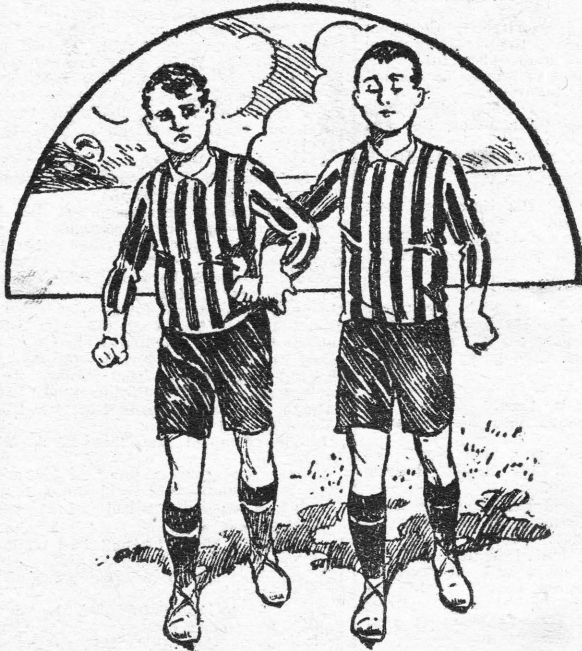


**A ROOKWOOD TALE WITH A DRAMA AND THRILL!**

*It was a great surprise for Rookwood when Cyril Peele, the cad of the Fourth, took to football, and appeared to see the error of his ways—and that was just what Peele wanted the school to think—that he had turned over a new leaf—for it suited his mysterious purpose very well!*



# PEELE'S PAL!

A Gripping, Long, Complete Story,  
dealing with the adventures of  
Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood  
School.

BY

**OWEN CONQUEST.**

(Author of 'the famous stories of Rookwood appearing in the "Boys' Friend"')

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**Getting ready for Peele!**

**RASH!**

"Go easy, old chap!"

Bump!

"Lovell—"

"Oh, rats!" grunted Arthur Edward Lovell. "Let a chap alone! Can't a fellow put in a bit of practice with a punchball without three silly asses sitting up and barking at him?"

Bump! Crash!

Arthur Edward Lovell was "going it." He seemed to mistake the punchball for the countenance of some deadly foe, to judge by the way he was dealing with the in-offensive article.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome were not looking pleased. They were not exactly sitting up and barking, as Lovell described it, but they were certainly looking exasperated. Prep in the study, along with vigorous punchball practice, was a matter of some difficulty.

"Can't you go down to the gym?" asked Newcome.

"Rats!"

"Well, why can't you if you want to slog at a punchball like a mad Hun?" demanded Raby warmly.

"Rot!"

"What's the matter with you, old chap?" inquired Jimmy Silver.

"Nothing!"

"Well, then—"

Lovell paused in his vigorous exercise to bestow a glare upon his three study-mates.

"I'm getting my muscle up," he said. "You punch the ball in the study, don't you, and I don't grouse at you?"

"Not during prep," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, blow prep!"

"And blow Mr. Bootles in the morning?" asked George Raby sarcastically.

"Yes. Blow him and bother him, and everybody else!" said Lovell forcibly. "I'm getting ready for Peele, if you want to know!"

"You needn't get your muscle up to handle a waster like Peele," said Jimmy Silver. "You're not going to kill him, I suppose?"

"I'm going to make him wriggle!" said Lovell. "I'm going to his study when

I'm done here. I'm going to make a regular picture of him!"

"What's Peele done?"

"He's been a rotter!"

"Well, he always was a rotter!" remarked Raby. "No need to punch him this evening specially, when he's been a rotter for fifteen years, and will be a rotter, most likely, for another fifty or sixty."

"He's been at it again!" snorted Lovell.

"At what?"

"His rotten games, of course!"

"Well, that's no business of this study!" said Newcome. "The Head hasn't appointed us censors of morals to the Fourth Form. If Peele plays poker in his study, we're not asked to take a hand. Let him rip!"

"It's my business, in this case!"

"How the dickens—"

"My young brother, Teddy—"

There was a deep groan from three.

Lovell's young brother, Teddy, was a personage of whom Lovell's chums were never glad to hear.

When Arthur Edward was doing what Raby called his "elder brother stunt," Lovell was liable to be a little unbearable.

Why Lovell couldn't leave his minor to settle down in his own way in the Third Form was a mystery to his chums. But Lovell apparently couldn't. And the end study did not conceal the fact that they were quite "fed" with the cheery Teddy.

Lovell stared at the three juniors as they groaned dismally. He did not seem to relish that expressive groan.

"Well, what's that mean?" he snapped.

"I'll tell you what," snapped Raby brightly. "Go to the Third Form-room and punch Teddy!"

"What?"

"Punch him hard! It will relieve your feelings, and do him good!"

"Ass!"

"What has Peele done to Teddy?" asked Newcome, with an air of great patience. "Has he pulled his noble ear, or tapped his lordly nose, or forgotten to address him as 'Your Highness'?"

Lovell's eyes gleamed.

"He's asked him to a poker-party in his study," he answered.

"Well, Teddy could say 'No,' couldn't he?"

"As it happened, he didn't say 'No.'"

"Little rotter!"

"If you're going to call my brother names, Raby—"

"Well, you've just said—"

"Teddy is such an easy-going, unsuspecting kid," said Lovell. "Peele's a cunning cad! The pater's sent Teddy three pounds for a tip—that's the reason. I've spoken to Teddy, and told him I'd wallop him if he goes to Peele's study. And Teddy cut up rusty! He doesn't like being interfered with. He's got plenty of spirit."

Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned a little.

It was curious to see Lovell making excuses for his troublesome minor, of whom he was very fond, in spite of his unnumbered faults. Whatever the wilful and obstinate fag might do, it was always certain that Arthur Edward would see some extenuating circumstances in the matter.

"It's Peele's fault!" continued Lovell. "He's an older chap, and he knows better. I'm going to stop him! He's after Teddy's tip, but he's not going to lead Teddy into wrong-doing while I'm here to look after him—see?"

"Quite so," said Jimmy Silver. "Punch Peele's nose, by all means, and—"

"I'm going to!"

"And let us do our prep."

"Blow prep!"

"Look here, Lovell—"

Crash!

Arthur Edward Lovell started on the punchball again with renewed vim. He found some solace, in his exasperated state of mind, in punching the ball with terrific punches.

But he overdid it a little this time.

That last terrific punch dragged out the staple above, and the punchball flew loose under the drive.

Jimmy Silver was in a direct line with it. Before Jimmy knew what was happening, the flying ball clumped him on the side of his head, and it was followed by Lovell, who was plunging forward as his drive failed to meet with resistance.

"Oh!" roared Jimmy.

He rolled off his chair, and Lovell just saved himself from falling on him.

"Oh! Ah!" gasped Lovell. "Sorry! The dashed thing's come loose!"

"You silly ass!" roared Jimmy Silver.

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rubbing his head as he sat on the floor. "You dangerous maniac!"

"Well, it couldn't be helped."

"You—you—"

"Lend me a hand to get this rigged up again, and don't jaw so much!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver scrambled to his feet. "Rigged up again!" he stuttered. "So you're going on, after nearly braining me, are you?"

"Of course! I—"

"Well, you're jolly well not!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Lend me a hand, you fellows!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Raby.

Lovell, to his great exasperation, was promptly collared by his three chums. Jimmy jerked open the door, and Arthur Edward was deposited in the passage with a heavy bump.

Then the door slammed on him, and Jimmy Silver turned the key in the lock.

"Oh!" gasped Lovell. "Oh! Ow! You rotters! Why, I'll—I'll—I'll half—"

Lovell jumped up and hurled himself at the door. But it did not open.

"Let me in, you rotters!" he roared.

"Good-by-e-e-e!" sang Jimmy Silver.

"Open this door!"

"Bow-wow!"

Lovell expressed his feelings by delivering a terrific kick on the door, which made it groan. Then he tramped away down the passage with a flushed face and glinting eyes. He was going to call on Peele of the Fourth; and, to judge by the effect of Lovell's fist on the punchball, Cyril Peele was not to be envied when he called on him.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Upper Hand!

"THERE'LL be a row!"

"Oh, rot!"

"Well, I don't like it!"

"More rot!" said Peele.

There were three juniors of the Rookwood Fourth in Study No. 1—the three black sheep of the Classical Fourth—Peele, Gower, and Lattrey. Cyril Peele was lounging against the mantelpiece, with his hands in his pockets and a cigarette between his lips. He looked quite at ease with himself and things generally; but Gower and Lattrey had decidedly uneasy expressions.

"There'll be a row!" repeated Gower. "You know what it was like before, when you took up that scrubby little beast, Lovell minor. His major came in here and pitched into the lot of us."

Lattrey rubbed his nose. He had a reminiscent feeling in his nose when he thought of that occasion.

"Lovell won't pitch into us this time," answered Peele lightly.

"I'll bet you he will if he knows. And he's sure to know. That fat cad Muffin heard you speaking to Teddy, and he's sure to tell Lovell!"

"Let him!"

"Look here! I don't like it! I'm not going in for fisticuffs with a hefty brute like Lovell."

Peele shrugged his shoulders.

"We're hard up," he said. "The kid's got a big tip, and it will come in handy. Besides, there's other reasons. Do you think I've forgotten Lovell givin' me a blue eye? I can't give him a fancy eye in return—he's too hefty—but I can get at him through his minor, and I'm goin', to."

"That's all very well; but it's not safe, I tell you. How long could you stand up to Lovell if he began on you?" sneered Gower.

Peele ejected a little stream of cigarette-smoke.

"He won't begin," he answered coolly. "It's as safe as houses this time. I know how to bottle up Lovell. I'm goin' to be very friendly with Lovell, in fact."

"Eh?"

"You'll see him feedin' out of my hand." "You're talkin' rot!" said Gower. "Lovell wouldn't be friendly with you at any price. No good askin' him to a game of poker."

"You'll see!" smiled Peele.

Lattrey gave a start.

"Here comes somebody!" he exclaimed.

There was a heavy tramp of feet in the passage. Lattrey and Gower exchanged a quick glance and stepped to the door.

"Don't turn the key!" yawned Peele. "I'm not afraid, if you are."

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Peele's chums did not answer. Lattrey opened the door, and both of them quitted the study, and walked very quickly towards the stairs, as Arthur Edward Lovell appeared from the opposite direction. Lovell glanced after them contemptuously, and turned in at the open doorway.

Lovell's look was not agreeable as he tramped into Peele's study.

But Cyril Peele did not seem to be alarmed.

He maintained his careless, lounging attitude, only removing the cigarette from his mouth with thumb and forefinger. Through a little cloud of smoke he nodded to the enraged Fourth-Former.

"Hallo, old bean!" he remarked. "Trot in! I was expectin' your minor, but I'm glad to see you."

"Glad to see me, are you?" said Lovell grimly.

"Certainly, old top!"

"You'll be sorry by the time I've done with you!" said Lovell.

"I hope not," answered Peele genially. "Shut the door, will you? That's right! Have a smoke?"

Lovell clenched his hands.

"You've been meddling with my minor again," he said, between his teeth. "You've asked him here to play cards. I thrashed you for it last time. I'm going to thrash you again. See?"

Peele nodded.

"Put up your hands, then!"

Peele put his hands into his trousers-pockets.

"I'm not fightin' you, old top," he answered. "Too much fag! Besides, there's nothin' to fight about!"

Lovell glanced round the study as if in search of something. Peele followed his glance with an amused smile.

"Lookin' for anythin'?" he inquired.

"Yes, a cricket-stump, or a fives-bat, or a dog-whip!" answered Lovell. "If you don't put up your hands, you're going to be thrashed, anyhow! You can make up your mind to that."

"There's a fives-bat on the shelf; but I recommend you not to use it, dear boy," answered Peele lazily. "You see, if you lay a finger on me, old top, I shall come down heavy!"

"You!" snorted Lovell. "I'll tackle you with one hand tied, if you like! That's what I think of you and what you can do!"

"I'm only speakin' for your own good and your minor's," smiled Peele. "I believe your pater is very much wrapped up in dear Teddy—isn't that so? It would be a shock to the dear old gentleman if Master Teddy were kicked out of Rookwood in disgrace, wouldn't it?"

"That's what I'm going to prevent," said Lovell. "Teddy gets into mischief when he's led into it, and I'm going to stop you leading him. You let him alone after I licked you last time. I'm going to try the effect of the same medicine again!"

"I think not!" yawned Peele. "You see, it rests entirely in my hands whether your brother is kicked out of Rookwood to-morrow mornin'!"

"That's a lie!" said Lovell bluntly. "You can't give him away to the Head without giving yourself away, too. And Dr. Chisholm would sack you and lick Teddy. He would know that you, as the elder, were to blame. You'll keep your mouth shut about Teddy playing cards in this study!"

Peele laughed.

"I wasn't thinkin' of that. If anythin's said about card-playin' in this study, I shall deny it, and Lattrey and Gower will bear me out. So I don't see how it's goin' to be proved. Teddy's word certainly wouldn't be taken, a pub-hauntin' young bounder like that!"

"A—a—a what?"

"You see, I've been keepin' a fatherly eye on Teddy, while you've been devotin' yourself to football and things!" grinned Peele. "Last Wednesday that excellent youth was at the Bird-in-Hand, at Coombe, on a friendly visit to Joey Hook, the bookie."

"It's a lie!" exclaimed Lovell furiously.

"It's true, dear boy!"

"If he went there, you took him there!"

"Well, he went, and he shook hands with Joey Hook when he left; and a chap about my size was in the summer-house with a camera—"

"What!"

"And snapped him in the act!" grinned Peele. "I've got the photograph now."

Lovell stared at him blankly.

The evil smile on Peele's face was evidence enough that his statement was true.

"It's a really nice photograph," went on Peele in the same drawing tone. "Your young brother and Mr. Hook came out quite nicely, with the Bird-in-Hand in the background and a potman in the offing! What do you think the Head would say if he saw the picture?"

Lovell did not speak.

"So I think you'd better be civil!" smiled Peele. "If you are not, old bean, I shall come down heavy, as I said. If that photo is sent to the Head, your brother will be kicked out of Rookwood for bein' a disgraceful young rascal, as he is, an' you know it! And if you don't toe the line, old bean, that photograph is goin' to the Head!"

Lovell found his voice at last.

"I—I don't believe you!" he stammered. "Show me the photograph!"

Peele tossed a photograph on the table from his pocket. Lovell caught it hastily up, and his eyes were instantly glued upon it.

The photograph bore out Peele's description. It gave a view of the garden behind the public-house at Coombe, with Teddy Lovell shaking hands at the gate with a coarse-featured, dissipated-looking man, easily recognisable as Mr. Joseph Hook, the shadiest character in the county. In the background was the Bird-in-Hand, with a potman glancing towards the two from a back door and grinning.

Lovell crumpled the thin sheet in his hand.

It was a staggering proof of his minor's utter recklessness—that recklessness of which Lovell had hoped the wilful fag was cured.

He had not seen much of his minor of late. Fourth Form football had claimed a very great deal of his leisure time. And he had supposed that Teddy was going on well in the Third.

Evidently he had been mistaken on that point. He almost trembled at the thought of the photograph falling into the hands of Dr. Chisholm. The proof of Teddy's reckless rascality was too plain to be doubted, and it was scarcely likely that he would be allowed to remain at Rookwood School.

Peele watched the junior's face, with a mocking smile.

He had the upper hand now, and the cad of the Fourth was thoroughly enjoying the situation.

He smiled still more as Lovell made a sudden stride towards the fire and tossed the photograph into the flames. It was consumed in a moment, and Arthur Edward turned on Peele with blazing eyes.

"Now, you cad—"

"There's still the negative!" said Peele coolly.

Lovell had forgotten that. He paused.

"Where's the negative?" he asked.

"That's tellin'!"

"You'll tell me, and it will be destroyed," said Lovell, gritting his teeth, "or I'll smash you! You fooled Teddy into going to that den, and fixed it up with Hook to give you a chance to snap them together, so as to get my brother under your thumb! Do you think I don't know that?"

"What about it?"

"Give me the negative!"

"No fear!"

"Where is it?" hissed Lovell.

"I'll tell you where it is," answered Peele coolly. "It's in an envelope addressed to the Head, along with a copy of the photograph. That envelope is in the hands of a chap I can rely on, with instructions to put it in the post the first time I have trouble with you, Lovell!"

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

His clenched hands dropped to his sides. Peele lighted another cigarette, while Lovell stared at him, furiously but helplessly, like a trapped animal.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Palling with Peele!

JIMMY SILVER almost jumped.

Raby and Newcome stared.

The three chums had never been so completely astonished as they were at that moment.

Lovell had not returned to the end study, and after prep was over the Co. had come downstairs, expecting to find Arthur Edward in the Common-room. They intended to remonstrate gently with him on having left his prep undone.



But all thoughts of prep were driven from their minds now.

Lovell of the Fourth appeared in sight in the passage as the trio were heading for the Common-room. He was not alone. Cyril Peele was with him, and, to judge by appearances, the two juniors were on the best of terms. And Jimmy Silver & Co. blinked at them blankly.

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy. "What the—"

It was astonishing enough. Arthur Edward Lovell had been "getting his muscle up" in the end study for the special purpose of hammering Cyril Peele. He had gone along to Peele's study, as his chums supposed, for that purpose. And here he was as friendly with Cyril Peele as if the black sheep of Rookwood had been his chum for two or three terms! Peele had his arm through Lovell's as they walked towards the Common-room.

"Lovell!" gasped Raby.

Lovell glanced round, and the colour flushed into his cheeks at the sight of his chums behind him. Instinctively he jerked his arm away from his new friend.

"Hallo, you fellows!" he said awkwardly.

Jimmy Silver gave him a searching look. Lovell's confusion was plain to the eye, but he did not leave Peele and join his chums. Peele was smiling in a very genial way.

"You haven't done your prep, Lovell!" said Jimmy Silver at last.

"I—I forgot! I—I've been chatting with Peele."

"Chatting with Peele!" repeated Newcome dazedly.

"Ye-es!"

"Not patching his nose?" asked Raby.

"Nunno!"

"Why not?"

"I—I— Oh, don't talk rot!" said Lovell crossly.

"But you were banging the punchball specially to get your muscle up for Peele!" said Raby.

Peele laughed.

"It's all serene, Raby!" he said. "It was only a misunderstanding. Lovell and I have made it up."

"Made it up!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Yes. Why not? What's the good of quarrellin' and grousin'? Why shouldn't we be friends?" said Peele.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Besides, as I'm takin' up football again, Lovell's promised to give me some help," said Peele. "No objection, I suppose?"

"Oh, no!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Not at all! If you're taking up footer, I'm glad to hear it. Better than loafing around smoking cheap cigarettes, at any rate."

"Exactly!" said Peele, with a cool nod. "That's what I think! That's why I'm doin' it."

"I suppose you're pulling Lovell's leg somehow," said Jimmy Silver. "Why Lovell should let you pull his leg beats me!"

"Oh, rot!" grunted Lovell.

"Well, are you going to do your prep, or are you going to have a row with Bootles in the morning?" asked Jimmy. "You'd better tear yourself away from your new pal for a bit, I think."

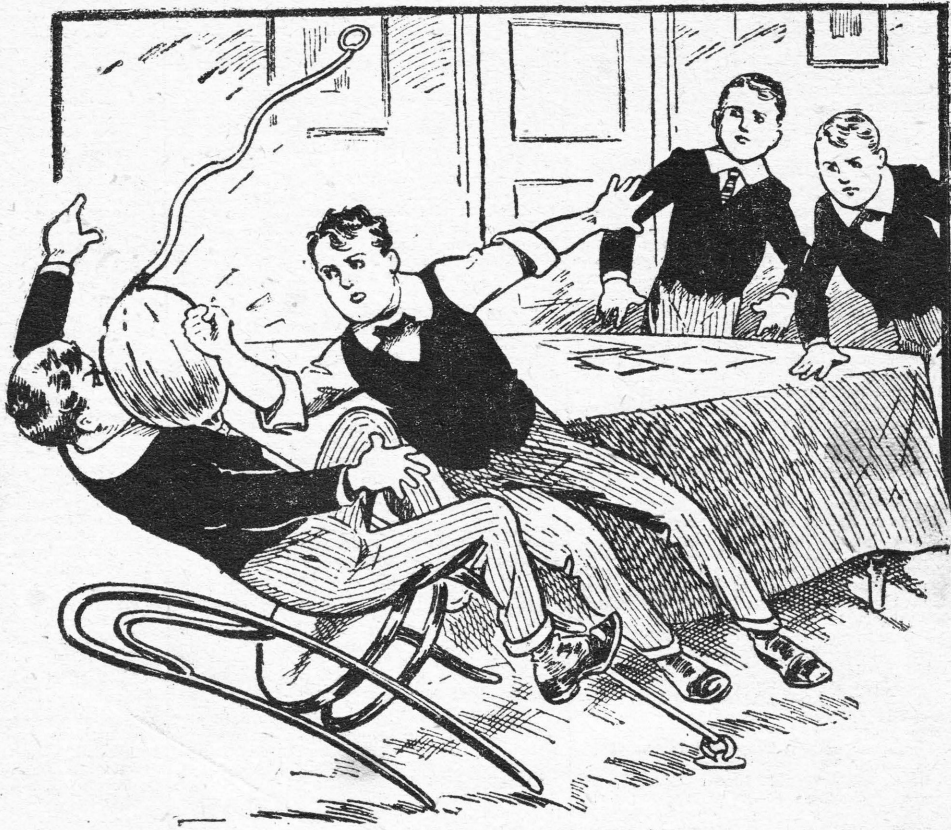
"I—I'm going—"

"I'll come and lend you a hand, old chap," said Peele.

Lovell winced.

"You needn't trouble, Peele," he said in a low voice.

"No trouble at all," answered Peele affably. "I can help you, you know. I'm



**THE PUNCH THAT CARRIED WEIGHT.** Crash! Lovell's terrific punch dragged out the staple above, and the punch ball flew loose under the drive. Before Jimmy Silver knew what was happening, the ball clumped on the side of his head, and it was followed up by Lovell, who was plunging forward as his drive failed to meet resistance. "Oh!" roared Jimmy, as he rolled off his chair. (See Chapter I.)

a bit ahead of you in the classics. Come on!"

Lovell hesitated a moment. He seemed rooted to the floor as he turned a crimson face towards the chums. But Peele drew him by the arm, and Lovell, without another word, accompanied him. The two strangely assorted friends headed for the end study in the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at one another. Jimmy rubbed his nose in a very perplexed way.

"I'm fairly good at conundrums," he remarked, "but I admit that this beats me. Either of you fellows know what it means?"

"Give it up!" answered Raby.

"Blessed if I know, unless Lovell's gone off his clump," said Newcome. "He likes Peele about as much as a Prussian likes truth! He was full of wrath about Peele asking his minor to play poker. Now he's made friends with him. Potty, I suppose!"

The trio went on their way, Jimmy Silver shaking his head very seriously. There was something behind this extraordinary change of front on Lovell's part; Jimmy was sure of that. What it was he could not guess, but he could guess that it was something in connection with Teddy Lovell.

Leaving his chums in the Common-room, Jimmy Silver strolled away to the quarters of the Third to see Lovell minor. Prep was over in the Third Form-room, and Mr. Bohun had left his Form to themselves. Jimmy Silver found Lovell's young brother there with a crowd of fags. Teddy Lovell was not looking in a good humour.

"Hallo, young 'un!" said Jimmy. Teddy gave him a morose look, and did not speak.

"Lovell minor's got his back up!" grinned Silver secundus of the Third, Jimmy's cousin. "The evening party hasn't come off."

Some of the fags chuckled, and Lovell minor scowled.

"Suckin' up to the Fourth!" said Wegg

of the Third. "That's Lovell minor's game. Hanging round with Peele and his set. We all know what Peele is like. Precious lot!"

"It's my bizney, I suppose?" snapped Lovell minor.

"Rotten, I call it!" retorted Wegg. "If I were your major I'd lick you! Jolly good mind to lick you, anyway!"

"Not a bad idea," said Grant. "It's a disgrace to the Third, the way Lovell minor goes on. Let's make him run the gauntlet."

"Oh, cheese it, you chaps!" said Teddy, in some alarm. "I'm not going to Peele's study. It's all off!"

"Only because your brother interfered!" said Stacey.

"He hasn't interfered!" grunted Teddy.

"Then why ain't you going?"

"That cad Peele's turned me down."

"That's what comes of sucking up to the Fourth!" said Wegg. "Of course, a Fourth Form cad would turn you down if you suck up to him! Serve you jolly well right! You're a disgrace to the Form, young Lovell—that's what you are!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Did you say 'rats' to me?" roared Wegg.

"Yes, I did! Go and eat coke!"

"Then I'll jolly well—"

James Wegg, in great wrath, made a rush, and Teddy Lovell, who was evidently very savage at being "turned down" by Peele, met him half-way. They were prancing round the Form-room and round one another, amid excited shouts from the Third, when Jimmy Silver walked out and left them to it.

Jimmy had learned what he wished to know—that Teddy's new friendship with Cyril Peele was off, Arthur Edward Lovell had managed that somehow, and he seemed to have managed it by making friends with Peele instead of by hammering his features. It was a gentler method, but much less like Lovell's ways; and according to Jimmy's

knowledge of his chum, that amazing friendship was not likely to last. But on that point Uncle James of Rookwood, in spite of his sagacity, was in error. For some time, at least, astounding as it was, Arthur Edward Lovell was to enjoy the doubtful distinction of being known as Peele's pal.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### Peele's Ambition!

"THANK goodness!" said Jimmy Silver, on Saturday afternoon. Jimmy's remark referred to the weather. It was clear and cold and bright that afternoon, just the weather for footer, and Jimmy's thoughts were all on the great winter game just then. The junior match with Greyfriars was coming off shortly, and Jimmy Silver, as the Lower School football captain, was much exercised in his mind on that subject. He was keeping his men well up to the mark—membership of the Rookwood junior eleven was no sinecure. The mighty men of junior football, like Jimmy himself, and Lovell and Tommy Dodd, and Mornington, Erroll, and Conroy, were sure of places in the team for the great match. But the other places were still on the knees of the gods, so to speak, and there was keen competition for them among the Rookwood juniors, both Classical and Modern. On this especial afternoon there was to be a match between the two sides of Rookwood, after which Jimmy's final selection of the school team would be made. The Fistical Four walked down to the football-ground in cheery mood—three of them, at least. Arthur Edward Lovell did not look quite so cheery as his comrades.

"Is Rawson playing in goal, Jimmy?" he asked suddenly.

"Oh, yes!"

"I suppose he will keep goal in the Greyfriars match?"

"Most likely," said Jimmy Silver, with a nod. "Rawson's very strong in goal, though he's been giving too much time to swotting lately, and not enough to footer. He isn't at the top of his form at present, but I'm going to rag him about that."

"Rawson's very keen on getting the prize he's entered for," remarked Lovell, in a thoughtful way. "Some of the chaps say he has to eke out his scholarship allowance by baggin' prizes."

"More power to his elbow!" answered Jimmy. "But prize-hunting can't be allowed to interfere with footer."

"I dare say Rawson wouldn't mind standing out."

"I'm not going to let him."

"Well, there are other chaps who can keep goal."

Jimmy Silver stopped, and glanced at his chum's face. Lovell did not meet his eyes.

"What are you driving at, old top?" asked Jimmy directly. "Have you been bitten with a sudden fancy for keeping goal yourself?"

"Oh, no!"

"You're wanted in the half-way line," said Jimmy. "That's your best show, old man!"

"I—I know! I—I was thinking of another chap."

"Name!" said Jimmy, with a smile. "Even your Uncle James isn't above hearing a suggestion. Are you thinking of Van Ryn?"

"No."

"Pons, perhaps? Pons is better forward. I don't think he would show to advantage in goal."

"I wasn't thinking of Pons."

"Well, give the johnny a name!" said Jimmy Silver.

"What about Peele?"

"Pip-pip-Peele!" stuttered Jimmy.

"Ye-es."

"Lovell's new pal!" remarked Raby in a tone of gentle sarcasm. "Peele for goal! Oh, my hat! Why don't you suggest Tubby Muffin, Lovell?"

Jimmy Silver looked hard at Lovell. Lovell's new and weird friendship for Peele had puzzled him, and perhaps a little annoyed him. But he had concluded that it was no business of his, and had forbore from making remarks on the subject. But this was really too much!

"Peele!" said Jimmy slowly. "You suggest Peele for the eleven—the eleven that's going to meet Wharton's lot from Greyfriars?"

"Well, yes."

"You seem to be under a delusion," said

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Jimmy, with gentle irony. "We're going to play Greyfriars at footer, not at poker, euchre, or banker!"

Raby and Newcome chortled, and Lovell reddened.

"Peele's been sticking to practice lately," he said.

"Not so close as he's been sticking to cigarettes and cards and Joey Hook, the bookie, I think!"

"He's not a bad player."

"When he likes!" agreed Jimmy Silver. "Admitted! He doesn't often like, and he's not often in form for a hard game. As for keeping goal, I don't believe he could keep goal against eleven bunny rabbits!"

"Give him a chance to show what he can do!"

Jimmy Silver paused.

"Perhaps we'd better have this out, Lovell," he said at last. "You've struck up a friendship with Peele. That's your bizney, of course. If you like to be friendly with a smoky, rotten, gambling cad, there's nothing to stop you! I don't know what you're doing it for, unless it's to keep him away from your minor, and you could do that by thrashing him, as you did before. I'd rather thrash him than pal with him myself. But you do as you like, only don't ask your friends to follow your example. I don't like smoky cads, and I wouldn't have Peele in my eleven if there wasn't another man at Rookwood to play. I'd rather play a man short than put him in."

"Hear, hear!" said Raby.

Lovell flushed deeply.

"I—I'm not exactly friendly with him," he stammered. "I—I don't see any harm in being civil to a chap. Besides, he's genuine about the footer. He's been putting his beef into practice."

"Precious little beef he has to put into anything! He knows how to choose a cigarette or a necktie, but he can't play footer for toffee!" grunted Newcome.

"I think he'd do well in goal."

"Lucky it isn't you that has to choose the goalkeeper for the Greyfriars match, then!" said Jimmy Silver tartly. "I don't think he would be any good at all, and if you think so you're the only fellow at Rookwood who does!"

Lovell compressed his lips.

"Give him a chance to-day, anyhow!" he said. "I—I've told him I'd put it to you, Jimmy. You needn't play him in goal if you don't want to, but you can shove him in somewhere. It's only a practice match. After all, he's a member of the club, and entitled to a show!"

"Nobody's entitled to a show who isn't fit to play!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Still, I admit that Peele has been sticking to it lately. I might shove him into a practice match, if he asks me."

"He's asked me to put it to you."

"No reason why he can't speak for himself, that I can see. But you can tell him to get into his things, if you like. If he cracks up, as I expect, there won't be any great harm done. But if Peele is thinking of figuring in the Greyfriars match, Lovell, you may as well tell him that it's N.G.—nothing in it, old chap!"

Lovell walked away without replying.

"I'd like to know what that means," said Raby, glancing after Arthur Edward. "A few days ago he was going for Peele's scalp, and now he's asking for him to be put in the junior eleven. How the thump has Peele brought him round like that?"

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"I can't catch on to it," he said.

Jimmy was frowning thoughtfully as he went on towards Little Side with his chums. The change in Lovell was surprising and disconcerting. It was not agreeable to think of his chum falling under the influence of a fellow of Cyril Peele's character. And Jimmy's frown deepened when Lovell arrived on Little Side in company with his new pal.

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

#### The Giddy Goats are Surprised!

JIMMY SILVER kept an eye on Cyril Peele occasionally in the ranks of the Classical footballers.

He had to admit to himself that there was a considerable change in Peele.

He looked fairly fit and alert. The old lounging manner, on which the Giddy Goats of Rookwood prided themselves, was quite gone.

Peele had doubtless kept off "smokes" and surreptitious excursions after lights-out of late. He would not have been so fit otherwise. And this seemed to indicate that his new ambition to shine as a footballer was genuine. Jimmy Silver relented a little towards him at that thought. If Cyril Peele wanted to give up his lounging, loafing, smoking, and other fallings, and play a more manly part, Jimmy Silver was just the fellow to welcome the change, and afford him every assistance. But between helping Peele to become decent and playing him in the most important match of the season there was a wide difference.

But undoubtedly Peele showed up well in the practice match. He was put at half on the left wing, and he played up well both in defence and in feeding the forwards. Jimmy had always known that the slacker of the Fourth could play a good game if he liked, and it was clear now that Peele liked! The only doubt was whether this remarkable reform would last, and that was a very big doubt indeed!

A good many fellows watched Peele's game with interest. His chums Gower and Lattrey were looking on, and with them were a crowd of the Giddy Goats—Smythe of the Shell, and Howard and Tracy, Townsend and Topham. They were as surprised as anyone else by Peele's new departure, and still more surprised by the form he showed in the game.

"Blessed if I catch on!" Adolphus Smythe remarked to his nutty chums.

"What's Peele's game?"

"Pullin' Silver's leg, somehow," said Tracy. "He doesn't care twopenny for footer. He's got some deep game on, you bet!"

"It's queer!" said Adolphus. "He's been chummin' with Lovell lately, and givin' up our little parties, an' all that. If he's thinkin' of givin' his old pals the go-by, and cringin' to Jimmy Silver's set—"

"Pullin' their legs, I tell you!" said Tracy.

"But why?"

"Oh, I give that up. Peele's too deep for me," Tracy confessed.

"Bravo! Well kicked!"

"Good old Peele!"

"Bravo!"

"By gad!" said Adolphus. "That was Peele's goal, by gad!"

The Moderns had been coming up the field with the ball, when Peele neatly robbed Tommy Dodd of it, and sent it to Jimmy Silver, who kicked for goal with success.

The Classical forwards were nowhere, and Jimmy kicked that goal from the second line. He had a clear field, as it happened, and it was Peele who had given him the chance. The Giddy Goats joined in the shouts of applause, which was as much for Peele as for the captain of the Fourth.

To the further surprise of the spectators and the other players, Peele did not "crack up" during the second half. He did not have bellows to mend, and he seemed fairly fresh when the final whistle went. It was proof positive that he had turned over a new leaf, for the present, at least, in his manners and customs.

His old friends surrounded Peele when he came off the field and threw on a coat and muffler. The Giddy Goats were pleased by the show he had made, which they felt reflected credit upon the whole of their select circle. They walked Peele off to the house in a sort of triumph.

"But what's the game, old bean?" asked Adolphus. "What are you doin' it for? You're makin' work of it like Silver and his gang!"

"I'm takin' up footer quite seriously," answered Peele. "You see, I hope to get a place in the Junior Eleven."

Smythe stared at him.

"I want to play against Greyfriars, if possible!" said Peele coolly.

And he went into the house, leaving Adolphus Smythe & Co. in a state of great astonishment.

"I suppose he means it," said Smythe. "More fool he! Looks as if we've lost a pal."

Tracy's lip curled.

"It's a stunt!" he answered. "If Peele gets into the eleven for Greyfriars, it's because he's got bets on the game, and it will help him to win them somehow. He's not takin' all this trouble for nothin'."

And, upon reflection, the Giddy Goats agreed that Allan Tracy was probably right. But how Peele expected to serve



his personal ends by "wedging" into the Junior Eleven remained a mystery to them.

### THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

#### Peele's Ultimatum.

**J**IMMY SILVER & CO. were at tea in the end study when Lovell came in rather late after his chums. "We're beginning," said Jimmy Silver. "You're just in time to save your toast, old top! Aren't you hungry?" "Oh, yes! I—I just stopped to speak to Peele."

"Oh, Peele! Speaking of Peele, he showed up remarkably well this afternoon," said Jimmy Silver. "Blessed if he didn't make me open my eyes! He seems to be quite in earnest about footer."

Lovell brightened up a little. "I think he is," he said. "So far as I can see, Peele's quite genuine about it. Why should he take it up at all, otherwise?"

"Echo answers 'Why?'" said Jimmy good-humouredly. "I'm glad to see it, anyhow. I'll put him in the next House match if he keeps on like this."

"Peele's very keen on getting into the team for the Greyfriars match." "So are about two dozen other fellows," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "But there won't be any room for Peele."

Lovell remained silent. "I'm glad to see him turning over a new leaf, and I'm willing to help him," said Jimmy. "But playing him against Greyfriars is quite a different matter. It simply can't be done!"

"Peele's set on it." "Like his blessed cheek, then! Anybody would think to hear you that Peele had some right to be played over other fellows' heads. What the thump claim has he, I'd like to know?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver warmly. "Dash it all, let's drop the sub-

ject, or I shall be getting ratty! Pass the marmalade, Raby!"

Tea in the end study finished in an atmosphere less genial than usual. Immediately the meal was over Arthur Edward Lovell left the study with a clouded brow.

He loafed about the Fourth Form passage for some minutes, evidently in a state of hesitation; but he repaired at last to Study No. 1 and entered.

"Sit down, old fellow!" said Peele, with great cordiality of manner.

Lovell sat on the corner of the table. Peele's eyes were on his downcast face, reading his expression. Under Peele's genial manner there was a hardness as of steel. His eyes were glinting.

"Well?" he said, as Lovell did not speak. "I—I've spoken to Jimmy Silver," said Lovell at last. "It's no good, Peele. I told you it wouldn't be any good. There simply isn't an earthly chance of your getting into the eleven for Greyfriars."

"I'm sorry to hear that!" Lovell stirred uneasily. "Look here, Peele, what does this mean?" he said in a low voice. "I—I believe you're keen about footer, but—but it's rather sudden. Is there anything behind this?"

"What could there be behind it?" "Well, I don't know. But it's jolly queer your getting so keen about footer all of a sudden, and being so bent on playing Greyfriars!"

Lovell's words were accompanied by a sharp, suspicious glance at the cad of the Fourth. But Peele only smiled.

"Some of my people will be seeing the match," he said airily. "That is my reason."

"Well, it can't be done." "Better be candid about this, Lovell. It's got to be done, or else something unpleasant will happen," said Peele quietly. "I'm

going to play for Rookwood against Greyfriars! I've got to play; and if Silver won't agree, you've got to make him!"

"I can't!" "You're his best pal!" said Peele savagely. "Perhaps if you tell him your young brother will be sacked from the school if I don't play—"

"Oh, you rotter!" burst out Lovell. "If you hadn't got that hanging over my head—"

"But I have!" said Peele coolly. Lovell clenched his hands helplessly.

"I'm keepin' to our agreement," said Peele. "The day after the Greyfriars match, if I play in it, I'll hand you the negative and the copy of the photograph, and your minor will be safe—if he chooses not to act the fool again! But if I don't play—"

"Well?" muttered Lovell huskily. "If I don't play, that letter will be posted to the Head! If you and your pals won't do anything for me, why should I care for you? Anyhow, I mean business! You're Silver's best pal—you can influence him. He would do a lot for you if he knew it was necessary. You can tell him anything you like!"

And Peele left the study. Arthur Edward Lovell came out of the study a few minutes later with a clouded face. Jimmy Silver & Co. were coming down the passage, and they met him.

"Here he is!" said Jimmy cheerily. "Coming along to the gym, Lovell?"

"Oh, let a chap alone!" snapped Lovell. And he walked past his chums with a black brow, leaving the astonished Co's staring after him blankly.

THE END.

(You must not miss reading next week's long complete Rookwood, entitled: "The Way of the Transgressor!" by Owen Coquest. Full of thrill and drama.)

## SAVED FROM DISGRACE!

(Continued from page 17.)

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry. "You weren't dead, or anywhere near it."

Loder laughed harshly. "What about the tide?" he asked. "It's coming in quickly. In half an hour's time it will begin to lap the entrance of this cave. Ten minutes after that it will only just be possible to reach safety."

"But—"

"Listen! That scoundrel meant to leave me here to drown!" "Good heavens!" ejaculated the juniors. "It's a fact!" went on Loder fiercely. "To drown! No, don't unbind me. I'll tell you why not later on. Just listen to what I have to say. I'm going to tell you the whole rotten story!"

And Loder, in a subdued voice, did so. The juniors listened with grave faces. It was strange for them to hear this recital from the bully of the Sixth, their old enemy. He was, in truth, eating humble pie, for he was at their mercy.

He told them all, right up to the moment when they had found him.

"Last night," he concluded, "Judd attacked me in the lane. He possesses amazing strength. He carried me to one of the caves not far from here, one that the sea never enters. He stayed there all night with me, and this morning, after the tide had receded, forced me in here, and left me, bound and gagged, as you found me. He meant to let me drown, the infernal scoundrel! Thank Heaven you arrived in time!"

"But how can we help you?" asked Harry Wharton. "When Judd finds that you have escaped, he will probably attack you again. And, even if he were captured, he would tell the whole story, and you would be expelled from Greyfriars. How can we help you?"

Loder looked at the cave entrance anxiously.

"This way," he replied. "Judd is coming back here—I expect him every minute—and he will taunt me. I want you fellows to hide yourselves and wait until he arrives. Then you can listen to what he says, and be witnesses that he meant to murder me."

"But how do you know that he is coming?" asked Bob Cherry.

"He said he would return," replied Loder, "and I feel sure that he will keep his word."

Harry Wharton looked puzzled. "But if we collar him, as, of course, we should do," he objected, "how will that help you? We should hand him over to the police—"

"For Heaven's sake, hide!" panted Loder. "The fellow may come at any moment. Gag me again, and hide!"

The urgency of his tone could not be ignored, and the juniors did as he requested. All five of them clambered up on to the ledge, and remained there unseen, but seeing all.

Loder's story had taken their breath away. The whole thing was so startling that they could hardly believe it. Loder had refrained from mentioning that he had let Judd into Greyfriars for the purpose of robbery. He had led the juniors to suppose that the man had come there for money, and had been discovered.

Perhaps, had the Famous Five known all, they would have hesitated as to their decision. But, much as they disliked Loder, they wished to see him freed from the power of this scoundrelly ship's officer. He had appealed to them for aid, and it would have been brutal to refuse.

Almost before the Famous Five had settled themselves in their cleft of vantage a shadow appeared at the cave entrance, and Lucas Judd crept in.

"Wal, I jest come around to see that you was good'n secure!" he exclaimed. "Y'see, I reckon I'm fairly safe in this blamed locality. Nobody knows me by sight, except that galoot of a constable, and I take care to steer clear of him. I'm leavin' this district right now, though; but, by gosh, I've taught you a lesson!"

Harry Wharton bent close to Bob Cherry. "He doesn't mean to leave Loder to die," he breathed. "I expect it's all bluff. He'll let him go now; that's why he's come back."

"Shut up!" whispered Bob.

Lucas Judd was still talking. "I guess I'll get along outside!" he exclaimed. "He don't fancy bein' bottled up here to share the same medicine as you. I've brought you in here to kill you. Have you got that fixed clear? To kill you! I guess I ain't particular about my words when there's no one else around! You're goin' to die, sonny!"

Wharton nudged his companions, and gave them a meaning look.

"He's said enough to convict him a dozen times!" he whispered. "Collar him!"

In a second the Famous Five had leapt to the sandy door of the cave. In their excitement they scarcely noticed that it was a terrific jump. But they landed on their feet, and Lucas Judd turned on them with a gasp of surprise and fear.

"By gosh! What—"

"On him!" roared Bob Cherry excitedly. Judd was simply borne to the ground by sheer weight of numbers. He was thoroughly frightened, and half his strength seemed to desert him. After a few futile struggles he lay back limp. And while four of the juniors held him, the other slipped out his knife and cut Loder's bonds.

The prefect rose to his feet stiffly. "You don't think I meant to kill him?" gasped Judd, looking at Wharton appealingly. "I didn't, young 'un! It was just bluff!"

"We have only your word for that!" replied Harry Wharton sternly. "If we hand you over to the police, and give evidence against you, you'll be convicted, and you know it! But we're not going to do that!"

"By gum!" panted Judd. "We're going to give you the benefit of the doubt," said Wharton. "We're going to let you go free, but on one condition."

"Guess that condition's complied with!" said Judd quickly.

"If we let you go, you're to clear out, and never return to the neighbourhood of Greyfriars School again," said Wharton slowly. "If you do, we shall have you arrested, and give evidence against you. You are to go right away. Do you agree?"

"Yep!" exclaimed Judd, in relief. "Guess I'll shunt like oiled lightning!"

He was allowed to arise, and the Famous Five knew that, once out of the district, Mr. Lucas Judd would never show his face within a hundred miles of it again.

The whole truth of the wretched affair never came out.

All things considered, Gerald Loder had come very lightly out of a pretty tight fix, and for quite a considerable time his behaviour was above reproach. But Harry Wharton & Co. guessed—and guessed rightly—that he would soon forget the unfortunate incident, and relapse into his old ways and habits.

He did! And the Famous Five were not surprised the least!

THE END.

(Another magnificent tale of the Chums of Greyfriars next Tuesday, entitled: "The Remove Acrobats!" Order now!)

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