as well!" exclaimed Tommy Cook, as his eye fell on a row of bottles of ginger-pop.

"There's ripping cream-buns and jam puffs in here!" said Tommy Doyle joyfully, as he delved into one of the paper bags.

As a matter of fact, the pastries were extra. Most of the provisions for the feed had been procured earlier in the day, and taken straight up to the dormitory.

The drink, however, had been forgotten, and when Jimmy Silver & Co.

had gone over to the tuckshop later for it they had seen the fresh new cream-buns and jam-puffs, and could not resist the temptation to procure a supply for their forthcoming feed.

"Now, you'd better bunk down, and see if all's clear," said Tommy Dodd, turning to Tommy Cook. "Then we'll load up, and cart this stuff off to our own study."

Tommy Cook hurried out, and returned a minute later, to report that there was not a soul about.

Tommy Dodd hastily scribbled a note, which read as follows:

"Thanks for the feed.—TOMMY DODD & Co."

This he placed in the cupboard where the purloined provisions had reposed, and relocked the door.

Loading themselves up, the Modern chums hastened to their own study, where they regaled themselves right royally.

The Fistical Four returned to Rookwood only just in time for call-over, and consequently had no opportunity to remove the luxuries which they blissfully imagined were still stored in their study.

It was decided, therefore, that a couple of them should go down and fetch the things after lights out.

The Fistical Four retired full of excitement in anticipation of the coming event.

Bulkeley entered the dormitory soon afterwards, to see that all was in order, and in a short time silence brooded over Rookwood School.

About half an hour later Raby sat up in his bed.

"You chaps awake?" he asked, in a stage whisper.

"Rather!" was the husky reply from three of the beds around him.

"Come on, then," he murmured. "We'd better start!"

Jimmy Silver, Lovell, and Newcome sat up. The light from a full moon was streaming in at the windows, making the dormitory almost as light as day.

"Wake those other kids up," said Jimmy Silver to Lovell and Newcome, while I help Raby to get the grub out." The two juniors succeeded, after some difficulty, in getting grunts from one or two of the beds.

"It's a feed!" said Lovell huskily, shaking Hooker. "Get up!"

"What's a feed?" murmured Hooker, opening his eyes.

"We've got a feed ready here," said Newcome, "and we want you chaps to come in."

By this time several others of the Classical juniors were turning over in their beds, and making growling inquiries as to what was on.

At last they began to sit up one by one, and were not long in catching on to the idea, as they saw Jimmy Silver and Raby passing backwards and forwards with parcels between the latter's bed and locker.

The packages of provisions were opened out in the middle of Raby's bed in readiness for the feast.

There were ham sandwiches, beef sandwiches, a large pork pie, cakes, and the fruit and nuts.

"Come on, kids!" exclaimed Raby. "I'm giving this feed to celebrate my birthday. Pile in!"

The Classical juniors began jumping out of their beds and scrambling for good places on the edge of Raby's.

"This is an awfully spiffing idea of yours, Raby," said Topham.

"Hear, hear!" agreed Townsend.

For a few minutes after that no one spoke. All were too busy eating.

"What about a drink?" said Hooker

at length. "The ham in these sandwiches is jolly salt."

"Just what I was thinking," remarked Jones minor.

"We've got some drink down in the study," said Raby, "and some extra-special cream buns and jam-puffs."

"Well, fetch up the drink, anyway," said Hooker. "I can't eat another crumb till I've had something to drink."

Lovell and Newcome were despatched for the ginger-pop and the pastries.

They were not absent long. In a few minutes the dormitory door was quietly opened, and they entered, but were empty-handed!

"What the merry dickens—" began Raby.

"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. Lovell advanced towards his chums, and held out a slip of paper to Jimmy.

"That's all there was in the cupboard," he said. "There's no sign of drink or grub."

"Nothing to drink?" growled Townsend. "Don't think much of this for a feed."

"Rotten!" exclaimed Hooker. "Fancy waking fellows up for a show like this!" grumbled Topham.

Jimmy Silver read the note which Lovell had handed to him in low tones: "Thanks for the feed.—Tommy Dodd & Co."

"Those Modern kids have scored off you again," said Hooker contemptuously. "But I wish you'd found it out before you woke us up."

"Done!" muttered Raby fiercely.

"Oh, yes, you're done right enough!" said Jones minor. "I'm going back to bed; I'm too thirsty to eat any more. I reckon it's a dud feed."

"Same here," agreed Hooker, moving away.

"The rotters!" howled Jimmy Silver, still holding the note in his hand.

"Can't be helped," said Lovell philosophically. "We're absolutely done brown by those Modern asses!"

"It's mucked up the whole business," said Jimmy Silver. "I'm as thirsty as a fish myself!"

"We'll have a drink out of the water-jugs, and put the rest of the stuff away till to-morrow," said Raby resignedly.

"We'll make those fatheads sit up for this!" murmured Jimmy Silver vindictively.

The feed was voted a failure by the four chums, who by this time were the only ones out of bed.

Then they, too, retired, muttering threats of vengeance upon the Modern chums.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The "Ghost."

THE next morning the Fistical Four arose with their feelings toward Tommy Dodd & Co. in no way calmed. Their tempers were not improved, either, by the taunts and jibes of the other members of the dormitory.

Having decided to hold a council of war after morning classes, Jimmy Silver & Co. made their way downstairs.

"One of those asses must have had a key to fit our cupboard," said Jimmy Silver, as he and his chums entered the end study.

"Yes," said Lovell. "The cupboard was locked all right when we came down last night."

"Well, between now and midday," said Jimmy, "just try and think of a wheeze for getting even with those bounders."

"Rather!"

Nothing was seen of the Modern

chums, and the Fistical Four trooped into class.

They were unable to concentrate on their work that morning quite in the usual way, for their thoughts were full of plans for revenge.

It was Wednesday and a half-holiday at Rookwood, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were heartily thankful, when morning classes were over, that they had finished work for the day.

After dinner they retired to their study to consider a scheme for taking Tommy Dodd & Co. down a peg.

"I think I've got hold of a very good notion," said Jimmy Silver eagerly, as soon as they had closed the door.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Lovell.

"Let's have it, then," said Raby. "I can't get over those rotters mucking up our feed like they have."

"Well, my idea is this," began Jimmy. "We'll make out we're going to have another feed to make up for last night. We'll let 'em hear us talking about it, as though we didn't know they were listening."

"Yes, go on!" urged Raby.

"You chaps know," continued Jimmy Silver, "that I'm very good at clay-modelling. Well, my idea is to get hold of a big chunk of clay, and make a bust of Tommy Dodd."

"Yes," said Raby excitedly. "What then?"

"Let them think we're storing grub in the cupboard," continued the leader of the Classical chums; "but instead of putting grub in there we'll borrow a high stool from one of the rooms, set the bust on top of it, and hang a white sheet round the shoulders, so that it drops down and covers the stool."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're a marvel, Jimmy!" cried Lovell enthusiastically.

"When that's done," resumed Jimmy, "we'll take the shelves out of the cupboard—they're all movable ones, you know—and stand the whole thing inside and lock the door."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When Tommy Dodd & Co. come to help themselves to the grub again, they'll get the fright of their lives. We'll hide ourselves in here, and jump out on 'em and give 'em a good wiping-up afterwards!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a rattling good wheeze," said Lovell, "if we can pull it off all right."

"There's no reason why we shouldn't," said Jimmy confidently as they left the study.

It did not take the Fistical Four long to put the first part of their scheme into action.

A short distance from Rookwood they espied Tommy Dodd & Co. lying on the grass behind a hedge, reading. They gave no sign that they had seen them, but seated themselves on a gate close by, and began eagerly to discuss plans for another feed.

After about ten minutes Jimmy Silver & Co. continued on their way, leaving the Modern chums excitedly congratulating themselves that they had once more scored over the Fistical Four.

Returning to Rookwood, Jimmy Silver surreptitiously purloined a huge chunk of clay from the art-room.

This he conveyed to the end study, and, locking the door, he commenced work on the bust of Tommy Dodd.

He stood an old box on a chair, and, aided by encouraging remarks from his three chums, who stood looking on, he soon modelled a rough outline.

Then he began working more carefully

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upon it, adding lines here and there in real artistic style.

At last he stood away from his work a little and surveyed it critically.

"I think that'll do," he said. "Just another touch for the nose, and then I've finished."

He gave the nose an upward tilt as he spoke, and the chums roared with laughter.

"Now for the stool!" said Jimmy.

"Here it is!" said Lovell.

The high stool was brought forward and the model placed upon it. Then the whole lot was covered by a sheet which was hung from the shoulders of the bust.

The finished effect was weird and wonderful, and calculated to shock the stoutest heart coming upon it suddenly.

Next the shelves were removed from the cupboard and carefully concealed, and Tommy Dodd's "ghost" was placed in position.

The cupboard door was locked, and the juniors set about clearing up the study.

"So far so good!" said Jimmy Silver, in self-satisfied tones.

"I'll bet we make those asses sit up this time!" exclaimed Lovell eagerly.

The next day the Fistical Four were seen as before carrying bags and packages from the direction of the tuckshop. This time, however, the contents were demolished as soon as they reached the study.

"Won't they be mad!" said Tommy Cook to his chums in the quad. "Fancy doing 'em the same way twice!"

"We haven't done 'em yet," cautioned Tommy Dodd.

"We shall, though," returned Tommy Cook, "because they haven't dreamt that we heard the whole giddy arrangement behind that hedge.

"We'll carry out the raid after tea," said Tommy Dodd. "Things will be quieter then."

Everything worked perfectly.

The Fistical Four had counted on Tommy Dodd & Co. choosing the dusk for the carrying out of their plan, and accordingly hid themselves in their prearranged places round the study, when at length they spotted the Modern chums coming towards the school door.

A few minutes later they heard whispering outside their study door, and shortly afterwards it was opened and a head thrust into the room.

Jimmy Silver, from his place of concealment, could just make out that it was Tommy Dodd's.

The Modern chums had chosen a time when there was only just about sufficient light to see.

In another moment the dim form of the leader of the Moderns entered the study, leaving the door ajar.

Tommy Dodd made straight for the

cupboard, fumbling in his pocket as he went.

Then he produced a key, which he fitted into the lock of the cupboard. The Fistical Four heard it turn with a click, and Jimmy Silver was just able to see Tommy Dodd opening the door.

Suddenly a piercing yell rent the air.

"Ow! Murder!"

With a dash Tommy Dodd made for the door, yelling as he went. As he reached it Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle pushed it open to enter.

The light was bad, and Tommy Dodd could not see clearly, with the result that he cannoned into it with terrific force.

"Yaroooh! Ow!"

"What the dickens—" began Tommy Cook.

"A ghost!" screamed Tommy Dodd, rushing out of the study.

When he had run some distance up the corridor he paused for breath. The shock he had received and the collision with the door had almost completely winded him.

The Fistical Four could plainly hear the voices of the Modern chums from their hiding-places, and they remained perfectly still, knowing that the intruders would return to investigate.

"Where's the ghost?" they heard Tommy Cook ask.

"In—in the cupboard!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"There's no such thing as ghosts!" snapped Tommy Cook impatiently. "I thought you had more pluck than that!"

"You go and see, then!" growled Tommy Dodd.

"I will, too!" retorted Cook.

He started towards the study door once more, and then turned.

"We'd better all go and investigate," he said.

"Afraid to go alone, I suppose!" said Tommy Dodd.

"I'll come!" volunteered Tommy Doyle.

And, followed by Tommy Dodd, the two made their way once more into the study.

Pulling an electric torch from his pocket, Tommy Cook advanced towards the cupboard and pulled open the door.

The light from the torch flashed out and revealed the ghost in all its glory.

"There you are!" exclaimed Tommy Cook to Tommy Dodd, who was lurking in the doorway ready to run. "There's your ghost!"

Tommy Dodd recovered from the effects of the shock remarkably quickly when he found that his chums did not make a dash for the door.

Tommy Cook was flashing his electric torch up and down the arrangement inside the cupboard.

Tommy Doyle lifted the sheet and revealed the stool underneath.

"They've done us properly this time!" he said, with a laugh. "I say, that head isn't at all unlike old Dobby's!"

"Well, I'll soon destroy the likeness!" grunted Tommy Dodd. "I'll just give myself a punch on the nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

He stepped back in order to land out with full force at the model, and he was about to strike a mighty blow at the "ghost" when a sudden interruption occurred.

"At 'em, kids!" cried Jimmy Silver, rushing from his hiding-place.

With a yell the other three juniors dashed out, and in a moment a fierce struggle was in progress.

Tommy Dodd was borne to the floor with a crash, and Jimmy Silver sat on his chest.

"Ow! Gerroff! I'm choking!" he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha! I'm sitting on his chest, and he says he's choking!" cried Jimmy.

Lovell soon had Tommy Cook on his back, then he followed Jimmy Silver's example and sat on him.

Newcome and Raby were bumping Tommy Doyle unmercifully.

"Ow! Yaroooh! Ow, ow!"

His screams were so loud that Jimmy Silver began to fear that some more of the Moderns would be attracted to the rescue.

"That'll do for him!" he said to his chums.

Tommy Doyle was released, and went scuttling out of the study like a rat.

Jimmy Silver grabbed the feet of Tommy Dodd and dragged him along the floor to the door. He was deposited in the corridor like a shot from a gun, and Jimmy turned to assist Lovell, who was again struggling with Tommy Cook.

He was soon dealt with, and pitched out into the corridor, shouting at the Fistical Four as he went.

"I feel better now we've had our own back on the rotters!" said Raby, as the door was shut.

"Hear, hear!" agreed Lovell.

"I don't think they'll bone things out of our cupboard again in a hurry!" observed Jimmy Silver, straightening his tie.

Meanwhile Tommy Dodd & Co. were sympathising with each other in the privacy of their own study.

They agreed that the second raid on the Fistical Four's cupboard had not proved quite so successful as the first, and they were bound to admit that Jimmy Silver & Co. had exacted an adequate revenge.

"They've done us absolutely!" said Tommy Dodd, who was not likely to forget in a hurry the "ghost" of the end study.

THE END.

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