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**THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF "THE SILVER JACKET" DON'T MISS IT!**

FUN AT CARCROFT!

# Just Like Turkey!

By  
**FRANK RICHARDS.**

HARRY COMPTON coughed. Dick Lee sniffed. Bob Drake spluttered. They did it all together, as they came into the corner study at Carcroft. Why that study was reeking with soot, they did not know. It was quite unexpected. But they did know that a thick sooty atmosphere caught them fair and square as they came in, causing them to cough, sniff, and splutter.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Bob. "Urrrrgh!"

"What the dickens—" ejaculated Compton. "Ugh! Ugh!"

"Turkey!" yelled Lee.

For a moment or two the chums of the Fourth were wholly mystified, as well as half-suffocated. The study chimney could not be on fire, for there was no fire in the study. No doubt there was plenty of soot in the chimney, but why it should have descended in clouds was inexplicable—till they spotted Turkey

They gazed at the plump back of the fattest fellow at Carcroft School in astonishment and wrath. James Smyth Tuck was kneeling at the grate, raking in the chimney with a poker in his right hand. In his left hand he held a large paper bag, catching the soot as it fell.

But he was not catching all of it. Far from that. A lot went into the paper bag; but a lot fell into the grate, into the fender, spotted the rug, and floated in the atmosphere. Turkey was wheezing as he worked—some having got into his capacious mouth.

"You mad ass!" roared Bob.

"What do you fancy you are up to in our study?"

"Oh, haddock!" gasped Turkey.

He squinted round at the three. There were flakes of soot on his fat face, clinging to his ears, decking his hair.

"Oh! Only you fellows!" said Turkey, relieved. "I say, old chaps, keep it dark. Don't mention to anybody that I've been bagging this soot."

"What are you doing it for?" shrieked Compton.

Turkey rose to his feet. He held a sooty bag, half-full of soot, in sooty fingers. He grinned at the Carcroft Co.—a sooty grin.

"It's for Mossos!" he explained.

"Monsieur Pons?" said Harry, blankly. "What on earth does he want it for?"

Turkey chuckled—a fat chuckle.

"He doesn't want it!" he explained. "He's going to get it without wanting it—he, he! The little beast reported me to Roger today—just because I cut the detention class. Now I've got two detentions instead of one—that's two

half-holidays gone up the spout. I'll jolly well show him."

"You potty porpoise!" breathed the captain of the Fourth. "Are you thinking of buzzing that bag of soot over old Pong?"

"Just that!" grinned Turkey. "Right on his napper, what? He, he!! I shall get him a treat. He's taken out his deck-chair and squatted down to read his idiotic French newspaper, right under the window of the French classroom. This bag of soot is going to drop from the window—"

"Oh, holy smoke!"

"Right on his nut!" grinned Turkey. "Bit of a surprise for him, what? He will never know who did it. Nobody'll spot me going up to the French classroom! You bet I shall cut off fast enough when I've dropped the bag on his napper. He, he."

"You howling ass!" gasped Lee. "Roger will take the skin off you if you buzz soot over a beak's napper."

"How's he to know?" grinned Turkey. "You fellows won't tell



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him, I suppose? You wouldn't give a man away."

"He won't need telling—if he sees you spotted and speckled all over with soot, you fat ass."

Turkey started.

"Am I a bit sooty?" he ejaculated.

"Ha, ha, ha! Just a few."

"Well, that's a tip," said Turkey. "I'll buzz off and get a wash the minute I've dropped this on Mossoo's napper. Thanks."

"You'd better drop it into the dustbin and forget all about it, you frumpious frump!" said Bob.

"I'll watch it!" said Turkey.

"Look at the state you've made our study in!" hooted Lee. "If you wanted to collect soot, why couldn't you collect it in your own study?"

"Well, Vane-Carter's there. You know V.C.'s rotten temper. I did start there, but he kicked me when some went into his eye. So I came along to your study, old chap. I knew you wouldn't mind."

"Quite a mistake!" said Harry Compton. "We do mind! We mind a lot! V.C. kicked you, did he? Jolly good idea—we'll all do the same."

"Here, I say, keep off!" yelled Turkey Tuck, dodging wildly. "If you jolly well kick me, I'll jolly well—yarrgh! I say—whoop! Will you keep off, you rotters? Oh, haddock!"

The study reeked with soot. Books and papers were thick with blacks. There was a great deal of cleaning-up to be done before the corner study became habitable again. So far from not minding, the Carcroft Co. minded so much that they all kicked Turkey, and kicked him again as he dodged for the door, and Bob Drake landed a final kick as he fled up the passage roaring.

Then they looked round their study in great exasperation. Turkey Tuck was welcome to scheme deep, deadly schemes of reprisal on the French master, so far as they were concerned—but he was not welcome to make their study look as if a chimney-sweep dwelt therein.

"Better go down to hall to tea," said Harry Compton. "We can't stand this. Come on."

And the Carcroft Co. went down to hall.

"Nom d'un nom!"

It was a wild shriek in the Carcroft quad. Dozens of fellows looked round in startled surprise, as the voice of Monsieur Adolphe Pons was heard on its top note. Masters, walking in the quad, looked round.

"Nom d'un nom d'un nom!" shrieked Monsieur Pons. "Nom d'un nom d'un nom d'un chien!"

It was awful and unaccustomed language from the little French gentleman. Never before had Mossoo been heard to call on the name of a name—much less the name of a name of a dog! But Mossoo was going through an unaccustomed experience—a terrific, unheard-of experience—such an experience as had never befallen a Carcroft master since the old school had a local habitation and a name.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frank Richards, the author of our Carcroft series, is the world's most famous writer of school stories. He first became well-known for his stories of Greyfriars School with the ever-popular characters of Harry Wharton & Co. and the inimitable Billy Bunter. Some of his stories featuring these well-known favourites are at present being played on television over the B.B.C. Look out for more stories by Frank Richards in future issues of "THE SILVER JACKET".

A few moments ago, Monsieur Pons had been seated placidly in his deck-chair by the shady wall under the window of the French class-room, reading the latest paper from Paris, enjoying the spring sunshine and the balmy breeze, content with himself and the universe generally. But now—!

Something, unexpectedly, had fallen on the top of his head as he sat there—and burst open. Now, Monsieur Pons was on his feet—clawing, gouging at soot, looking like a pillar of soot, breathing soot, spluttering soot, gurgling soot, spitting soot, snorting soot. He was almost dancing. Soot floated round him in clouds as he danced.

Eyes fixed on him in amazement—some in amazement and horror, others in amazement and hilarity. Thoughtless fellows even laughed, seeing something comic in the strange and extraordinary aspect of the suddenly blackened French master. Masters, however, did not laugh—they rushed to the spot, horrified. Roger Ducas, master of the Fourth, was the first to reach Mossoo.

"My dear Monsieur Pons—!" he gasped. "What—?"

"Nom d'un nom d'un nom!" shrieked Mossoo. "I am smozzer viz somezing! I am choke! I am suffocate! Qu'est-que-c'est? Quel-quechose tombe sur la tête—nom d'un nom d'un chien!"

"Calm yourself—"

"Is it zat I calm myself, when I am smozzer and choke? Nom d'un cochon—"

"It is soot!" said Mr. Tinshaw, master of the Shell. "Soot! It is undoubtedly soot! But how—why—?" Tinshaw gave it up.

Roger Ducas knitted his brows. "Someone has dropped a bag of soot from the window above!" he snapped. "Some young rascal—some unthinking young scamp! I will see—"

Other masters, and sympathetic prefects, and grinning juniors, gathered round the gurgling sooty French master, Roger, who was quick on the uptake, cut rapidly into the House. The soot had been thrown from the window of the room above—and if not a second was lost, there was a chance of catching the delinquent before he could escape detection.

Roger's long legs whisked as if he were on the cinder-path. He shot into the House. He did the staircase two at a time. He hurtled into the French class-room on the second floor.

He had lost no time. But he was too late. The soot-hurrier was gone. He had left traces behind him—soot on the window-sill, flakes of soot on the floor, smears of soot here, there, and everywhere. There was no doubt that the fellow who had handled the bag of soot was considerably sooty. But he was gone. Unless he could be tracked down by sight or scent of soot, it was difficult to see how he was to be spotted at all. And as Turkey Tuck, in those very moments, was in a bath-room, carefully cleaning off every trace of soot, it was certain that no trail of soot would lead to the fat Turkey.

"The fat ass!"

"The blithering bloater!"

"Blow him!"

Harry Compton and Co. came up to their study after tea—and looked round it in wrath and exasperation.

All Carcroft was thrilled by the amazing happening to the French master. Beaks were in solemn council about it. It was certain that no stone would be left unturned to discover the culprit—and that his fate would be extremely unenviable if he were discovered. But the chums of the Fourth were not bothering about all that. They had enough bother on hand, in the sooty state of their study.

"We've got to clean it up before prep!" said Bob. "I wish I'd given Turkey another kick."

"I wish I'd given him another dozen!" growled Compton.

"Look here, that fat ass Turkey ought to clean it up!" exclaimed Lee, wrathfully. "Where is he now?"

"If he's got any sense, he's getting himself clean!" said Bob. "Just a speck of soot would be enough for Roger's eagle eye. Let's get going—I've got some dusters here. By gum, if I ever catch Turkey in this study again, I'll burst him all over Carcroft."

There was no help for it, and the three juniors set to work to clean up sooty blacks which smothered nearly everything in the corner study. It was unpleasant—it was exasperating—and they simply yearned to boot the fat and fatuous Turkey the length of the Fourth-Form passage and back again. But the work was suddenly interrupted by a tap at the door, and three grubby and exasperated juniors looked round as it opened.

"Is that you, you blithering ass?" explained Bob. "Oh! Sorry, sir!" It was Roger Ducas who stepped into the study.

He stepped in—then he stopped dead! He stared at the grubby dusters in their hands—at the soot in the grate and the fender—and his face set like iron.

"I need not look further, I think!" said Mr. Ducas. "All of you, I conclude, were concerned in this." "In—in what, sir?" stammered Compton. "We—we—we're just cleaning up the study a bit—"

"I can see that!" said Roger, grimly. "I am sorry for this, Compton. I thought better of you. Some excuse might be made for some foolish unthinking boy—but you are captain of your form. Drake and Lee I shall deal with—but you will be sent to your head-master."

"But—but what for, sir?" exclaimed the bewildered captain of the Fourth. "What have I done?"

"At this moment," said Mr. Ducas, "every master in the school is visiting the studies of his form. As it seemed probable, indeed certain, that the soot thrown over Monsieur Pons was extracted from a study chimney, I considered it likely that some traces would be found in the study of the person or persons concerned in the outrage."

"Oh!" gasped the three. They began to understand.

"I hoped—indeed, I felt almost assured—that the culprit would not be found in my form!" said Mr. Ducas, sternly. "But what do I find here?"

"But—but—" stammered Bob helplessly.

"We—we never—!" mumbled Lee.

"Compton! It is obvious that soot has very recently been raked down from the chimney in this study. I find you cleaning up the traces of it. Obviously the soot thrown over Monsieur Pons was obtained here. You will not venture to deny it!" rapped Roger.

"No!" gasped Compton. "But—"

"We never—!" stammered Bob.

"I cannot believe that one of you perpetrated this outrage without the knowledge and connivance of the other two!" said Mr. Ducas. "That all three are equally concerned is clear from the fact that I find you all three engaged in removing the traces that might lead to discovery. You need say no more, Drake."

"But we didn't do it, sir!" exclaimed Lee, in utter dismay. "Some other fellow got the soot from this study—"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Ducas, decisively.

"That is the truth, sir," said Harry. "We found the fellow here and kicked him out."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Ducas, very dryly. "And who was he, Compton?"

Harry Compton did not answer that. His comrades were silent. Only too well they knew that that was, so to speak, a chicken that would not fight—unless they gave the name of the soot-collector. Any fellow, found in a sooty study, might have told such a tale—but he could hardly expect it to pass muster. The master of the Fourth was looking for a sooty study—and he had found one. That was enough—unless the Carcroft Co. gave away the fatuous Turkey. That they could not and would not do. They yearned and longed to boot Turkey Tuck all over Carcroft: but they were not giving him away to a "beak".

There was a dead silence in the study. The three hapless juniors exchanged dismayed looks—Roger Ducas's face grew grimmer and grimmer. The silence was suddenly broken.

"He, he! I got him all right, you chaps! He, he!"

Turkey Tuck rolled into the corner study. It was a newly swept and garnished Turkey—he looked cleaner than he had looked any day during the term. Not a trace of soot was there about Turkey—not on his fat hands, not on his podgy visage, not on his large ears or his untidy hair, not on his clothes—it was a spotless Turkey. A wide grin adorned Turkey's fat face—he was grinning from one extensive

ear to the other—indeed, his grin was so wide that it almost looked as if it might go round and meet at the back of his head. Turkey was in high feather—Turkey was bursting with glee—Turkey was triumphant—quite on top of the world. He rolled into the corner study grinning and chuckling—unaware, for the moment, that Roger Ducas was there!

"I got him all right!" trilled Turkey. "Right on the nut! He, he! You should have heard him howl, you fellows. I believe he was swearing in French—it sounded to me like swearing! I say—!"

Turkey broke off suddenly. He saw Roger!

He gave a gasp, like the last expiring squish of a soda syphon. He gazed at Roger. He goggled at him. His little round eyes almost popped out of his podgy face. Macbeth when he beheld the ghost of Banquo, Priam when he gazed at the dread figure that drew his curtains at dead of night, had nothing on Turkey Tuck at that moment. If Roger Ducas had been the grisly spectre of a form-master, he could not save horrified Turkey more.

"Ooooooooooh!" gasped Turkey. His fat brain swam.

"So it was you, Tuck, who threw the soot over Monsieur Pons from the window of the French classroom?"

"Oh! No! Nothing of the kind, sir!" gasped Turkey. "I—I was only—only joking, sir! I—I didn't mean that I got him, sir—I—I meant that I hadn't got him! I never went to the French classroom at all, sir—and I only went to fetch my French grammar. I never had any soot! I didn't get it from this study, sir, and—and those chaps never came in and caught me at it—d-d-did you, you fellows? I—I say, you stand by a chap, you know. You tell Mr. Ducas that I wasn't here when you came in and found me—"

"That will do, Tuck!" said Mr. Ducas, grimly; while Harry Compton and Co. stood silent.

Turkey Tuck trailed down the passage after his form-master, in the lowest possible spirits.

"Poor old Turkey!" sighed Bob.

A few minutes ago that Carcroft Co. had been longing to boot Turkey all round the school. Now they could not help sympathising with him. It was going to be tough for Turkey. In the Fourth-form master's study, Roger Ducas selected his stoutest case, and— But let us, as the novelists used to say, draw a veil!

THE END.