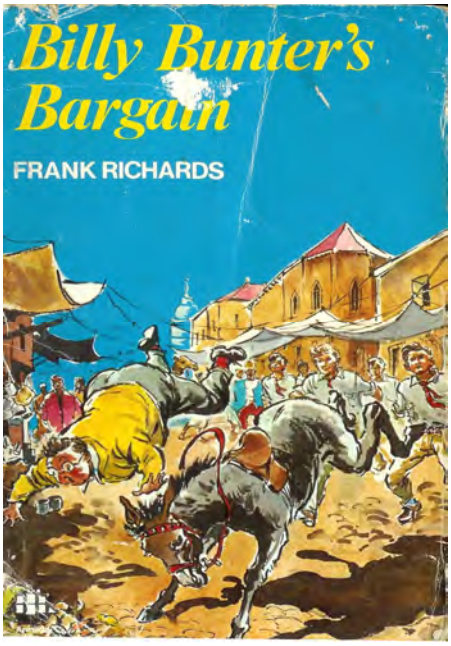

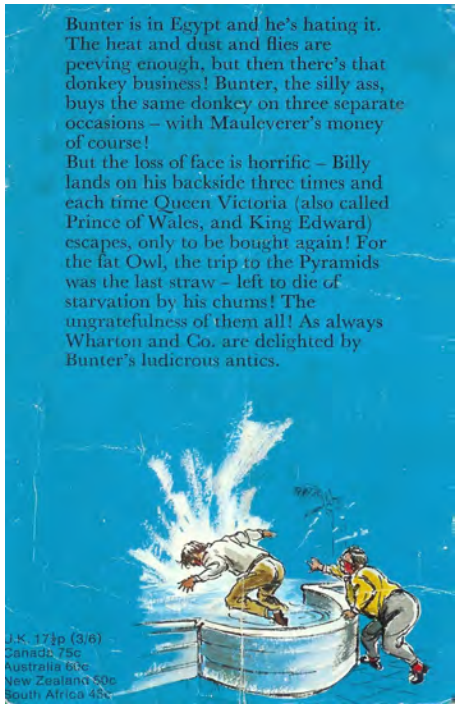

Billy Bunter's Bargain

Frank Richards

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CHAPTER ONE
CHEAP!

"DONKEY!"
"What?"
"Donkey!"
"You cheeky devil!" snorted Billy Bunter.
"Donkey! Donkey!"
Billy Bunter of the Greyfriars Remove blinked at the brown-faced man in the tattered djubbah and turban through his big spectacles, with a devastating blink.
He was angry and indignant.
It was hot in the streets of Cairo. Heat and dust and flies had already annoyed Billy Bunter. Of all the Greyfriars party who were "doing" Egypt, only Hurree Jamset Ram Singh really enjoyed grilling under the African sun. But Harry Wharton & Co. were merry and bright. Bunter, on the other hand, was peeved. He was still more peeved when this gentleman marched up to him and called him—as he supposed, at least—a donkey!
Bunter had often been called an ass at Greyfriars School. But he did not like being called a
donkey to boot. He gave the man a blink that ought to have withered him on the, spot.
Instead of being withered, however, the insulting devil only grinned, waved both his brown hands, and repeated:
"Yes, sar! Donkey! You—donkey!"
Harry Wharton & Co. were taking a walk in Cairo in the cool of the afternoon. But the "cool" of the afternoon was frightfully warm.
They had stopped at an Arab cafe for cooling liquid refreshment.
A bright-coloured awning stretched outside the cavernous-looking cafe sheltering them from the sun. On the "dekkas" under the awning, grave faced Egyptians and Arabs were seated cross-legged, sipping sherbet or smoking long pipes. Lord Mauleverer, and the Famous Five of the Remove, sat in a row on one of the wooden benches, and Hassan, the dragoman, was talking in Arabic to the cafe-keeper, with a sound like the cracking of nuts, ordering cooling drinks for his "lordly gentlemen."
Billy Bunter stood with Lord Mauleverer's best Panama hat pushed back from his streaming brow, mopping that streaming brow with one of Mauly's best handkerchiefs, when the Egyptian came up to him.
"Donkey, sar!" said the native. "Donkey! Yes! Donkey!"
There was a chuckle from the Famous Five, and a sleepy grin from Lord Mauleverer.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yawned Bob Cherry. "I didn't know you had any friends in Cairo, Bunter."
"I haven't!" snapped Bunter.
"That man seems to know you!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at, in the man's blinking, beastly cheek!" growled Bunter. "I've never seen the brown image before. What does he mean by calling me a donkey?"
"He guessed it in one!" said Frank Nugent.
"Well, really, it rather leaps to the eye, doesn't it?" remarked Johnny Bull. "After all, what else could he call you, if he calls you anything?"
"Donkey, sar! Yes! Donkey!"

“You sheer off, you cheeky native!” snapped Bunter. “I’ll jolly well call a bobby, see?”
Billy Bunter glared at the brown man. The brown man grinned and gesticulated. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him rather curiously. Had the native had a donkey with him, they would have supposed that he was a donkey-boy seeking a customer. But he had no donkey with him. Neither did he look like a donkey-boy. He looked like one of the innumerable native merchants who had been trying to sell things to the juniors ever since they had set foot in Egypt.
“Donkey, sar! You!” said the brown man. “Yes! Beautiful donkey!”
“He’s got it wrong this time,” said Harry Wharton gravely. “The noun’s right—but not the adjective!”
“Oh, really, Wharton—”
“Fine big donkey, sar. You buy!” further elucidated the native merchant. “Me Abdullah, sar! Sell a donkey! Yes.”
“Oh!” ejaculated Bunter.
Abdullah’s English was evidently limited. But he had made his meaning clear at last. He was not calling Bunter a donkey! He was trying to sell him a donkey!
The variety of articles offered for sale in the streets and shops of Cairo was infinite. Natives had tried to sell the Greyfriars party all sorts of things, from “antiquities” made in Germany, to razors and hairbrushes, and even hairpins. But this was the first time that a donkey had been offered them.
Like all visitors to Cairo, the juniors rode on donkey-back. But they had never thought of buying donkeys. What the brown man supposed a schoolboy could want to buy a donkey for, was a mystery. Still, it was no more mysterious than the belief of native merchants that they were prepared to buy amber beads, powder-puffs, live doves, boxes of cosmetics, Turkish pipes, hairpins, razor-blades and the other surprising things that had been urged upon them.
“The silly ass!” grunted Bunter. “What the thump does he think I want to buy a donkey for? Silly ass!”
“Oh! No, sar!” exclaimed Abdullah. “No silly ass, sar—very clever ass, sar—fine clever good donkey, sar!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You see a donkey!” said Abdullah persuasively.
“I show you a donkey! Fifty piastres, sar! Yes.”
“Oh, my hat!” said Bob. “That’s a cheap line in donkeys! Let’s see—a piastre is about three pence. That’s about ten bob for the donkey. Never heard of a donkey going for ten bob.”
“We’d take that for Bunter!” remarked Johnny Bull thoughtfully. “But any other donkey would be cheap at the price”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Yah!” snorted Bunter.
“Better close on that offer,” chuckled Nugent. “It may turn out to be a long-lost brother.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Oh, don’t be a funny idiot!” said Bunter. “I say, you fellows, I think I’ll look at that donkey. I dare say we can put it up at the hotel. It sounds to me like a bargain.”
“Fathead!” said Harry Wharton. “If the man offers a donkey for fifty piastres, that means that it can’t be worth more than fifteen.”
“The worthfulness is probably not terrific,” agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
“I’m rather a judge of horseflesh,” said Bunter. “We keep a lot of hunters at Bunter

Court, you know. I can tell whether it's a good donkey or not. You can lend me fifty piastres, Mauly."
"Yaas!" yawned Lord Mauleverer.
"You see a donkey, sar!" urged Abdullah. "Fine splendid donkey, sar! You take two step, you see a donkey." He pointed along the street. "You come, sar! Yes! Donkey, sar! Donkey!"
He was pointing to a shady stone archway next to the cafe. Apparently the splendid donkey, was there, waiting for a sale.
"I say, you fellows, let's step along and see it," said Bunter.
"Oh, all right!"
The juniors rose from the bench and followed Abdullah from under the awning. Outside the awning was a blaze of burning sunshine. But they passed quickly into the cool shade of the stone archway. Billy Bunter was rather eager on the track of a bargain. The other fellows were grinning. They had no doubt that if the brown man was selling a donkey for ten shillings, it was a donkey that had seen better days, and seen the last of them long ago. Still, Bunter was not going to lose on the transaction, anyhow, as he was going to borrow the necessary piastres from Lord Mauleverer.
Abdullah waved them into the shady archway, with gesticulations of both brown hands.
"Donkey, sar! You see a donkey!"
"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in astonishment.
There was a donkey tethered in the archway. But it was not the knock-kneed, broken-down relic of a donkey that the juniors expected to see. It was a big, powerful, handsome donkey; as fine a donkey as they had seen in Cairo. What its value might be they did not know; but it must have been worth hundreds of piastres at least.
Bunter blinked at it.
With all his experience of the hunters kept at Bunter Court, the fat Owl of the Remove did not know much about horseflesh, and he knew still less about donkey-flesh. But even Bunter could see that that donkey was a terrific bargain at fifty piastres. His eyes gleamed behind his big spectacles. He blinked at the brown merchant.
"Fifty piastres?"
"Yes, sar."
"I'll buy him!"

CHAPTER TWO
PARTED PALS!

"FATHEAD!"
The Famous Five made that remark all at once.
The donkey was a bargain. There was no doubt about that. He was worth at least ten times as much as Abdullah asked for him. It was so extraordinary for a Cairo merchant to offer any article below its value that the juniors could not help suspecting that there was a "catch" in it somewhere. Still, they had to admit that they could not see where the catch came in. There was the donkey, and there was Abdullah, his owner, ready and eager to sell. Nevertheless, that donkey, though evidently a valuable animal, was likely to prove rather a white elephant to the Greyfriars party. Donkeys had to be accommodated, fed, and looked after; and in a day or two the party were going up the Nile by water, and a donkey, howsoever valuable, would be superfluous on board a dahabiyeh.
"I say, you fellows—"

“Chuck it, Bunter,” said Wharton. “You don’t want to buy a donkey, What are you going to do with it?”
“Well, one of you fellows can lead it back to the hotel—”
“Oh, my hat!”
“And they’ll look after it there, if they’re paid. Mauly can arrange that, as he’s paying the exes on this trip.”
“Oh gad!”
“It’s a topping donkey!” said Bunter. “Worth hundreds of piastres! Can’t make out why the man’s selling him so cheap! But I jolly well know I’m buying him. Why, I could sell him again and make a big profit if I liked!”
Billy Bunter patted the donkey’s head. The animal looked round at him, opened his capacious mouth, and remarked:
“Hee-haw!”
“He knows Bunter!” said Bob. “He’s talking to him in his own language already!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You buy a donkey, sar?” exclaimed Abdullah eagerly. “Fine donkey, sar, you see, Yes! Fifty piastres—cheap price!”
“What’s his name?” asked Bunter.
All donkeys in Cairo have names; sometimes the most extraordinary names. The juniors had ridden animals that rejoiced in such names as Queen Victoria, Lord Kitchener, Duke of York, and William Shakespeare.
Abdullah grinned at the fat Owl.
“You English, sar, or American?” he asked. “To the English his name is Prince of Wales. To American gentleman his name is George Washington. Yes.”
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared the juniors.
“Well, I shall call him Quelch, after our Form master at Greyfriars,” said Bunter. “He, he, he! I’m buying him! Lend me fifty piastres, Mauly.”
Hassan, the dragoman, came along from the cafe. Hassan, gorgeous in his red tarboosh with a gold tassel, his gold-braided tunic, his sky-blue trousers, his crimson sash, and his yellow boots, looked rather like a tropical butterfly beside the donkey merchant.
“My lordly gentlemen, the sherbet is prepare!” exclaimed Hassan. “What you do here with a donkey, noble sars?”
“I’m buying that donkey,” said Bunter.
Abdullah’s dark eyes fixed uneasily and suspiciously on Hassan. Hassan’s fixed suspiciously on Abdullah. The two natives were mutually suspicious and distrustful. Hassan, like a true dragoman cheated his masters to the fullest possible extent. But it was his dragoman duty to see that others did not cheat them.
Only “backsheesh” slipped into his own greasy palm would have induced Hassan to let any other rogue rob his lordly gentlemen!
The dragoman addressed Abdullah in Arabic. The donkey dealer answered in the same tongue. Hassan replied, and the donkey dealer rejoined, and the volleys of Arabic went back and forth, not a single word comprehended by the Greyfriars fellows.
The argument sounded emphatic, and Harry Wharton & Co., though they did not understand the language, had learned enough of Egyptian ways to guess the purport. They had little doubt that Hassan was stipulating for “backsheesh” for himself as a condition of allowing the donkey to be sold to one of his lordly gentlemen. As they were thirsty, and the sherbet ready waiting next door at the cafe, the chums of the Remove were not disposed to wait for the end of the argument.

“Tell you what; you men,” yawned Lord Mauleverer, “let’s cut—what?”
“The cutfulness is the proper caper!” agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
“I say, you fellows—”
“Come on, fathead!”
“I’m buying that donkey!” hooted Bunter. “Lend me fifty piastres, Mauly. I’ll settle up next term at Greyfriars. I believe I mentioned that I was expecting a postal order—”
“Oh gad!” said Lord Mauleverer. “Here you are, old fat bean. But don’t buy the donkey. Two of you would be really too much, you know.”
“Yah!” retorted Bunter.
Lord Mauleverer ambled away, the Famous Five following him, leaving Bunter to conclude his bargain, as he was evidently deaf to argument. Hassan remained with him, no doubt having a bargain to conclude also. If Hassan had allowed one of the party to buy anything without getting his “whack” from the seller, Hassan would probably have wept with grief.
The juniors sat down under the awning to sip their sherbet, which was grateful and comforting on a blazing hot Egyptian day. As they sipped they looked with interested eyes at the ever-moving crowd in the narrow, hot, somewhat scented street.
Water-sellers passed them—plenty of water-sellers of all sorts, for in Cairo on a hot day there was a great sale for that commodity. A big man dressed in red carried a huge jar slung to his belt, from which he sold liquorice water in a blue china bowl. Sherbet-sellers with great, green glass bottles; bread merchants with loaves and cakes made like rings and strung on sticks; pastry-cooks with baskets of sticky pastries balanced on their heads, at which sometimes a hawk came swooping down from nowhere—all had interest for the schoolboys from the far-off island in the North Sea.
“Hee-haw!”
Their attention was turned to Bunter again as the fat junior rejoined them, leading the big, handsome donkey by a halter. George Washington, or the Prince of Wales, whichever he was, seemed quite content with his new master. Billy Bunter was more than content. He had made a tremendous bargain in “Quelch,” as he had newly named the donkey, and there was no doubt that the handsome animal could have been sold again for a great deal more than fifty piastres, even by a stranger in the land. The Owl of the Remove felt that he had reason to be satisfied.
“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here come the twins!” said Bob Cherry.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Hold him, one of you fellows, while I have some sherbet,” said Bunter. “I’m jolly thirsty! Here, hold him, Hassan.”
“Yes, sar!” said the dragoman.
Hassan was smiling, as usual, and the juniors had no doubt that he had “touched” Mr. Abdullah for backsheesh.
But Mr. Abdullah’s dealings were really perplexing. Anywhere in Cairo he could have sold that donkey for hundreds of piastres, yet he had sold it to Bunter for fifty, and out of the fifty he certainly had had to give Hassan at least ten. It really was mysterious, and the juniors felt more than ever that there was a catch in it somewhere.
Hassan held the donkey while Bunter absorbed sherbet and devoured sticky cakes. Bunter, apparently, was prepared to spend the. rest of the afternoon at the Arab cafe, eating and drinking. But the other fellows had not come there to watch the fat Owl’s gastronomic performances. They rose to their feet to move on. Hassan was conducting them to view the celebrated Mosque of El-Azhar, one of the sights of Cairo.
“I say, you fellows, what about chucking that mosque and getting back to the hotel?”

asked Bunter. “I can’t lead my donkey all over Cairo, you know.”
“You should have thought of that before you bought him, fathead,” answered Harry Wharton. “Come on, Mauly!”
“Well, look here. Let Hassan take him to the hotel,” said Bunter. “We don’t really want Hassan. I can tell you all about Cairo.”
“My lordly gentlemen—” began Hassan. “Well, one of you fellows lead him back to the hotel,” said Bunter. “You can cut out the mosque, and I’ll tell you all about it when I get back.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Look here, that donkey’s got to be taken home!” exclaimed Bunter warmly. “The question is, who’s leading him home for me?”
“The whofulness is terrific!” chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
“I say, you fellows—”
“My noble gentlemen will follow in my humble footsteps,” said Hassan. “We go see great Mosque of El-Azhar, wonderful monument of Fatimid period—yes! Built in a tenth century—”
Harry Wharton & Co. followed the dragoman. Billy Bunter stood holding the halter of the donkey, and glaring after them through his big spectacles.
“I say, you fellows—” he bawled.
“Oh, come on, Bunter!”
“What about this donkey?” bawled Bunter.
“Oh, bother your relations!”
“Beast!”
Evidently, if anybody was going to lead Quelch, it was going to be Quelch’s owner. Billy Bunter snorted with indignation. As he had bought Quelch, and Quelch was his property, Bunter might have been expected to take charge of him—by anybody but Bunter. But the fat Owl did not want the trouble. Trouble for anybody else was a lesser matter—in fact, a trifle light as air! But as Hassan and the juniors walked on Bunter realised that he had to lead the donkey himself, or else leave him where he was—so he led him.
But the difficulty was solved very quickly, and in a way that was rather unexpected. Not more than a hundred yards from the donkey-dealer’s archway Quelch suddenly slipped his shaggy head and his long ears out of the halter, and took to his heels. Bunter, pulling him on by the halter, suddenly found the rope loose in his hand, and blinked round in surprise—in time to catch a farewell glimpse of Quelch’s heels as he vanished in the crowded street.
“Oh crikey!” gasped Bunter.
Quelch was gone!
“I say, you fellows!” Bunter rushed after the juniors. “I say, that donkey’s bolted! After him.”
There was a chortle from the Greyfriars fellows. They could not see themselves chasing a runaway donkey through the hot and crowded streets of Cairo—not quite! Quelch was gone from Bunter’s gaze like a beautiful dream—and he was going to stay gone, so to speak, so far as the Famous Five were concerned.
“I say, you fellows! Deaf?” hooted Bunter. “I say, get after that donkey! Catch him! After him! I’ll wait for you here!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You silly chumps, what are you cackling at?” roared Bunter. “I gave ten bob for that donkey! Now he’s gone! Think I’m going to lose that donkey, you cackling chumps?”

“Well, get after him, old fat bean!” chuckled Bob Cherry.
“I can’t run after him in this heat, you silly ass!”
“And can we?” bawled Johnny Bull.
“Yes, old chap! Don’t be a slacker, you know! I say, you fellows, will you stop?” howled Bunter. “The donkey’s gone the other way—”
“The stopfulness will not be terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter.”
“Beasts!” roared Bunter.
The Greyfriars party walked cheerily on their way, and Billy Bunter rolled after them, snorting with indignation. And at the other end of the street a grinning brown gentleman of the name of Abdullah slipped a halter over Quelch’s neck and led him away—with a view to selling him at a remarkably low price to some other tourist with an eye for a bargain in donkeys!

CHAPTER THREE
DANGER AHEAD!

“KALIZELOS!” breathed Harry Wharton.
“What—”
“Look—in the mirror!”
The juniors had stopped before a shop in a narrow street, where the projecting balconies above almost met in the middle, turning the street into a shady tunnel.
In the shop, many articles were displayed, among them a large steel mirror, in which were reflected the faces of the schoolboys as they looked, and the passing figures in the street.
An olive-skinned face was reflected in the mirror—the face of a man who stood at a little distance behind the Greyfriars party.
It was a face they knew. The olive face of Kalizelos, the Greek dealer, the enemy who had dogged their footsteps all the days that they had spent in the land of the Pharaohs.
“My hat!” murmured Bob Cherry.
“Watching us, the rotter!” muttered Johnny Bull. “I dare say he’s been following us, looking for a chance at Mauly and the scarab.”
The Famous Five did not look round at the Greek. Evidently he was unaware that they had spotted him by catching his reflection in the mirror in the Cairo shop. Whenever they had seen him before Kalizelos had been dressed like a European; but now he wore the kaftan and turban of a native Egyptian, obviously for disguise. His olive face was dark enough to pass for an Egyptian’s.
That he was following and watching them there was no doubt. Neither was there any doubt of his object.
The Golden Scarab—the sacred scarabeus of A-Menah—was what the Greek was after; and that scarab was in Lord Mauleverer’s pocket.
Once a rich dealer in the city of Cairo, Kalizelos was now a fugitive, hunted by the Egyptian police. Twice Lord Mauleverer had narrowly escaped with his life at the hands of the Greek.
According to ancient tradition, that golden beetle was a clue to the treasure of Osiris, the wonderful diamond famed in the reign of Rameses the Second. The juniors did not believe it—it seemed a fable to them—but, amazing as it was, the Greek was prepared to risk his liberty and his life to obtain possession of the scarab, which proved that he, at least, was a firm believer in the tradition. The risks he had taken, and the losses he had sustained, showed how fierce was his desire to possess the mysterious scarab, how firmly he believed that it would lead him to an immense fortune.

Even now, in the crowded Cairo street, the Greek was running risks—as he shadowed the Greyfriars juniors. Doubtless, in his native dress, they would not have noticed him in passing; but looking at his face reflected in the mirror under their eyes, they had a good view of him, and they knew him at once, in spite of the kaftan and the turban.
"Don't give him the tip!" said Harry in a low voice. "He doesn't know we've spotted him, We may get a chance of bagging him and handing him over to a Cairo bobby."
"Good egg!" murmured Nugent.
"I say, you fellows—"
"Shut up, Bunter!"
"I say, what are you blinking at in that silly shop?" asked Bunter peevishly. "There's a pastry cook's next door. They've got some of those ripping cakes! Lend me twenty piastres—I can't see Mauly."
"Go and eat coke!"
"Beast!"
The olive-skinned face disappeared from the mirror. The juniors saw the reflection of the figure in the turban and the blue kaftan turn away. Then they turned from the shop and glanced after it. They could not see Kalizelos' face now—his back was turned—but they knew his figure in the crowd, and they followed on. He was not a dozen paces from them, and they glanced round, hoping to see an Egyptian policeman. Billy Bunter blinked after them.
"I say, you fellows—" he howled.
But the Famous Five did not heed Bunter. It was a chance of getting hold of the Greek and removing the danger that had haunted Lord Mauleverer ever since Kalizelos had discovered that he was the possessor of the Scarab of A-Menah. The man in the blue kaftan moved on, evidently unconscious that he, the watcher, was now watched; and the Famous Five drew closer and closer to him, with the intention of collaring him suddenly before he could dodge away in the crowd. They were hardly a yard behind the Greek when he turned suddenly into an arched doorway and disappeared from their eyes.
"My lordly gentlemen—" Hassan was hurrying after the juniors.
Harry Wharton & Co. stopped at the arched doorway. There was no door, and in the dusky interior they could see dimly a flight of stone steps. Harry turned to the dragoman.
"What place is this, Hassan?" he asked.
Hassan made a grimace.
"It is not suitable for my noble lords to enter," he said. "It is cheap place where poor persons lodge in great numbers. Once long ago it was great house of Mamelukes; now it go to pot, as you say in your noble language."
Three or four people came out of the arched doorway, and their looks bore out Hassan's statement; a half-clad negro, an Armenian pedlar, and a couple of beggars, who promptly demanded "backsheesh" as they saw the English faces. Hassan drove them off with a wave of his stick.
"My lordly masters, this is not a place to linger," said the dragoman. "Also and likewise, my magnificent gentlemen have not yet beheld the wonderful Mosque of El-Azhar——"
"Never mind the mosque now," said Harry Wharton.
Hassan opened his eyes wide.
"Oh, sar! That so wonderful mosque, which is builded in a tenth century, in the reign of the Caliph El-Muizz——"
"Yes, yes; never mind now! Look here, Hassan, we've just seen Kalizelos, that Greek

scoundrel, and he has gone into this house."
"And we're after him," said Bob Cherry. "We're jolly well going to bag him. The mosque can wait."
"The bagfulness is going to be terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous Hassan," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
"I say, you fellows—"
"For goodness' sake shut up, Bunter!"
"If you won't lend me twenty piastres, you stingy beasts, tell me where Mauly is! Mauly will lend an old pal a few piastres!" said Bunter warmly. "I can tell you, they've got some simply ripping cakes in that pastry cook's, and I can't see Mauly anywhere.
Harry Wharton started. In their keenness on "bagging" the Greek, the Famous Five had not noticed that Lord Mauleverer was not with them. They had supposed that he was at hand, probably looking into one of the dusky shops in the narrow street. But if Bunter could not find him, evidently he was not at hand.
"Hassan, where's Mauleverer?" exclaimed Wharton.
"I was of belief that noble lord was with my majestic gentlemen," said Hassan, staring round. "But perhaps he go entering into a shop."
The juniors exchanged a quick glance. It was possible that Lord Mauleverer had stepped into one of the cave-like, dusky shops out of sight. But they did not think so.
"I say, you fellows, I've been hunting for Mauly, and I can't see him. Look here, I can do with ten piastres—"
"If Kalizelos has got him—" breathed Johnny Bull.
Wharton set his lips. It seemed incredible that Mauleverer could have been seized and whipped out of sight in the crowded street. Yet, on the other hand, the swarm of jostling natives and foreigners might have given the kidnappers an opportunity, screening their movements; and it came into
Wharton's mind that that was why Kalizelos had been watching them—watching to see that they did not intervene.
"Come on!" said Harry abruptly. "We're going in here; we're going to find that scoundrel Kalizelos—"
"My noble lords—" exclaimed Hassan.
"Come with us, Hassan," said Harry. "We've got to find Kalizelos. You can find him for us; he's in the house somewhere."
"To hear is to obey, my magnificent lord," answered the dragoman, but he looked very dubious.
Hassan entered the arched doorway, and the juniors followed him up a flight of dirty and evil- smelling stone steps. Natives were coming up or going down every minute; and the dragoman stopped to speak to several of them in Arabic. He turned to the anxious juniors with a smiling face.
"I hear of a Greek who stay in this beggarly house, sars," he said. "Perhaps he is Kalizelos. Yes, I think! We go to see him, and if he give a trouble, I, Hassan, will bash him, as you say in your noble language, with stick! Hassan is your dragoman. You trust Hassan."
And the juniors followed the dragoman up the evil-smelling stairs, their hearts beating fast.

CHAPTER FOUR
PIPPED AT THE POST!

LORD MAULEVERER blinked.
He hardly knew what had happened.
While his companions were looking into the shops, Mauly had stepped into a shadowy archway out of the sun that streamed down into the narrow street, and there he fanned himself with his hat while he waited for the other fellows to come on.
Mauly was thinking of the heat and the flies, so far as his noble intellect was working at all. Certainly he was not thinking of danger. He was taken utterly by surprise when a dusty, evil-smelling sack was suddenly dropped over his head, and he was whipped off his feet and rushed up a staircase.
He heard a door open and shut.
Then the sack was jerked from his head, and the schoolboy earl of Greyfriars blinked round him dizzily.
He was in a bare, dingy, almost unfurnished room, with a narrow window that looked out on what had once been a garden, but was now rubbish-heaps. The door by which he had entered was closed, and with his back to it stood an Arab with an evil, grinning face and eyes like a hawk.

A sack was dropped over Mauleverer's head and he was ferreted away!

Another Arab, with the scar of a knife-cut across his dark cheek, was in the room, and he was grinning, too. Mauleverer blinked at them.
He knew both by sight. The hawk-faced man was Yussef, who had guarded him in the lost tomb near the Pyramids, a week ago. The scarred man was the pickpocket who had shadowed him in the
catacombs of Alexandria, two or three weeks since. Both of them, he knew, were rascals in the pay of Kalizelos, the Greek. It dawned on Mauleverer that he had fallen into the hands of his enemies,
suddenly, unexpectedly, at a moment when he had not dreamed of danger.
"Oh gad!" gasped Mauly. He brushed the dust from his face—the sack had been very dusty. 'Oh
gad!"
"You will be silent, Faringhee," said Yussef.
"One cry out, sar, and Hamza will knock you over your head."
The scarred Arab, Hamza, grinned and lifted a stick. Lord Mauleverer eyed it and decided not to

call out.
“Well, you’ve got me, old beans,” said his lordship calmly. “I suppose you’ve been watchin’
for a chance like this.”
Yussef chuckled.
“Yes, sar, we watch you step into a doorway’ he grinned. “You choose to step into a doorway of
house where we are. Bismillah!”
“Oh gad!” said Mauleverer.
He realised that the archway into which he had stepped for shade from the sun was the entrance of the building where these thieves of Cairo had their den. By sheer chance he had walked fairly into their hands.
His face set. The Golden Scarab was in his pocket. Mauleverer wished now that he had left it locked up in the manager’s safe at the hotel.
He had taken it from that secure place to show it to Hilmi Maroudi, the Egyptian gentleman with whom the Greyfriars fellows had made friends. With his usual carelessness he had slipped it into his pocket afterwards and left it there. His captors, doubtless, were not aware of it, but a search would reveal it soon enough.
The two ruffians did not touch him, however. They seemed to be waiting, and Mauleverer could guess for whom they were waiting. He had no doubt that the Greek was at hand.
He was right. In a few minutes there came three taps at the door; evidently a known signal, for Yussef stepped away from it at once and allowed it to open from without. It was Kalizelos, the Greek, who entered, closing the door after him, and Yussef again put his brawny back to it.
Mauleverer stared at the Greek. For the moment he did not recognise him in the blue kaftan and turban. But he knew the olive-skinned, handsome face as he looked at it.
“We meet again, my lord!” said the Greek.
“Yaas,” assented Mauleverer. “Can’t say I’m glad to see you, old bean. It would be stretchin’ politeness altogether too far.”
“I have failed many times, my lord,” said Kalizelos. “But the goddess of fortune has favoured me today; or perhaps it is Fate, as the Moslems would say—Kismet! Since I have become a fugitive, my lord, hunted in my own city by the police, this wretched building, which was once a palace of the Mamelukes, has been my hiding-place. It was obliging of you, my lord, to step into my humble doorway and place yourself in my hands.” The Greek grinned.
“I’m an obligin’ chap,” yawned Lord Mauleverer. “And I may as well remind you that my friends are quite close at hand, Mr. Kalizelos.”
Kalizelos laughed.
“Quite; but your friends cannot see through stone walls,” he answered. “I have been watching your friends, prepared to intervene if they should have followed you. But your friends are very
interested in gazing into a shop, my lord, and I have left them so engaged. I do not think they will guess that you have disappeared into this house. Do you think they will, my lord?”
Mauleverer did not answer. Obviously Harry Wharton & Co. could guess nothing of the sort.
“Let us talk business, Lord Mauleverer,” said the Greek. “At the Pyramids you fell into my hands,
but the scarab had been left in a safe place. Now you are in my hands again, and you

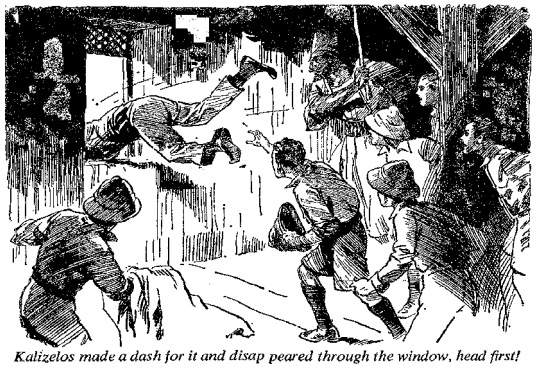
will not escape as before. Where is the Golden Scarab of A-Menah?"
"Find out!" said Lord Mauleverer.
The Greek spoke in the native language to Hamza. The scarred Arab stepped towards Lord Mauleverer. Probably Kalizelos did not expect to find the scarab on the schoolboy earl, but he was not the man to leave anything to chance. Mauleverer was to be searched before other steps were taken. At that moment the schoolboy earl repented bitterly of his carelessness. But it was too late for that to be of any use. He clenched his hands as the scarred man stepped to him.
Kalizelos' face lighted. That instinctive movement of resistance enlightened him; the scarab was on the schoolboy.
"Fortune has favoured me more than I supposed, my lord!" he grinned, "You have the scarab in your pocket! Me explettete! Eine dunation!" He dropped into his own language for a moment, and then went on in English: "Is it possible? My lord, I thank you from my heart; and you also may be thankful, for when the scarab is in my hands you will see me no more. I have lost my shop and my business in Cairo. But when I have sold the diamond of A-Menah, the Eye of Osiris, for a quarter of a million pounds, I shall make my peace. Oh, yes! With backsheesh one can do anything! Give me the scarab!"
He rapped out a word in Arabic, and the scarred man grasped Lord Mauleverer. It was futile to resist the brawny ruffian, and in that powerful grasp Mauleverer had to yield. The brown hands ran through his pockets, and there was a sudden gleam of gold in the shaft of sunlight from the narrow window.
The Greek gave a shout of delight. He bounded forward and grasped the golden beetle from the Arab's hand.
His black eyes danced.
The golden beetle lay in his olive palm. The prize he had so long sought was in his hand at last!
And even as that shout of triumph broke from the Greek, and the two Arabs, with curious eyes, drew nearer to stare at the gleaming golden beetle, the door of the room burst open, and Hassan, the dragoman, rushed in, with the Famous Five of Greyfriars at his heels.

CHAPTER FIVE
TURNING THE TABLES!

CRASH!
Hassan's heavy stick struck as the Greek whirled round, and the blow caught Kalizelos fairly on the head.
He gave a gasping cry and lurched over, falling heavily, and the Golden Scarab shot from his hand and dropped in a corner of the dingy room.
"Go for 'em!" roared Bob Cherry. "Back up, Greyfriars!"
Yussef and Hamza jumped back from the rush of the juniors. Hamza dodged round the wall and darted out at the open doorway almost in a twinkling. His fleeing footsteps died away on the dingy stairs. Yussef flashed a knife from under his djubbah.
The dragoman flourished his stick.
But Yussef was not thinking of fighting. The game was up, and he knew it; the dragoman had only to call for help if he wanted it. Yussef brandished the knife to

clear a way of escape, and the juniors, unarmed, had to jump back from the slashing, keen blade. Barely escaping a blow from Hassan's stick, the hawk-faced Arab darted out of the room and fled after his comrade.
Kalizelos lay where he had fallen, half-stunned.
"My lordly gentlemen, we have found our noble lord and rascally persons who lay hands on him!" exclaimed Hassan. "Yes! Hassan is your dragoman! You trust Hassan!"
"Mauly, old man—"
"Glad to see you fellows, by gad!" said Lord Mauleverer. "The jolly old Greek would have had the scarab this time, and no mistake!" His lordship lounged across to the corner where the golden beetle had fallen and picked it up. "This dashed old insect has had a narrow escape—what?"
"And we've got the Greek!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "Never mind the Arabs; they don't matter! We've got Kalizelos!"
"The gotfulness is terrific!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.
The Greek raised himself on his elbow, still dazed from the blow, and his jetty eyes glittered at the juniors.
In the very moment of triumph he had been defeated.
How the schoolboys had found their way to that room in the rabbit warren of a house was an utter mystery to him. But they were there, and he was a beaten man. His dusky hand slid under his kaftan and grasped a hidden weapon, and there was murder in his glittering eyes. Yussef and Hamza had fled promptly enough. But the Greek was desperate; even with the Cairo police at the door, he would not have yielded up the scarab without a struggle. From under the folds of the blue kaftan an automatic flashed out. But even as it came into sight Harry Wharton kicked it from his hand. It crashed on the floor, and Bob Cherry promptly caught it up.
"Collar him!" shouted Bob.
"Bag the rotter!" panted Johnny Bull.
The Greek bounded up. He made a spring towards the door, and Hassan leaped in the way with brandished stick. The chums of Greyfriars grasped at him on all sides, grasping the loose kaftan and dragging him down.
Kalizelos struggled furiously.
Five to one as they were, he was like a tiger in the hands of the Famous Five. They went to the floor in a scrambling, struggling heap, and then Kalizelos tore loose, leaving the long-flowing kaftan in the hands of the schoolboys. Hassan was rushing on him with uplifted stick, but the blow missed by an inch as the Greek bounded back. A second more, and he had plunged headlong through the narrow window.
"Collar him!"
"Oh, my hat!"
Harry Wharton & Co. scrambled to their feet, the empty kaftan in their hands. Kalizelos was vanishing, headfirst, through the narrow window. Crash came Hassan's stick, and it struck the leg of the Greek as he went. Then he was gone.
"Inshallah!" gasped Hassan.
There was a crash below.
"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.
He stared down from the window.
Twenty feet below an evil-smelling rubbish heap rotted in the sun. From amid rotten vegetables and putrid bones, dust, and ashes, the Greek was struggling to his feet. He gained his feet, glared up at the faces in the window, and darted away and vanished in an instant into a dark and noisome alley.

“Gone!” said Bob. He whistled. “He might have broken his neck! No loss if he had! But he’s
gone!”



Kalizelos made a dash for it and disap peared through the window, head first!

“The brute’s got a nerve!” said Nugent. “Blessed if I should like to take a header from this window! But it was that or chokey!”
“Well, he’s gone,” said Harry. “But you’ve got the scarab all right, Mauly.”
“Yaas.”
“All serene, then!”
“I rather fancy that sportsman must be cracked,” said Mauleverer. “He’s takin’ a fearful lot of risks to get hold of this jolly old beetle! I don’t see it myself.”
The juniors looked at the scarab in Mauly’s hand.
The golden beetle, with the name and title of A-Menah inscribed on it in the picture-writing of ancient Egypt, was an interesting curio, all the more because it was known to be three thousand years old. But to the eyes of the schoolboys, at least, it was nothing more than that.
It seemed incredible to them that there could reside in the little golden object any power to lead its possessor to the discovery of the Eye of Osiris, the once-famous diamond of the reign of Rameses the Second. Yet the cool, cunning Greek believed it, and Kalizelos was a clear-headed, successful business man—anything but “cracked,” as his lordship put it. The whole thing was a mystery to the chums of Greyfriars.
Hassan, the dragoman, eyed the Golden Scarab with curious eyes. It was evident that he knew it by sight. Many pictures of that famous scarab, with its inscription in picture-writing, were in existence.
“It is the Scarab of A-Menah,” said Hassan. “That noble person was a great general of Rameses the Second, honourable sars. Ignorant persons believe that there is a magic in the scarab to lead to a treasure.” Hassan shrugged his shoulders. “It is one fable; what you call piffle in your noble English language—what you call tommy-rot! Yes! I, Hassan, am a civilised Arab. I do not believe these ancient tales, sars. I am too civilised to believe anything, my lordly gentlemen.”
“I say, you fellows”—Billy Bunter’s spectacles gleamed in the doorway—” I say, I’ve found you, you silly asses! What the thump are you up to here? Buzzing off and leaving a fellow! Oh, here you are, Mauly! I’ve been looking for you everywhere, old chap! Lend me twenty piastres, old fellow!”
“Lordly gentlemen, let us proceed to see a mosque!” said Hassan. “This is not suitable place for my noble sars to linger!”
The Greyfriars fellows went down the dingy stairs. They turned to the right on reaching the street, which was the way to the Mosque of El-Azhar. Billy Bunter’s

voice was raised in indignant expostulation. The way to the pastry-cook's was to the left. Bunter was more interested in pastry-cooks than in mosques.
"I say, you fellows—"
"Come on, fatty!"
"I say, they've got some ripping cakes—almonds on top—" gasped Bunter. "Simply topping!
Never mind that silly old mosque—let's go into the pastry-cooks and have a feed! See? I'll stand the feed—you needn't worry about that! You lend me some piastres, Mauly—"
But deaf ears were turned on Bunter. Hassan and his flock marched on, and Billy Bunter followed them, grunting and grousing, and the pastry-cook's shop and its delights were left behind.

CHAPTER SIX
A TIP FOR BUNTER!

SIR REGINALD BROOKE jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and fixed it, and the eye,
on William George Bunter.
It was the following afternoon. That day the Greyfriars party were to make a call on Mr. Hilmi Maroudi, their Egyptian friend, at his house in Cairo. Billy Bunter had told the other fellows that he was not specially keen on visiting the old boy. Still, he was not going to be left behind; moreover, tedious as Mr. Maroudi was, in Bunter's lofty estimation, it was certain that there would be refreshments, and that the refreshments would be ample and good.
That consideration weighed with Bunter very much. Indeed, there was no doubt that Bunter would have been willing to pay a friendly visit to a cannibal chief of Central Africa, if he had been sure that the grub would be good and ample.
The Greyfriars fellows were ready to start; and Mr. Maroudi had sent a big car to collect them. But there was grim disapproval in the frigid eye that Mauly's uncle fixed on William George Bunter.
Mr. Maroudi was a wealthy gentleman, and a very estimable gentleman, in the baronet's opinion; and all the party—excepting Bunter—had dressed themselves very nicely for the visit. Bunter hadn't! At Greyfriars School, Billy Bunter was not infrequently called over the coals by Mr. Quelch, his Form master, for slovenliness. More than once had Billy Bunter been sent out of the Form-room to wash his hands or put on a cleaner collar. But on vacation there was no gimlet-eyed Quelch to see that Bunter did not slack in such matters.
As a matter of taste, Bunter had never liked washing. Extravagant in many things, he exercised great economy in soap; and thrift in hot water. And if a fellow couldn't go easy on washing in the school holidays, Bunter would have liked to know what holidays were for.
"I say, you fellows, I'm ready," said Bunter, blinking down from the balcony at the waiting car. "Is that the fellow's car? Not a bad turn-out— pretty nearly as good as the Rolls at home, in fact.
I say—"
"Bunter!" said Sir Reginald Brooke, in a deep voice.
"Eh?" Bunter blinked round.
"Have you washed today?"
"Wha-a-at?"

“Bunter washed the day we broke-up at Greyfriars,” explained Bob Cherry. “He’s making it last over the vac!”
“Oh, really, Cherry—”
“Bunter! There is something sticky on your face,” said Sir Reginald.
“Oh, that’s all right!” said Bunter. “Only jam!”
“Your collar is extremely soiled.”
“Oh, really, sir—”
“Go, once, and make yourself clean and tidy,” said Sir Reginald. “Otherwise, I must leave you here.”
Billy Bunter blinked at the stiff old gentleman in speechless indignation. Bunter really had washed that morning.. Even Bunter washed of a morning. But in a hot climate—hot and dusty—a fellow who was scoffing sticky things all day long really needed more than one wash. Bunter’s shining morning face grew grubbier and grubbier through the day, till by bed-time he might almost have been taken for a native. Putting in an extra wash because he was going to call on a bore seemed quite absurd to Billy Bunter; and he could barely restrain his natural desire to tell Sir Reginald Brooke what he thought of him.
“Go at once!” said Sir Reginald.
Bunter, suppressing his wrath and indignation, went. Bob Cherry winked at his comrades, and they followed Bunter.
Billy Bunter could regard Mr. Maroudi as a bore if he liked; but Harry Wharton & Co. had a great liking and respect for the Egyptian gentleman. The visit to Mr. Maroudi’s house was, in their opinion, a rather important matter; and on such an important occasion they considered that Bunter ought to wash. And, as Bunter hated that kind of exertion with a deep and abiding hatred, they were prepared to lend him any necessary help.
“I say, you fellows, pretty thick, ain’t it?” asked Billy Bunter, with a snort, on the stairs. “Making a lot of fuss over this! I shan’t stand much more cheek from that man Brooke! Making out that a fellow’s face is dirty, you know! It’s only jam and dust and some orange-juice and, perhaps, a bit of Turkish Delight! I’m clean, I hope!”
“Oh, my hat!” murmured Nugent. “He’s got jam and dust and orange-juice and Turkish Delight plastered over his chivvy; and he hopes he’s clean!”
“Hope springs infernal in the human chest, as the esteemed poet remarks,” observed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
“Well, I’m jolly well not going to wash!” said Bunter. “I’ll give my face a dab! Might as well be at Greyfriars, with Quelch snorting at a chap, if that interfering old ass is going to send a fellow up to wash! Jevver hear of such cheek!”
Each of the juniors had a room with a bath-room attached, in the big European hotel. Billy Bunter’s bathroom never claimed much of his time. He did not intend to let it claim much now. But Bob Cherry kindly turned on the hot water for him, putting the plug in the bath.
“No need to plug the bath, old man,” said Bunter. “Let it run! I shan’t be a minute!”
Bob turned on the cold water, also.
“What’s that for!” asked Bunter.
“You, old chap!”
“I don’t want it.”
“Well, you need it, at any rate!
“Yah!”
Water from both taps streamed into the bath. Billy Bunter blinked at the grinning five. If these fellows fancied that Bunter was going to have a bath, these fellows were very

much mistaken, in Billy Bunter's opinion.
The fat Owl dipped a sponge in the running water, and gave his face a dab. He could not venture to go down, with the jam, dust, orange-juice, and Turkish Delight still in evidence. But a dab with the sponge, in Bunter's opinion, was enough.
"Where's the towel?" he asked. "Gimme the towel!"
"My hat! Are you finished?" asked Johnny Bull.
"Certainly! Isn't the jam gone? I don't need so much washing as you fellows do," explained Bunter. "I'm not dirty like you chaps, you know."
"Make a good job of it, Bunter," urged Bob.
"Give your ears a turn! Remember how it improved them when you washed them last term!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"And your neck!" said Harry Wharton. "Go it, Bunter!"
"I remember Bunter washed his neck when he was a fag in the Second Form," remarked Nugent. "Fellows hardly knew him afterwards."
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh, really, Nugent—"
Bunter towelled his face, which had been slightly wetted by the sponge. His wash, apparently, was over. The Famous Five gazed at him. Bunter seemed to believe that he had finished. Harry Wharton & Co., on the other hand, were of opinion that he had hardly started.
"Is that the lot?" ejaculated Wharton.
"The lotfulness is not terrific!"
"Oh, don't jaw!" said Bunter peevishly. "If I've got to stand cheek from that old ass Brooke, I'm not standing cheek from you fellows, and I can tell you so. You can turn off those taps, Bob Cherry— you're filling the bath for nothing."
"Tumble in, old fat bean."
"The esteemed bath is the proper caper, my idiotic Bunter," urged the Nabob of Bhanipur.
Bunter's fat lip curled.
"You fools seem to think that I want as much washing as yourselves," he sneered.
"Well, I don't! I'm going down."
"The bath's full, old bean," said Bob Cherry persuasively.
"You can have it if you like," jeered Bunter. "I dare say you need it. Thank goodness I'm not dirty like some fellows."
"Not going in?" asked Bob.
"No!" roared Bunter.
"Your mistake—you are!"
"Look here—leggo—oh, my hat! Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "Yoop! Gerrrroooooogh! Gug-gug gug!"
Splash!
Quite a water-spout rose from the bath as Billy Bunter tipped in. He disappeared for a moment and came up spluttering wildly.
"Urrrgh! Yug-yug-gug! Goooogh!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Woooooch!' spluttered the fat Owl. "Ooooooch! Groooogh! Beasts! Oh crikey! Gug-gug-gug-gug!"
"Better strip," chuckled Bob. "You'll really have to change, old chap—you're quite wet! Wash while you're about it!"
"The wetfulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter."

“Yurrrrrggh ! Beasts! Gug-gug-groogh!”
“We’ll wait for you downstairs,” said Bob. “Don’t mind us, Bunter! We don’t often have to wait for you while you wash.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Beast!” roared Bunter.
The Famous Five ‘departed, chortling, leaving the infuriated Owl wallowing in the bath. As Bunter had tipped in with his clothes on, there was no doubt that he would have to change. The other fellows had to wait for him; but, as Bob said, they seldom or never had to wait for Bunter while he washed. It was really worth while waiting, on such a very unique occasion. With smiling faces the Famous Five rejoined Sir Reginald Brooke and Lord Mauleverer on the balcony.
“Mind waiting a few minutes, sir?” asked Bob. “Bunter’s decided to take a bath! In fact, I gave him the tip.”
The juniors chuckled. The “tip” Bob had given Bunter was a tip over the side of the bath; but it was unnecessary to mention that detail.
It was a quarter of an hour before Billy Bunter reappeared. His fat face was full of wrath; but in other respects, there was no doubt that Bunter was much the better for the tip Bob had given him. Sir Reginald turned his eyeglass upon him and approved.
“That is better, Bunter,” he said.
“Yah!” snorted Bunter.
“‘What?”
“I—I—I mean, all right! I’m ready!”
Sir Reginald gave him a glare.
“Come with me, my boys,” he said. And the juniors followed the tall and stiff old gentleman down the steps to the waiting car. Billy Bunter gave the chums of the Remove a ferocious blink.
“I’ll make you beasts sit up for that!” he hissed, “and as for that cheeky old fossil—”
Sir Reginald Brooke glanced round.
“Did you speak, Bunter?”
“Oh! No!” gasped Bunter. “Not a word! Never opened my lips! I only said what a—a-—a nice old gentleman you are, sir!”
Grunt from Sir Reginald. And the Greyfriars party packed in the big car and started for the house
of Hilmi Maroudi.

CHAPTER SEVEN
TIT FOR TAT!

“THAT it?” grunted Billy Bunter.
The car stopped at the house of Hilmi Maroudi, near the Eskebiyeh Gardens of Cairo. Billy Bunter blinked at the building disparagingly. Little was to be seen, but high walls and barred windows, with a great’ arched doorway. Mauly’s uncle had visited the Egyptian gentleman several times, while the juniors were sight-seeing with their dragoman; but this was the first visit of Harry Wharton & Co. to the house, and they were rather curious to see the interior.
Hassan had told them much of the vast wealth and great power of Mr. Maroudi; and they were aware that the dragoman regarded him with fear and awe; though they were unaware that Hilmi Maroudi had intervened when the Greek had bribed the “Faithful Hassan” to betray his lordly gentlemen. Since that intervention, the faithful Hassan had been indeed faithful, for no bribe that Kalizelos could have offered would have

tempted him to incur the anger of Maroudi.
“Don’t think much of the show,” said Bunter. “From what Hassan has been saying, I expected to see something like Bunter Court.”
Whereat the juniors chuckled.
But the house of Maroudi, like most Eastern dwellings, was more attractive in the interior than in the exterior.
The Greyfriars fellows entered at the great arched doorway, on one side of which the doorkeeper sat cross-legged on his raised seat.
Within was a great entrance hall; which, as in most of the native mansions of Cairo, had a turning, to prevent curious eyes from looking in from the street—privacy being the great desideratum in Mohammedan countries.
Beyond, there was a vast courtyard, in which was an artificial lake, surrounded by trees and flowers and shady walks, the lake fed by a spraying fountain that flashed and sparkled in the sunshine.
Bowing dusky servants, in flowing garments, greeted the visitors, and conducted them onward to a great recess at the side of the court, the ceiling of which was adorned with gorgeous arabesques picked out with gold.
Here Mr. Hilmi Maroudi awaited his visitors.
Mr. Maroudi wore European costume, with the exception of the national headgear, the tarboosh. But he was cross-legged in the native way—which the juniors would have supposed to be rather difficult in trousers; but no doubt Mr. Maroudi was used to it. He was on his feet with the swiftness of a Jack-in-the-box as his guests were ushered in.
“Salamn aleikum!” said Mr. Maroudi gravely, of salaaming to the visitors quite gracefully, in spite the plumpness and the European trousers, and then he translated at once: “Peace be with you!”
“And with you be health, and God’s mercy and blessing.” answered Sir Reginald Brooke, in English—which in Arabic would have been “U’aleikum essalaam warahmet Allah wabarakatuh.
“Naharak said!” added Maroudi, with a smile to the juniors. “Thy days be happy, my little friends.”
To which the polite answer would have been “Naharak said wemubarak,” “Thy day be happy and blessed!” That answer, however, the juniors did not make, as their knowledge of Arabic was limited to the word “backsheesh’ —a word which certainly was of no use on the present occasion.
The greeting of visitors is a ceremonious business in the East. “How do you do?” is extended into many flowing sentences. The host displays a deep concern for the health of his visitor—so far as words go, at all events; and the visitor replies with long-winded inquiries concerning the health of the host. But Mr. Maroudi had adopted many European ways, along with his European clothes, and he cut the greetings short. Rather to the relief of the juniors, he had carried his European manners and customs so far as to have chairs, and they were not required to sit on prayer-mats, like Mr. Maroudi himself. Sitting cross-legged on rugs would have been rather a trial! Indeed, it would probably have been impossible for Billy Bunter, at least, without the sacrifice of a good many of his buttons.
The plump Egyptian gentleman, who spoke English perfectly, made himself very agreeable to the juniors, whom he evidently liked. The fact that he had saved Harry Wharton from going overboard, in the squall on the Mediterranean, seemed to have caused him to take a special liking to the captain of the Greyfriars Remove. Even to Billy Bunter he was kind and courteous; though doubtless he had his own opinion of

that fat and fatuous youth, which politeness made him keep strictly to himself.
After a little conversation, Mr. Maroudi suggested that the schoolboys might like to look round on their own, a suggestion with which the juniors heartily agreed. Much as they liked the good-hearted Egyptian gentleman, they did not want to sit and manufacture conversation. Billy Bunter was keen for the refreshments to begin; but the refreshments were not yet due. The juniors walked out into the great courtyard, leaving Sir Reginald Brooke in conversation with Mr. Maroudi.
"Topping place," said Bob Cherry, as they strolled round the lake in the centre of the courtyard,
in which the fountain played. "This is what Mr. Maroudi called his 'poor house,' when we met
him on the steamer. More like a jolly old palace out of the Arabian Nights."
"The topfulness is terrific," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
"I say, you fellows—"
"Is it up to Bunter Court, after all, old fat bean?" chuckled Bob Cherry.
"Well, hardly," said Bunter. "Still, it's a decent show! But look here—is that a goldfish?"
"Where?" asked Bob, joining the fat Owl at the edge of the mosaic pavement that bordered the lake.
There was a sly gleam in Billy Bunter's little round eyes, behind his big round spectacles.
Bob had already forgotten Bunter's enforced bath. Billy Bunter hadn't! A bath, from Billy
Bunter's point of view, was one of those things which it is more blessed to give than to receive.
Billy Bunter was on the warpath. Thoughts of vengeance were in his fat and podgy mind.
Bob Cherry peered at the sunlit water, on which water-lilies floated, in search of the supposed goldfish.
As he leaned over the edge, Billy Bunter gave him a sudden and unexpected shove in the back.
Splash!
"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.
"Oooooogh!" spluttered Bob.

Bunter gave Bob a gleeful shove and into the fountain he went.

Before he knew what was happening he was in the water. It was not more than three feet deep; but Bob, taken quite by surprise, went right under. He sprawled headlong in the pond, and as he scrambled up, the falling stream of the fountain swamped over him and gave him a shower-bath.
"You silly owl!" roared Harry Wharton, running to the edge of the pond, as Bob Cherry spluttered and scrambled and struggled in the water. "You potty porpoise! What the thump— Oh—ow— what— Oh, my hat! Ooogh!"
Splash!
As Wharton reached out a hand to Bob, the fat Owl gave him a shove behind, and he went in headlong.
"He, he, he!"
"Oooogh! Grooogh! Oh crikey! Ooooch!"
"He, he, he!"
"You fat lunatic!" shrieked Bob Cherry, standing up in the lake, drenched and streaming, "I'll— I'll burst you all over Cairo! I—I'll———"
"He, he, he! How do you like it yourself?" chortled Bunter.
Wharton and Bob Cherry came splashing to the side of the lake. Nugent and Hurree Singh and Johnny Bull ran to help them out, and Lord Mauleverer ambled up to lend them a hand.
Billy Bunter looked on and chortled. This, in Bunter's opinion, was tit for tat! But he ceased to chortle as Bob Cherry came scrambling out, drenched and dripping and infuriated. The expression on Bob's face was rather alarming.
Giving a fellow a much-needed bath at the hotel was one thing; tipping a fellow into a pond when he was on a visit was quite another. Bob looked as if he was going to make that distinction clear to William George Bunter, in a very drastic manner.
"Wait a tick, you fat maniac!" gasped Bob. "Just you wait a tick, and if I don't burst you into a million small pieces—"
Bunter did not wait a tick. He did not wait half a tick. Before Bob was fairly out of the pond, Bunter departed—on his highest gear.
"Come back, you fat villain!" roared Bob, as he crawled out, in a pool of water, streaming from head to foot.
"Beast!"
That reply floated back as the fat Owl vanished among the palms and shrubs and flower-beds.
Bob Cherry made a rush in pursuit. Lord Mauleverer, grinning, caught him by the arm.
"Hold on, old bean!" exclaimed Mauly.
"I'll burst him!" roared Bob.
"My esteemed chum—" exclaimed the Nabob of Bhanipur.
"I'll spiflicate him!"
"The spiflication is the proper caper, but not in the absurd mansion of the respected and ridiculous Maroudi !" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
"Bunter will keep, old bean!" grinned Mauleverer. "You don't want to astonish our hosts by bursting him all over Maroudi's house, old chap."
"I—I—I——"
Bob Cherry realised that it was not a time or place for giving Bunter his due. The fat Owl merited "spiflication," but the house of Mr. Maroudi was not the proper place for that hectic process.
"Let the fat idiot rip!" said Harry. "We'll kick him all round the hotel when we get back! Oh, my hat! I'm wet!"

“The wetfulness is terrific!”
“Here comes some of the jolly old retainers,” said Lord Mauleverer.
Two or, three Nubian servants came running up. They bowed, and spoke incomprehensible words; but the meaning was clear, and Wharton and Bob followed them into the house, to dry themselves— leaving a watery trail behind them as they went.
The other fellows continued to stroll round the sunny court, excepting Billy Bunter. That fat and fatuous youth considered it judicious to keep out of sight for the present, and he was not likely to be seen again until refreshments were due.

CHAPTER EIGHT
IN DESPERATE HANDS!

HILMI MAROUDI, sitting cross-legged on a Persian prayer-rug, smoked his hookah. Sir Reginald Brooke, in a long cane chair, smoked a cigar. They were talking of farming in the Fayyum, that fertile province of Egypt where the old baronet had an estate which adjoined Maroudi’s.
A silent-footed Nubian came in, and stood waiting for his master to give him permission to speak.
For some minutes Mr. Maroudi did not seem to have observed him; then, politely excusing himself to Sir Reginald, he turned his eyes on the servant.
The Nubian spoke in Arabic, and Maroudi, with all his impassive Oriental calm, gave a slight start. Apparently the Nubian’s communication had startled him. He answered the man in Arabic, and the servant went out as silently as he had entered.
Sir Reginald, who had been many times in Egypt, and had a smattering of Arabic, was aware that the Nubian had announced that a caller had come, and had been shown into the “mandarah,” or guest-room, inside the house. And, to his amazement, he had caught the name of Kalizelos.
He looked very curiously at the Egyptian over his cigar. Kalizelos, the Greek, was charged with kidnapping and attempted murder, and was a fugitive from the police. It was amazing if he had ventured to show himself in public, and in the house of a friend of the Greyfriars party.
“My good friend,” said Maroudi gravely, “Kalizelos, the Greek, has the audacity to come here and demand speech with me. If you will pardon me for leaving you for a few minutes, I will see the man.”
“By all means,” said Sir Reginald.
Maroudi rose from the prayer-rug, salaamed gravely to his guest, and left the colonnade by an inner door.
He traversed several passages, and entered the “mandarah”—a great apartment with many doors, one side of which was open to the court, with a perforated stone balustrade.
Kalizelos the Greek was there, alone.
He was seated on a low divan, but he rose to his feet as the Egyptian entered, and salaamed in the Eastern style—a greeting which Hilmi Maroudi did not return.
Kalizelos was dressed like a native, as the juniors had seen him the day before.
“Es-salamn aleikum!” he said as he salaamed.
“I have no greeting for you, Konstantinos Kalizelos!” said the Egyptian coldly. “Is my house a village of the Baggara, that a pariah dog dares to enter?”
“I come in peace, O Maroudi !” said the Greek, speaking in Arabic.
“Between us there is no peace, as you are the enemy of my friends,” answered the

Egyptian. “And the police of Cairo are seeking you.”
The Greek shrugged his shoulders.
“But you will not call the police, Maroudi, for I have come trusting to your faith,” he said. “And a good Moslem dare not violate the laws of hospitality.”
“That is true,” said Maroudi. “In my house you are safe, and you know it, or you would not have come. But I will have you driven from my door like a pariah dog, with blows of the kourbash.”
“Let me speak first,” said the Greek.
“Speak!”
“What I have to say is secret.” Kalizelos glanced round the spacious mandarah, to which there were many doorways, some of them covered only by latticed hangings.
“No ears will listen here,” said Maroudi scornfully. “But be brief.”
“I would speak of the Scarab of A-Menah,” said Kalizelos, still in Arabic. “But for you, O Maroudi, this scarab would now be in my hands. I bribed the young lord’s dragoman to betray him, and it was your intervention that forced Hassan to return to his faith, and save him from my hands. For some reason you have befriended these foreigners, who would be at my mercy in this land of Egypt, but for you.”
“It is true!” said Maroudi. “And my protection will shield them so long as they remain in my country. Son of a dog, you bribed my servant, Ali, to rob them on the steamer, and the life of one boy was endangered. It was the will of Allah that I should save him. Ali has been punished by many blows, and sent to my plantations on the Upper Nile. And because peril came to these English lords through my servant, I am their protector.”
“You are rich, and you are powerful, Maroudi,” said the Greek. “Against you I am powerless. But listen! In an ancient papyrus, written by the scribe of A-Menah, three thousand years ago, I have learned the secret of the Golden Scarab!”
“This papyrus is known only to me. It came into my hands by chance, in my shop in Cairo; it lay long neglected among many other papyri. But when I chanced to read it, Maroudi, I read the secret of the Scarab of A-Menah! And then I knew that the tradition was true, and that the possessor of the Golden Scarab holds in his hands the finding of the Eye of Osiris. Shall I tell you this secret?”
“That is as you choose!” answered Maroudi; but there was a glimmer of keen curiosity in his eyes.
“Listen again, O Maroudi! The great diamond, the Eye of Osiris, was famed in the reign of Rameses the Second, when the general A-Menah brought it back from the land of the Hittites, after the battle of Kadesh. It was known to be worth the ransom of many kings. In English money of the present day the value is a quarter of a million pounds.”
“So I have heard it said!”
“Even you, Maroudi, rich as you are, will not despise such a sum,” said the Greek. “As I have said, against you I am powerless. That is why I am here. Give these foreigners into my hands; withdraw your protection from them, that is all I ask. Let Hassan, the dragoman, learn that he need not fear your anger and vengeance, and he will betray them into my hands. They shall not be harmed—I seek only the scarab. And the half of its value shall be yours! Rich as you are, is not this worth your while, Maroudi ?”
“Dog, and the son of a dog!” said the Egyptian, his eyes gleaming at Kalizelos. “If I were as poor as the beggars who ask alms at the doors of the mosques, do you think that all the treasures of the Pharaohs would tempt me to betray my friends?”
“Those are but words!” said the Greek coolly. “Listen, Maroudi! I have lost much in

seeking the Golden Scarab. From a rich merchant of Cairo I have become a hunted fugitive. Only with a great fortune can I make my peace and pay the backsheesh that will turn from me the talons of the law. I am a desperate man now, Maroudi. Leave these foreigners to me, and take the half of the treasure to which the scarab will guide me."
"It is enough!" said Maroudi. "I will call my servants to drive you from my door!"
The Greek's eyes glittered.
"I have said that against you I am powerless, Maroudi," he said. "But there is too much at stake for me to retreat. There are many daggers and many desperate hands in this city, and even the powerful Maroudi is only mortal. If you should be taken to the Prophet, O Maroudi, who will protect these foreigners?"
Maroudi's lip curled.
"For that threat you shall receive blows from the kourbash when you have passed my door," he said. "Within my house no hand may be raised against you, as you came trusting to my faith. But in the street outside my walls you shall be beaten away like a jackal. Have you more to say, O son of pariah dogs, before I call my Nubians?"
The Greek gritted his teeth.
Maroudi stretched his hand towards a gong, to strike it, to summon the Nubians. But his dusky hand did not reach the gong.
With the spring of a tiger the supple Greek was upon him.
So swift, so sudden, was the spring—like that of a wild beast of the jungle—that the Egyptian was taken utterly by surprise. Not for a moment had it crossed his mind that Kalizelos would dare to attack him in his own mansion, with a hundred devoted servants within call.
The plump Egyptian went down on a rug, the Greek over him. A sinewy knee was planted on him, and two strong, sinuous hands gripped his throat.
Maroudi's starting eyes stared up at the Greek. Plump as he was, the Egyptian was no weakling; but the Greek was twice as strong, and he was desperate and ruthless. The grip of his sinuous fingers
choked Maroudi into silence. His black eyes blazed down at the suffocating man.
"Die, then!" hissed Kalizelos. "Die in your own palace, dog of a Moslem! The scarab shall be mine,
in spite of you! When you have gone to your place, Moslem hound, the foreigners will be at my mercy!
Powerful as you are, O Hilmi Maroudi, who shall save you now?"
The Egyptian could not speak. He struggled, but his struggles were futile. No servant would come to the mandarah without his order, and the gong was out of his reach.
The fierce grip on his throat hardened and tightened, the savage face glaring down at him floated before his eyes, and Hilmi Maroudi knew that it was death, and that in a few moments more he would be crossing the bridge of a hairsbreadth to the paradise of the Prophet!

CHAPTER NINE
IN THE NICK OF TIME!

"THE fat idiot!"
"The podgy, puffing, potty porpoise!"
"Bother him!"
"Blow him!"
Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were both speaking at once, and both speaking of

William George Bunter.
A bowing Nubian showed the two drenched and dripping juniors into a room in the house of Maroudi, where there was a green marble bath sunk in the mosaic floor, bath-robes and towels in abundance.
With a grave black face—though probably the Nubian was inwardly smiling—he helped them to remove their drenched clothes, and handed them towels.
Another Nubian brought fresh garments to the room, evidently for the juniors to change into while their clothes were drying.
The garments were, of course, native; even in Mr. Maroudi's wealthy and well-appointed residence there was no supply of European clothes of boyish size at a moment's notice.
The juniors were glad, however, to get dry clothes to put on, though it was a little odd to think of dressing in djubbahs.
The Nubians carried away the wet clothes, making signs to indicate that the same were to be dried; and one of them pointed to a brass gong, evidently meaning that it was to be struck if anything more was wanted.
Then the schoolboys were left alone to towel themselves down; which they were very glad to do.
While they towelled they told one another what they thought of Billy Bunter.
Dry at last, they put on the Egyptian clothes, and grinned at their reflection in a spacious mirror.
"Two jolly Egyptians, except for the jolly old complexions," said Bob Cherry, laughing. "I say, these silky things are jolly comfy and cool in hot weather. I shall be glad to change back, though."
"Same here," agreed Wharton. "I wonder how long they will be drying our clobber! Can't stick indoors all the time. Let's get out."
"So long as we can change before we leave, it's all right," said Bob. "Come on!"
He opened the door, and they left the bath-room. It did not seem necessary to sound the gong to call the Nubians to show them out. But, as a matter of fact, they found that it was not easy to pick their way in the vast building.
They went down a corridor, and turned into another, under the impression that they were heading for the courtyard; but, instead of arriving at the court, they found their way barred by a latticed doorway.
The corridor led to some apartment; and though it would have been easy to push the lattice aside and pass through, they halted.
In an Eastern house one could not be too careful. If the room beyond the latticed doorway was one of the public apartments, all was well; but if it was a private apartment, they naturally did not want to enter it.
"I fancy it's all right," murmured Bob, "I'm certain we're heading in the direction of the courtyard. This would be one of the rooms looking on it, I think."
"Better make sure, though," said Harry, in the same low tone. "I think we ought really to have sounded the gong for a servant to take us out. Perhaps we'd better go back—"
"Well, we don't want to butt into the wrong shop," grinned Bob. "But—"
He broke off.
There was a sound in the apartment beyond the latticed doorway. It was a faint, low, but startling sound—a choking gurgle!
The two juniors started, and exchanged looks.
"What—" breathed Wharton.
"What the thump!" muttered Bob. "Dash it all, it sounds' like somebody being strangled! What the jolly old thump have we dropped on?"

The juniors stood quite still for a moment.
They knew Mr. Maroudi as a polite and kind-hearted gentleman, who had been very civil and hospitable; but they knew, too, that the ways of the East were not the ways of the West. Life was cheap in the East; and they had heard of the bow-string! It was surely impossible that a dark Oriental deed was being done in the house of Maroudi; yet the sound from beyond the latticed doorway was undoubtedly, unmistakably that of some unhappy victim whose life was being choked out.
Wharton's face set.
"We're chipping in here, Bob, whatever it is," he said. "Come on!"
With a resolute hand Harry Wharton pulled the lattice aside, and stepped through the doorway, Bob at his heels.
The juniors found themselves in a vast apartment, with a lofty ceiling adorned with gilded arabesques, one side open to the courtyard, though screened by a high balustrade in graceful stonework. It was, if they had known it, the "mandarah," the guest-room of the mansion.
But they had no time for looking about them. They stared, with startled eyes, at the fearful scene that met them as they entered.
Stretched on his back on a prayer-rug was Hilmi Maroudi, and, bending over him, grasping his throat, and choking out his life, was Kalizelos, the Greek.
The sight was so astonishing that, for a brief second, they stood spellbound. Then they bounded forward.
"It's Kalizelos!" panted Wharton.
"Get hold of him!" gasped Bob.
Their grasp was on the Greek at once.
They dragged him backwards by main force, and the Greek sprawled over on his back on the stone floor.
Maroudi lay gasping.
He had been near to death—very near to death— and his eyes were bulging, his brain swimming, and he lay powerless, as he gulped in the life-giving air when the cruel grip was gone from his throat. He could not speak, or lend aid—but the juniors did not need aid.
Strong and supple as the Greek was, they had him down, and they kept him down. He struggled like a wild beast, and contrived to get his hand under his kaftan and draw a knife; but Wharton had hold of his wrist in a flash, and twisted it savagely till he dropped the weapon.
"You!" panted the Greek, his olive face convulsed with rage. For a moment he had taken the juniors, in their native garb, for attendants of Maroudi; but now he recognised them.
"You scoundrel!" said Wharton, between his teeth.
"Hold him!" panted Bob.
Fiercely the juniors grasped the writhing, struggling rascal. But they had their hands full with Kalizelos. He was like a tiger in their grasp.
The three of them rolled on the floor, struggling, grasping, clutching, panting for breath; the Greek striving to escape, the juniors striving desperately to hold him and keep him a prisoner.
Maroudi sat up dizzily.
He could not rise, but he reached his knees, and crawled to the gong. He struck it, and a deep, booming sound rang through the building.
One boom of the gong was enough. There was a soft patter of feet, and a tall Nubian entered.

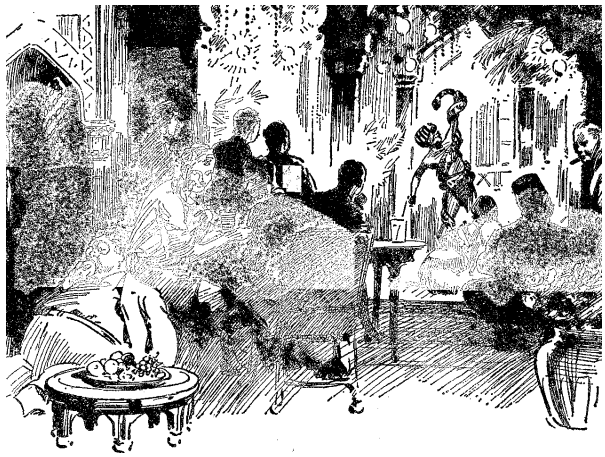
Maroudi panted a word in Arabic.
Instantly the Nubian's grasp was on Kalizelos. It was a much-needed relief to the Greyfriars fellows.
The powerful grasp of the Nubian finished the struggle. Kalizelos almost crumpled in it. He collapsed on his back, and a black, heavy knee was placed on his chest, pinning him down. One hand of the Nubian grasped him, the other jerked a dagger from some place of concealment under his loose garments, and the keen point was placed to the Greek's throat. The black man looked to his master for instructions, obviously prepared to drive the dagger home at a sign from Maroudi.
"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.
"Mr. Maroudi—" exclaimed Wharton.
To their relief, Maroudi made the Nubian a negative sign. Villain as the man was, it thrilled the juniors with horror to think of such summary justice executed under their eyes.
Maroudi smiled faintly at the juniors. He struck the gong again, twice, and four or five black servants entered. Maroudi spoke to them in Arabic, and the Greek, in the grasp of many hands, was led away.

CHAPTER TEN
BUNTER IS SATISFIED!

HILMI MAROUDI stood silent for several minutes, his hand to his throat. Wharton and
Cherry waited. But in a few minutes the Egyptian had recovered his accustomed calm.
"Marshallah!" he said. "My little friends, it was the will of Allah that you should save me from that son of ten thousand dogs. Already I could see the houris beckoning."
"Thank goodness we butted in, sir!" said Bob. "They've got Kalizelos safe at last!"
"He will go from this house to prison," said Maroudi. "Had he not lifted his hand against me, I should have had no choice but to allow him to depart in peace, for it is written that even the evildoer shall be safe in the house of his enemy. But since he has sought my life, he goes where justice awaits him. My servants will hand him over to the police of Cairo."
He paused, and eyed the juniors, in their strange garb, curiously.
"But how came you to enter this room so fortunately?" he asked, and when Wharton explained,
the Egyptian nodded gravely.
"Kismet!" he said. "It is Fate! On the steamer, my little friend, I saved your life, and it was written
that you should save me. All things are written in the book of Fate. Allah is great!"
Hilmi Maroudi and the juniors left the mandarah, the Egyptian returning to Sir Reginald Brooke, once more as calm and impassive as if nothing out of the ordinary had occurred, and the juniors rejoining their friends in the gardens in the courtyard. Their faces were grave, and the faces of
their chums became grave also when they learned what had happened.
"Well, that brute Kalizelos is safe now, at any rate," said Johnny Bull. "He won't be following us
when we go up the Nile!"
"That's rather a relief," said Nugent.
"But—if that fat idiot, Bunter, hadn't ducked us!" said Bob. "If we hadn't butted in when we

did— Mr. Maroudi thinks it was all written in the jolly old book of Fate! But it was jolly lucky,
anyhow! I think we had better not kick Bunter, after all." He glanced round. "Where is the fat
frump now?"
"Keeping out of sight," grinned Nugent. "He's sure to turn up for grub. Hallo, there goes the jolly old gong! I suppose that means tiffin! Time for that fat villain to show up."
"I say, you fellows—"
The juniors looked round. That fat and familiar voice came from the other side of a high bank of glowing scarlet geraniums. Billy Bunter evidently had heard the gong, and guessed that it meant tiffin. "Oh, there you are, you fat freak!" said Bob Cherry.
Bunter peered warily at the juniors over the tall geraniums.
"I say, you fellows, no larks," he said. "I hope you're not going to kick up a row here, Bob Cherry! There's such a thing as manners, you know! You're not in the Remove passage now."
"I've a jolly good mind—"
"You asked for that ducking," said Bunter, watching warily from the safe side of the geranium bank, and ready to bolt. "It served you jolly well right! I'm willing, to let the whole matter drop. I'd give you a jolly good licking, only I've got some manners, if you haven't. Old Maroudi's a silly fool, of course, but I'm not going to kick up a shindy here. So——"
"It's all right, you fat freak! You can come out of cover," said Harry Wharton.
"Is it pax?" asked Bunter cautiously.
"Yes, ass!" grunted Bob.
"Oh, all right, then! I say, you fellows, you look rather guys in that rig," grinned Bunter, as he came down the bank and joined the chums of the Remove. "I suppose you were rather wet, what? He, he, he!" Bunter blinked curiously at the juniors.
"What are you all looking so jolly solemn about?
Don't you think we shall get good grub here? "
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Billy Bunter's question had the effect of banishing the gravity of the Famous Five.
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said the fat Owl, puzzled. "Nothing else to worry about, is there? My idea is that the grub will be good! Old Maroudi's jolly rich, and it stands to reason that he will stand us something decent. Don't you fellows think so?"
"Fathead!"
"Well, I think so," said Bunter. "I fancy the grub will be good, and plenty of it, too. Nothing to worry about that I can see. Come on! That gong means grub, and it's rather bad manners to be late. You fellows don't think much of manners, I know; but when you're with me, you ought to play up, you know."
"Oh gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.
Billy Bunter rolled off, with a look of happy anticipation on his fat face. He had little, if any, doubt that the grub would be good. He had given this important matter considerable thought, and was fairly satisfied that the grub would be all right. And if the grub was all right, everything, of course, was all right!
Bowing Nubians conducted the juniors into the house.
The ceremonial washing of hands before a meal struck Bunter as unnecessary and absurd; but it struck the other fellows as a custom that William George Bunter would do well to adopt in his native land when he returned there.

After this, the Greyfriars fellows were shown into a vast apartment, where they found Maroudi and Sir Reginald, and where refreshments were produced.
Billy Bunter found that his anticipations were well founded. The grub was good. Innumerable native servants waited on the juniors, and sweet strains of music came from a band of musicians on a dais at the upper end of the room.
In the centre of the room was a fountain, with a golden ball balancing in its jet of water. The floor was of a rich, glowing mosaic. The ceiling, lofty and domed, was covered with gold
arabesques. Palms in tubs nodded against the walls, intermingled with banks of gorgeous flowers of every hue.
The musicians, in decorative native costumes, were half hidden by banks of flowers, through which glimpses could be had of their gorgeous garb and dark faces and strange instruments.
To the schoolboys it was all rather like a scene from the "Arabian Nights." It was indeed a sight the chums of Greyfriars would remember for a long, long time.
Only Bunter gave no attention to his surroundings.



The Greedy Owl turned his back on the snake charmer and carried on munching

Bunter's attention was concentrated on the provender.
The fat Owl was soon happy and shiny and sticky.
Mr. Maroudi, showing no sign of the late terrible experience he had been through, was smiling and urbane, kind and attentive to all the juniors, not excepting Bunter. Evidently the Egyptian gentleman was pleased to see the bright and cheery faces of the schoolboys round him, and his usually grave face beamed with smiles.
It was rather a lengthy meal, though by no means too lengthy for Bunter. Indeed, when it was over and the guests moved into the gardens in the court, Billy Bunter went with both hands full of sticky Turkish sweetmeats, and a supply of nuts stuffed with marzipan in his pockets—a proceeding to which Mr. Maroudi was politely blind.
In the falling dusk of the evening coloured lamps glimmered over the gardens, the lake, and the fountain, turning the scene almost into fairyland.
Music came from some hidden spot among the palms, and a troupe of dancers appeared from nowhere and performed a graceful Oriental dance for the entertainment of Mr. Maroudi's guests.
Mr. Maroudi smoked his hookah, and Sir Reginald a cigar, while the juniors looked on at the dancing, and Billy Bunter slowly and laboriously, but determinedly,

travelled through his supply of sweetmeats and stuffed nuts.
After the dancers came a snake-charmer, whose weird exploits held the juniors spellbound. Then came a native conjurer, who made a palm-tree grow from a tub almost in the twinkling of an eye, who threw flowers into the air which—apparently, at least—never came down again, and who produced live, hissing snakes from an orange.
When the time came to depart, and the big car rolled away with the Greyfriars party, even Billy Bunter acknowledged that it had been a jolly good time.
"It was very fortunate," said Sir Reginald in the car, "that we paid our visit to Mr. Maroudi today—"
"Yes, wasn't it?" said Bunter heartily. "I told you fellows the grub would be good, and it jolly well was."
Sir Reginald gave the fat Owl a glare and went on: "There is little doubt that Wharton and Cherry saved Mr. Maroudi's life. Now, my boys, Mr. Maroudi has offered to lend us his dahabiyeh for the trip up the Nile, and he was so insistent that I really had to accept the offer. It is a magnificent boat, much more commodious than any dahabiyeh I could have hired in Cairo. It is manned by Mr. Maroudi's own crew of Nubians, and the reis is a man in whom he has every confidence. In these circumstances, and now that that rascal Kalizelos is in the hands of the police, I shall be able to trust you on the Nile in the care of the dragoman while I go to the Fayyum to see to my business there. Mr. Maroudi is leaving for the Fayyum tomorrow, and I shall accompany him, and you boys will start up the Nile. I shall rely upon you, Wharton, to see that the party does not get into mischief."
"Leave it to me, sir," said Bunter. "It will be all right. I shall be there. I'm accustomed to looking after these fellows."
"Will you kindly hold your tongue, Bunter?" demanded Sir Reginald.
"Oh, really, sir—"
The car arrived at the hotel. A gold tassel on a tarboosh danced as Hassan, the dragoman, opened the door and salaamed to his lordly gentlemen. The juniors went to bed that night with great anticipations for the morrow.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
BUNTER BAGS ANOTHER BARGAIN!

"WALKING?"
"Yes."
"Rot!"
"The rotfulness is not terrific, my esteemed Bunter. The absurd distance is only a ridiculous mile."
"Think I'm going to walk a mile?"
"Are you ready, my boys!" called out Sir Reginald Brooke.
"Here we are, sir!"
The baggage was gone. Backsheesh had been duly distributed, and the Greyfriars fellows were going. It was early morning; not yet hot, but already bright and sunny. Every fellow in the party was quite keen on a last walk through the Cairo streets, even Mauly—but with the exception of William George Bunter. Bunter would not have walked from his bed-room to the dining-room if it had been possible to take a cab—so long, of course, as there was somebody else to pay for the cab.
On the trip to Egypt the "exes" were stood by Lord Mauleverer; therefore there was no reason why a car or an arabeyeh should not be taken on all occasions, so far as

Bunter could see. The announcement that they were going to walk to the Kasr-el-Nil Bridge, where the boat was waiting, roused Bunter's deepest indignation.
"Come on, fatty!" said Bob Cherry. "It will shake down your breakfasts if you walk a bit. I suppose you want them to settle down?"
"Yah!"
"Bunter's got a lot of breakfasts to carry, though," remarked Johnny Bull. "Did you stack away six or seven, Bunter?"
"Beast!"
"Jolly mornin' for a walk," said Lord Mauleverer. "Come on. Can't keep nunky waitin'."
"But what the thump are we going to walk for?" demanded Bunter. "Has Mauly turned stingy, or what?"
"Oh gad!" said his lordship.
"If that's it," said Bunter, with deep scorn, "I'll pay for a car. You can leave that to me. Now, if I'm going to pay for the car, I suppose some of you will have the decency to lend me a few pounds—"
"My lordly gentlemen—"
"Shut up, Hassan! I don't like being interrupted! Now, look here, you fellows— I say, don't walk away while I'm talking to you, you beasts!" roared Bunter.
But the chums of the Remove did walk away, and the fat Owl rolled after them, snorting. Lord Mauleverer marched ahead with his uncle, the Famous Five strolled after them, and Bunter grunted in the rear, with Hassan, the dragoman, hovering round the whole party, his brown face grinning cheerfully, and his stick poking away the common persons who got in the way of his lordly gentlemen.
Billy Bunter lagged behind.
A walk of a mile in the freshness of the morning was agreeable to all the other fellows, and really was not a martyrdom for Bunter. But the fat Owl had a sense of injury. Feeling quite certain that the other fellows would not sail up the Nile on Mr. Maroudi's dahabiyeh without him, Bunter took his time. Besides, Bunter had a lot to carry. He had distinguished himself, as usual, at breakfast, and astonished the waiters, for the last time, with the amount of foodstuffs he had packed away. He was not disposed to exertion, and he did not exert himself. Harry Wharton looked back and shouted to him:
"Buck up, Bunter!"
"Yah!"
"You'll get lost, fathead!" bawled Bob Cherry.
"Beast!"
Bunter did not buck up. At first it was obstinacy that made him lag. But after a half-mile he really was fatigued, owing to the cargo he had to carry. Six or seven breakfasts, one after another, weighed on him a little. He panted and perspired, and lagged more and more. He lost sight of the juniors, but the dancing gold tassel on Hassan's tarboosh guided him. Hassan was a tall dragoman, and his red tarboosh and golden tassel glowed over the crowd in the street.
"Donkey!"
Bunter blinked round.
"Donkey! You, sar! Donkey!"
For a moment Bunter had the impression, as he had had once before, that the brown man was calling him a donkey. But the brown man who spoke to him was leading a big, powerful donkey; so the fat Owl guessed that the animal was for hire or sale.
"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter. "Yes, I'll hire your donkey. Rather!"

A lift was exactly what Bunter wanted.
“Sell a donkey, sar!” said the brown man. “Me no donkey-boy, sar! No, sar. Me Hafiz, sar—me sell donkeys. Yes, sar. You buy a donkey. Me make a cheap price—sixty piastres, sar.”
Bunter blinked at the man.
Hafiz grinned and salaamed.
“Fine big donkey, sar! Him name Queen Victoria, sar, to English gentleman. To American gentleman him name Abraham Lincoln. Yes, sar. Sixty piastres cheap price. What you say, sar? Buy a donkey?”
Bunter blinked at the donkey. It was a big, handsome animal, and very like Quelch to look at—the donkey Bunter had bought once before, and which had departed so soon after the purchase, and had not been seen since. Sixty piastres was an absurdly low price for such an animal. Once more Billy Bunter scented a bargain.
“Well, you see, I’m going on a boat—what you call a dahabiyeh in your silly language,” he explained. “So—”
“Him donkey like go on dahabiyeh sar—very good donkey for dahabiyeh, sar—many times him go on dahabiyeh, sar—”
“Oh!” said Bunter thoughtfully.
He did not know whether there was accommodation for donkeys on board a dahabiyeh; but Hafiz, as a native, ought to know!
“You buy a donkey, sar,” said Hafiz persuasively. “He carry you all over Egypt, sar—you look at a donkey, sar, you see him splendid fine animal, sar. Sixty piastres very cheap price, sar. What you say?”
“Saddle and all?” asked Bunter.
“Yes, sar—everything and all!” said Hafiz.
“Done!” said Bunter.
Sixty piastres was about twelve shillings, and such a donkey for twelve shillings was almost as big a bargain as Quelch for ten shillings. Billy Bunter felt that he could not afford to lose a chance like this. Even if he could not take the donkey on the dahabiyeh, he could hand it over to Hassan to dispose of, certainly for a larger sum than twelve shillings. Why Hafiz was selling a valuable donkey, saddle and trappings and bridle and all, for such a trivial sum, was as great a mystery as why Abdullah had sold a similar donkey at a similar ruinous price. But Billy Bunter, who had jumped at one bargain, now jumped at another.
“Help me up!” he said, making up his fat mind. A big bargain, and a lift at the same moment, appealed to Bunter. Mounted on Queen Victoria, alias Abraham Lincoln, he would soon overtake the juniors, now far ahead. He rather fancied himself riding in style, on his own donkey, while the other fellows walked.
Hafiz assisted him to mount, the donkey standing quite still, looking as if butter would not melt in its capacious mouth. Bunter thought he had never seen a quieter or more good-tempered-looking donkey—except perhaps Quelch, who was possibly a relation; for there was undoubtedly a strong resemblance between Bunter’s first bargain and Bunter’s second bargain.
The fat junior counted out sixty piastres, and Hafiz salaamed, and salaamed again, and the donkey started. Even Bunter could ride a quiet, good- tempered donkey, so long as the donkey remained quiet and good-tempered. He trotted on cheerily, and with a clatter of hoofs, overtook the Greyfriars party.
“1 say, you fellows—”
“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter’s found his twin!” exclaimed Bob Cherry.
“The twinfulness is terrific!” chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

“Well, my hat!” said Harry Wharton, staring at Bunter’s long-eared mount. “How on earth did you find him, Bunter?”
“Eh? I’ve just bought this donkey.”
“You’ve bought him again?” yelled Wharton.
Bunter blinked at him.
“What the thump do you mean?” he demanded peevishly. “I’ve just bought him for sixty piastres. He’s nearly as cheap as that donkey I bought the other day.”
“It’s the same donkey!” roared Bob.
“The samefulness is terrific.”
“Oh, don’t be silly asses, you know!” said Bunter. “This donkey is named Queen Victoria.
The one I bought the other day was named George Washington. I’m going to name him Quelch, same
as the other. He, he, he!”
“You fat owl, it’s the same donkey!” exclaimed Frank Nugent. “Was it the same man sold him to you?”
“No, it wasn’t, you ass—think I shouldn’t know him again,” snorted Bunter. “Think I could be taken in?”
“Well, whether it was the same man or not, it’s the same donkey,” said Harry Wharton, laughing.
“Rubbish!”
“Same donkey, sar,” said Hassan, grinning. “Hassan know! Abdullah he have many brothers, lordly gentlemen; very great rogues, sar; sell same donkey many times, always at cheap price. Yes. You trust Hassan. Hassan know everything.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Rot!” snorted Bunter. “I’d jolly well like to see the native that could take me in! I—Oh Help! Yooop! Hold him! Yarooooh!”
From somewhere in the crowded street came a long, shrill whistle. Apparently it was a signal to the donkey. Even as the whistle shrilled, the quietest looking donkey Bunter had ever seen suddenly turned into an infuriated buck-jumper.
George - Washington - Queen - Victoria threw down his head, threw up his hind legs, and cavorted frantically, and Billy Bunter, yelling wildly, sailed over the lowered head, and landed on one of the many heaps of garbage that adorn the streets of Cairo.
“Yooooooop!”
“Oh, my hat!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
The instant Bunter was off his back the donkey vanished. There were other donkeys in the street, and camels, and a few buffaloes, and arabeyehs, and a crowd of early peasants going to market with their produce, and amid that assorted crowd, Queen Victoria-Abraham Lincoln vanished like a ghost at cock-crow.
Bunter sat on the garbage and roared.
“Yarooh! I’m killed! Yooop! Whooop!”
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared the juniors.
“I say, you fellows—Yaroooh! Whoop! Help! I’m smashed—killed—dislocated. I say— Whooop!”
The Famous Five dragged Bunter up, though they were laughing almost too much to help. Fragments of ancient vegetables clung lovingly to Bunter as he was rescued from the garbage-heap. He panted and gasped and spluttered. Fortunately he found that he was not killed, or smashed, or dislocated. But he was breathless.
“Where’s my donkey?” he gasped.

“Gone!” chuckled Bob Cherry. “You fat duffer, that donkey’s trained to it. It’s the same donkey—”
“‘Tain’t!” roared Bunter.
“I dare say he’s been sold cheap to about a hundred tourists, or perhaps a thousand,” chuckled Johnny Bull. “A different man and a different name every time—”
“And generally a different mug!” chortled Bob.
“But in this case they caught the same mug again.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“I say, you fellows, you go after that donkey—I gave sixty piastres for that donkey—” gasped Bunter.
“Sixty and fifty—that’s a hundred and ten piastres altogether!” chuckled Bob. “If you buy him a few more times, you’ll get up to quite a big figure—he’ll be a dear donkey, in the long run.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You silly chump, it’s not the same donkey—”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
The chums of the Remove walked on. Billy Bunter cast a last blink round through his big spectacles, in search of his second bargain. But his second bargain had vanished like his first; though Bunter was not willing to admit that it was the same bargain. He snorted, and rolled after the Famous Five—on foot. It was walking, after all, for William George Bunter.

CHAPTER TWELVE
UP THE NILE!

MOUSSA, the reis, salaamed to the Greyfriars fellows, as they came on board the Cleopatra—that being the name of Mr. Maroudi’s dahabiyeh. The Nubian boatmen salaamed also, in a swarm on the sailor’s deck.
It was a huge houseboat; the largest and handsomest dahabiyeh that the juniors had seen. They had seen a good many on the Nile since they had arrived in Egypt; but nothing to equal the Cleopatra.
Obviously, Mr. Maroudi was a very wealthy gentleman indeed, to be the owner of this magnificent craft. Instructions had been given to the reis and the crew, and they greeted the Greyfriars tourists with great respect and attention.
The juniors looked about the great river-boat with delighted eyes. It was to be their floating home for many days to come, and they agreed that Mr. Maroudi was a real brick to lend them such a wonderful craft. They had looked forward to “doing” the Nile in a dahabiyeh; but a hired dahabiyeh would have been very different from this palatial boat. Even Billy Bunter admitted that it was “some boat,” and even that it was nearly up to his pater’s houseboat—an admission which made the juniors smile. Still, Bunter declared that he would have preferred a steamer.
“How do they get this thing along?” he demanded.
“Wind him blow big sail, sar!” said Hassan.
“Suppose the wind blows the other way?” asked Bunter.
“Most time wind him blow from the north, lordly sar, blow dahabiyeh up the Nile!” explained Hassan. “Wind he go up, current him come down, sar.”
“Still, there isn’t always a wind, I suppose,” said Bunter.
“Wind him no blow, sailors push along with tremendous long pole,” said Hassan. “Sometimes sailors run on bank, tow with tremendous big rope, sar. Suppose lordly

gentlemen in pressed hurry, tow with a steamer."
At the stern of the dahabiyeh was a raised platform, where the reis, or pilot, stood, to steer with the huge helm.
Steps led down from the boatmen's deck into the cabins, and up from the boatmen's deck to the upper deck.
The juniors went down the three shallow steps to look at their quarters.
They passed through a wide doorway, over which was a gilded inscription from the Koran, though, as it was in Arabic, the juniors were unable to read it.
Within was a corridor on either side of which doors opened into the sleeping-apartments.
Passing the length of the corridor between the rows of bed-rooms, they arrived in a large room, which extended over the whole of the stern of the great boat.
Windows looked out on the balcony that ran round the stern outside, furnished with lattices in exquisite mushrabeyeh work, which could be closed as shutters. Three doors gave access to the outside balcony, which was sheltered from the sun by awnings.
The great cabin was furnished in the Oriental style, as was natural, as the boat belonged to a native. Embroidered divans in gorgeous colours were round the walls, with, piles of cushions wonderfully soft to the touch and glowing with colour. Prayer-rugs covered the floor, which was of a hard, polished wood—prayer-rugs of every colour and design, and, as the juniors could see at a glance, extremely costly. But Mr. Maroudi had evidently made some preparations for the comfort of his European guests, for there were chairs and tables and several deep and comfortable armchairs.
In the centre of the saloon was a sunken pool of marble, in which a tiny fountain played, surrounded by earth in which tiny dwarf palms grew. There was a faint musical murmur from the fountain, and the ceaseless jet of water gleamed and glistened in the sunlight that poured in at the windows and doors.
"Jolly!" said Bob Cherry.
"The jollifulness is terrific," declared the Nabob of Bhanipur.
"Beats the jolly old study in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, what?" said Nugent, with a grin.
"What-ho!" chuckled Johnny Bull.
"I think you boys will be comfortable here," said Sir Reginald, smiling.
"I fancy so, sir," said Harry. "It's simply ripping of Mr. Maroudi to lend us a magnificent boat like this."
"What about the grub?" asked Bunter.
"What?" barked Sir Reginald.
"Grub!" said Bunter firmly. "The boat ain't bad—but the grub's rather important, you know."
"Shut up, Bunter," said Bob.
"Oh, really, Cherry! Just like you fellows to be staring at fountains and paintings and carvings and things, and forgetting the grub!" said Bunter witheringly. "Lucky you've got somebody with you to think of it. If they haven't made proper arrangements about the grub—"
"Mr. Maroudi's cook is on board, my boys," said Sir Reginald, with a glare at Bunter. "Every arrangement has been made for your comfort. And—"
"I think we'd better look at the bedrooms," said Bunter. "I'm not going to sleep on a mat, I can jolly well tell you fellows."
"Shut up, Bunter!"
The juniors looked into their rooms. They found that they were provided with

European beds, and every bedroom had a recess in which was a marble bath, an armchair, and a tall mirror; the walls painted white, picked out with green. The baggage had already been deposited in the rooms. Billy Bunter was pleased to give a grunt of approval.
"Like your room, old fat man?" asked Bob.
"Not bad!" admitted Bunter.
"I hardly think it will suit you, though," said Bob, shaking his head as he looked into Bunter's room.
"Eh? Why not?"
"There's a bath in it."
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh, really, Cherry—"
"And there's a lot of soap all ready," said Nugent. "Of course, Mr. Maroudi doesn't know Bunter as we do."
"Oh, really, Nugent—"
"Don't you worry, old fat man," said Johnny Bull. "You can drop the soap overboard as soon as
we start, and put a screen round the bath so that it won't keep on reminding you that you want a wash—"
"Oh, really, Bull—"
The juniors returned to the deck. There Sir Reginald left them, with many parting instructions to the juniors, all of which they promised to remember; and to Hassan, which the dragoman received with endless salaams.
The old baronet went ashore, leaving the Greyfriars party to themselves. Now that Kalizelos, the Greek, was in prison, there was no doubt that the juniors would be safe on board Mr. Maroudi's dahabiyeh, in the care of the faithful Hassan, and it was an opportunity for Sir Reginald to attend to the business that had brought him to Egypt. And much as the juniors liked and respected the stiff old gentleman, they were by no means averse to the idea of going up the Nile "on their own."
Every comfort had been provided on the dahabiyeh by Mr. Maroudi's generous hospitality; and even if there had been danger ahead, the chums of the Remove were convinced of their ability to take care of themselves. But with their enemy in the hands of the Cairo police, it seemed that the danger was over, and that the Golden Scarab would no longer bring perils round them.
The Nubian sailors took in the gangway, and the dahabiyeh floated out into the Nile, the juniors on the upper deck waving their hands to the tall figure of the baronet ashore, Sir Reginald waving back.
"Now we're off," said Bob Cherry, "and we're going to have a gorgeous time, what?"
"The gorgeousness is going to be terrific, my esteemed Bob."
"My lordly gentlemen will see everything," said Hassan, beaming. "Tombs of the kings, tombs of innumerable and enormous numbers of dead persons. Denderah — Luxor — Edfou — Hassan knows all things, and will show them to his magnificent lords! Yes!"
The juniors gazed about them with keenly interested eyes, as the Cleopatra started on the long trip up the Nile.
The wind blew steadily from the north, and the great sail was set, filling with wind and driving the great boat up the river against the sluggish current The reis stood like a bronze statue at the helm. The Nubian boatmen sang a song of the Nile in their own tongue as they went about their work. Hassan pointed out innumerable objects of interest on either bank.

After passing the Abbas II Bridge, old Cairo was on their left, backed by the Mokattam Hills; on their right, the Pyramids of Ghizeh. Both dropped out of sight as the dahabiyeh rolled on to the south. Other dahabiyehs and several steamers were to be seen on the Nile, as well as a crowd of feluccas. On the banks brown men looked at them as they passed, and every now and then from some hopeful brown man came faintly from the distance a cry of "Backsheesh!" From the shores at frequent intervals came the sing-song chant of the shaduf men.
"Isn't is ripping?" said Bob. "Think of jolly old Cheops floating along here 5,000 years ago!"
"And jolly old Rameses the Second, 3,000 years ago, coming back after his scrap with the giddy Hittites!" said Nugent.
"And the jolly old Ptolomies—" said Johnny Bull.
"And the merry old Pharaohs—"
"And the giddy Mamelukes—"
"Historical interest of celebrated river enormous and very large, my lordly gentlemen," said Hassan, beaming. "No country but Egypt contains such tremendous and gigantic numbers of dead persons."
"I say, you fellows—"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life, old fat bean?" roared Bob, bestowing a hearty smack on Bunter's fat shoulder.
"Yarooooh!" Bunter dodged out of reach of the exuberant Bob. "I say, you fellows, I'm getting hungry!"
Whereat the chums of the Remove chuckled. Their thoughts had been on the past; but Billy Bunter's thoughts were on the present. Cheops and Rameses the Second and the Ptolomies, the Pharaohs, the Mamelukes and the Caliphs, did not fill so much space in Bunter's mind as lunch. And the fat Owl, leaving the other fellows to think of the immemorial past as long as they liked, went to look for provender.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
ANOTHER BARGAIN FOR BUNTER!

"MEMPHIS!"
"What's that!" yawned Billy Bunter.
"Memphis!" answered Bob Cherry, with a look of surprise.
"Oh, really, you ass—"
"Bunter," said Bob, adopting the manner of Mr. Quelch at Greyfriars, "you are not only the most backward boy in the Form—I mean on board the dahabiyeh—but you seem to have an absolute dislike to the acquisition of knowledge—"
"You silly ass!" said Bunter.
"I've a jolly good mind," said Bob severely, "to give you a detention, Bunter, and make you write a hundred times that Memphis was the ancient capital of Egypt—by the way, it was, wasn't it, you men?" asked Bob, breaking off in his instruction of Billy Bunter, to ask that rather pertinent question.
"Yes," said Harry Wharton, laughing.
"Tremendous vast city of ancient times, sar !" said Hassan. "Now in most interesting ruins, with innumerable dead persons; and suitable place for serious meditation on fall of human greatness and such things. Hassan show you all."
"It's the jolly old city where Rameses the Second used to roll about in his giddy chariot," went on Bob. "It's got a bit dilapidated, I believe, since the time of jolly old Rameses. We tie up the dahabiyeh at the bank, and go to the ruins of Memphis with

the help of your relations, Bunter—"
"Eh? I haven't any relations in Egypt, that I know of," answered the Owl of the Remove.
"I mean on donkey-back," explained Bob Cherry.
"You silly chump!" roared Bunter.
The huge sail of the dahabiyeh had been lowered, and the Nubian sailors poled in to the western bank. The Pyramids of Sakkara stood out against the sky over the Libyan desert. All the fellows were interested in Memphis, the ancient capital—excepting Bunter, who was fed-up with ruins and tombs and mummies; and who did not agree with the dragoman that the chief attraction of Egypt was the "innumerable dead persons." Still, Bunter jerked himself out of his chair on the upper deck and blinked shoreward. He was not going to be left behind when the juniors rambled over Memphis.
"My donkey would have come in useful now," he remarked. "Both my donkeys, in fact. If you fellows had caught them—"
"Both your donkeys were the same donkey, fathead," said Bob. "They sold you the same donkey over twice, chump!"
"I tell you there were two donkeys!" hooted Bunter.
"Only you and the other."
"Beast!"
The gangway was run out to the shore. Harry Wharton & Co. and Lord Mauleverer crossed it, and Billy Bunter rolled after them, followed by Hassan, and a Nubian servant carrying a large basket of provisions for lunch in the ruins. Donkey-boys immediately surrounded them, eager for custom. Every donkey-boy shouted at once, urging the claims of his own special donkey, which, it appeared, was better than all the others put together. The dragoman proceeded to engage donkeys for the ride, while the juniors strolled on the banks of the Nile.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry suddenly. "I've seen that jolly old donkey before."
"Which?" asked Nugent.
"Look!"
A brown-faced man in a dingy djubbah and turban was leading a big, handsome donkey, which he was not offering for hire. He was looking round with keen black eyes, and as he sighted the Greyfriars fellows he came towards them with an ingratiating grin on his face. They had never seen the man before; but they had seen the donkey. They knew that donkey. It was the George Washington that Abdullah had sold to Bunter—likewise, it was the Queen Victoria that Hafiz had sold to Bunter!
The juniors grinned. They could guess that the brown man was one more member of the donkey-dealing firm, with the same donkey to sell to some innocent tourist. No doubt that donkey had been sold so often in Cairo that the firm had decided to trot him out to Memphis for further business.
"Donkey, sar" said the brown man, grinning with a flash of white teeth. "You buy a donkey, sar?"
"Oh, my hat!" said Harry Wharton.
There was no doubt about George Washington-Queen Victoria! Undoubtedly and indubitably, it was the same donkey. But as a new member of the firm was in charge of him, he naturally did not know the Greyfriars fellows by sight, and was unaware that they were well-acquainted with George Washington-Queen Victoria.
"Fine big donkey at very cheap price, sar!" said the brown man. "Me, sar, me Osman, sar, very honest donkey dealer, sar! Sell a donkey! Yes! Sell a donkey for price of

forty piastres, sar."
"Cheaper than ever!" chuckled Bob.
"The cheapfulness is terrific!"
"You buy a donkey, sar!" asked Osman. "You ride to Memphis on a donkey, sar. Buy a donkey forty piastres, sar! Cheap donkey, sar! Yes." He grinned and salaamed. "You like this donkey, sar! Saddle and all things, sar, all forty piastres! Noble lords buy a donkey?"
"I say, you fellows, that looks a decent donkey!" said Billy Bunter, blinking at the animal through his big spectacles. "He's rather like the one I bought the other day—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, that donkey's jolly cheap at forty piastres."
"It's the same donkey!" roared Bob.
"Eh, what?" Billy Bunter blinked at the donkey again. "Rot, old chap! It's a different man with him. I say, you, what's that donkey's name?"
"You English, sar, him name King Edward," said Osman agreeably. "You American, him name President Hoover, sar."
"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors.
"I say, Mauly, lend me forty piastres!" said Bunter, "I'm not losing a chance like this!"
"But it's the same donkey, dear man!" said Mauly.
"Don't be an ass, old chap!" said Bunter. "I know one donkey from another, I suppose! Lend me forty piastres, there's a good chap. Why, the saddle alone's worth that."
"You buy a donkey, sar?" said Hafiz, fixing his attention on Billy Bunter now. "You know one good donkey, sar—you buy a donkey."
"Yes, rather!" said Bunter. "Lend me—I say, Mauly, where are you going? Don't walk away
while a fellow's talking to you, you beast! Mauly! Deaf, you ass! What's that silly chump Mauly walking off for, you fellows, when I want to speak to him?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Lend me forty piastres, Wharton, old chap—"
"Can't you spend your own piastres!" asked the captain of the Remove.
"Oh, really, Wharton!" That resource, apparently, had not occurred to Bunter. "I say, don't walk away—beast! Bob, old man—beast! I say, Nugent, lend me forty piastres."
"You've bought that donkey twice!" roared Johnny Bull.
"Yah! Will you lend me— Beast!" hooted Bunter, as the chums of the Remove followed Lord Mauleverer.
He was left alone with the donkey-dealer. Osman regarded him rather uneasily. He had caught some of the juniors' words, and realised that they had seen King Edward-President Hoover before. But he need not have worried. Billy Bunter was keen on a bargain; and Billy Bunter's obtuseness was an armour of proof that no instruction could penetrate. All the more because the other fellows declared that it was the same donkey, Billy Bunter was convinced that it was not the same donkey. Donkeys were much alike, anyhow; and Bunter was short-sighted as well as obtuse. He had not recognised it as the same donkey; and he was not going to be convinced.
But he had to dip into his own financial resources for the forty piastres. This was rather disagreeable; still, the donkey was obviously worth at least ten times as much.
"You buy a donkey, sar?" asked Osman, rather dubiously.
"Yes, rather!" answered Bunter.

Osman's brown face brightened again. He had come across many "mugs" in his career as a member of a donkey-dealing firm; but he had never struck such a "mug" as this before! People were not often glad to meet Bunter; but Osman undoubtedly was glad to meet him, and he would have been glad to meet whole tribes of Bunters.
The fat Owl counted out forty piastres, and slipped the reins of the donkey over a fat arm.
"You ride a donkey, sar?" said Osman, having tucked away the piastres under his dingy djubbah.
"You like ride a donkey, sar?" No doubt Osman was anxious to see Bunter in the saddle—from which he would speedily have been tossed by King Edward-President Hoover.
"That's all right," said Bunter, and he led the donkey away with a fat arm through the reins, after the juniors.
Bunter did not believe that it was the same donkey; but he remembered his bad luck with George Washington and Queen Victoria; and be was going to be careful this time.
Osman stared after him. He did not depart. If he was to whistle that donkey back, he had to keep the tourists in sight till an opportunity came. So long as Bunter had an arm through the reins, even that well-trained and sagacious ass could not get away from him. Osman had some shadowing to do.
"I say, you fellows—"
"Here are donkeys, sars!" said Hassan. "You trust Hassan to find you some very fine and magnificent donkeys—"
"I've got my mount, Hassan," said Bunter. "You needn't hire a donkey for me."
The dragoman gave quite a jump when he looked at Bunter's mount.
"Oh, sar!" he ejaculated. "You find Abdullah's donkey one more time, sar!"
"Don't be a silly ass!" said Bunter peevishly "This is a new donkey. I've just bought him from a man named Osman. What are you grinning at, you cheeky ass?"
"Oh, sar!"
"Shut up!" snapped Bunter. "If you fellows are ready, we'll start! Look here! The basket of grub can be put on my donkey, and I'll keep an eye on it, see? That man can lead my donkey. Not that he's likely to bolt, you know—I fancy I can ride a donkey—still, that native may as well lead him! Gimme that basket!"
Harry Wharton & Co. were already mounted on the hired donkeys, Bunter, being in possession of his own steed, refused a hired donkey. The Nubian servant who carried the basket of provisions stared as Billy Bunter jerked it away from him. Bunter preferred to keep that important cargo under his own eyes; likewise, he felt that it was probable that he would be in need of a snack or two before lunch.
The Nubian looked to Hassan for instructions. The dragoman, with a shrug of the shoulders, spoke to him in Arabic, and the Nubian took the reins of King Edward-President Hoover to lead him. Billy Bunter clambered into the saddle, and took the basket of provisions on the donkey. And the Greyfriars party, turning their backs on the Nile, rode towards the ruins of Memphis. And behind them, with a rather anxious expression on his brown face, crept Osman—with an eye on Bunter's donkey.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
A FAMINE IN EGYPT!

"ENORMOUS and gigantic statue of Rameses the Second—" Hassan, the dragoman,

was going strong in the ruins of Memphis.
With a shouting of donkey-boys and a cracking of sticks, the Greyfriars fellows arrived at the spot where the gigantic statue of King Rameses lay on its back amid the ruins of the great city over which Rameses had reigned three thousand years ago.
Harry Wharton & Co. dismounted. Billy Bunter did not dismount. He was not very keen on Rameses the Second; but he was very keen indeed on the contents of the big wicker basket. He sat in the saddle, helping himself to bunches of figs from the basket, while the other fellows "did" Rameses the Second.
Billy Bunter had soon tired of holding the basket, and the Nubian had tied it securely on the donkey's back—with the lid within convenient reach of Bunter's fat hand. This suited Bunter nicely.
It also suited the other fellows, for so long as Billy Bunter was munching figs and dates and sweetmeats, he was not talking. When Bunter was not eating, his conversation resembled the little brook in the poem, which went on for ever. And as it was a large basket, with an enormous supply of provender, even Bunter had to leave enough for the other fellows' lunch. Which was a rather important consideration, as provisions were unobtainable at the ruins, and had to be brought from a distance.
"Length of enormous statue, twenty-six feet English," said Hassan. "Crown, which is now absent, was six feet, also English! This gigantic and immense statue being of huge historical interest. Next we see alabaster sphinx close at hand, but here we wait if my lordly gentlemen desire to meditate solemnly on fallen greatness of magnificent, but now debilitated royalty."
Bob Cherry chuckled.
"Anybody going in for solemn meditation?" he asked. "Or shall we move on to the giddy sphinx? May as well see it—though I've given up counting the sphinxes we've seen."
The juniors remounted the donkeys and moved on. The Nubian led Bunter's donkey after them. So far the Nubian had not let go the reins of King Edward-President Hoover—which was no doubt the reason why Bunter was still mounted on that steed of many names. Now, as the donkey jerked into motion again, Bunter dropped a bunch of figs that he had just extracted from the provision basket.
"Here, pick that up!" snapped Bunter to the black man.
"Yes, sar!" said the Nubian obediently.
He stooped to pick up the fallen bunch of figs. To do so, he released the reins of King Edward- President Hoover.
From somewhere among the rambling ruins of Memphis, it seemed that a keen eye was upon them, for the moment the Nubian released the donkey, a shrill whistle sounded from amid a thicket of acacias close at hand.
Hitherto, King Edward-President Hoover had been as quiet and orderly a donkey as even a rider like Bunter could desire.
But at the sound of the signal whistle, King Edward-President Hoover developed on the spot the buck-jumping proclivities of Queen Victoria- Abraham Lincoln.
It happened so suddenly that Bunter was taken quite off his guard.
The donkey's head went down, and his heels flew up.
Before the fat Owl knew what was happening, he was shooting over the donkey's head and sprawling in the ruins of Memphis.
"Yarooooh!" roared Bunter, as he landed.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
The Greyfriars fellows looked back.
They saw Billy Bunter sprawling headlong, they saw King Edward-President Hoover

galloping off, and they saw the Nubian, with a bunch of figs in his black hand, clutch at him too late.
The donkey, going strong, vanished behind the acacias, leaving the Nubian staring, and Billy Bunter sprawling and roaring.
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Bob. “He’s gone again!”
“The gonefulness is terrific!”
“Him donkey go back to him masters, sars!” said Hassan, grinning. “Small fat lord no see him donkey again! No, sar!”
“Yarooh! Help! I say, you fellows— Wow!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Billy Bunter sat up.
He blinked round him through his big spectacles. The other fellows reined in, chuckling. The
donkey-boys grinned. Bunter did not grin. He had had a severe bump, and he had lost his donkey once more. He blinked round in vain for a sign of King Edward-President Hoover. The many-named steed had disappeared, and from a distance came back an echo of galloping hoofs. That was all.
“I say, you fellows! Where’s my donkey?” gasped Bunter.
“Gone, old fat bean!” chortled Bob. “What did you expect? I dare say you will be able to buy him again farther up the river.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You silly ass!” yelled Bunter. “I tell you it wasn’t the same donkey! Look here, you ride after him and catch him, see!”
“No takers!” grinned Johnny Bull.
“I say, you fellows—”
“My dear idiot, we’ve come here to see Memphis, not for a donkey race,” said Harry Wharton, “and I fancy it wouldn’t be easy to catch that donkey, either. Osman will take care of that.”
Billy Bunter scrambled to his feet.
“Here, you native, you go after that donkey!” he shouted to the Nubian. “Go after him and catch him, see? Run! What are you standing there like a stiff board for, you dummy? Run after that donkey!”
“Yes, sar!” gasped the Nubian.
“I’ll give you ten piastres if you catch him, and I’ll jolly well kick you if you don’t, see? Don’t come back without him!” hooted Bunter.
“Yes, sar!”
The Nubian started at a run, and disappeared behind the thicket of acacias. As all the fellows but Bunter realised, there was not the remotest chance of catching that elusive donkey. His master was already on its back, putting on speed for parts unknown. The Nubian was as well aware of that as Harry Wharton & Co. and as soon as the acacias hid him from sight, he gave up the chase, and sat down to rest among the trees.
The Nubian had no objection to taking a rest, and quite possibly he had had enough of Billy Bunter. With a cheerful face he went to sleep under the acacias. Meanwhile, Osman and King Edward-President Hoover had vanished into space.
“Well, let’s get on,” said Bob Cherry.
“I say, you fellows, we shall have to wait here!” exclaimed the Owl of the Remove. “I’ve not got a donkey! I can’t walk, I suppose.”
“Suppose again!” suggested Bob. “Come on, you men!”
The donkey-boys’ sticks cracked again, and the party proceeded. Billy Bunter rolled after them, panting and gasping. He overtook them, while they were looking at the

alabaster sphinx, which was quite close at hand.
“I say, you fellows—”
“Shut up, Bunter!”
“You silly asses!” roared Bunter. “I say, the grub was tied on that donkey! There won’t be any lunch!”
“Oh, my hat!”
“We’d better chuck this, and go straight back to the dahabiyeh,” said Bunter. “Buck up! We shall be jolly hungry by the time we get there!”
“Go and eat coke!”
“Oh, really, Cherry—”
“You fat chump!” exclaimed Harry Wharton, in great exasperation. “We told you it was the same donkey, and you might have known—”
“Beast!”
“Well, we’re not going back,” said Harry. “I suppose we shall have to cut it short, as there’s no grub; but we’re jolly well going to do Memphis while we’re here. What do you fellows say?”
“Yes, rather!”
“The ratherfulness is terrific!”
“Come on!” said Harry. “There’s another jolly old colossus to see somewhere—”
“I say, you fellows, are you mad?” roared Bunter. “How can we possibly stay out for the day without grub? Why, we shall be famished by the time we get back, if we start now? Have a little sense!”
“Rats!”
“I’m getting hungry already—”
“Fathead!”
“Look here, you beasts—” roared Bunter, in wrath and consternation. “I can’t go back alone. I don’t know the way. Look here—”
“Dry up!”
“I tell you there isn’t any grub!” shrieked Bunter.
‘Well, that’s worse for us than for you,” said Bob. “You can live on your own fat, like a polar bear. You’ve got enough to last you a week, at least.”
“You silly chump!” yelled Bunter. “I tell you—”
“Better save your breath, old top! You’ll need it, doing the jolly old ruins of Memphis on foot!”
“Beast!” howled Bunter.
The party moved on. Billy Bunter rolled after them, hot and panting and perspiring. But he was silent now, save for his gasps and pants. He needed his breath to keep up with the donkeys.
The juniors stopped to view the second colossal statue of Rameses the Second, clambering up the wooden platform that had been built for tourists to make their inspection. Bunter did not follow them up, however. He sat down on a rock and panted for breath. Whatever interest Bunter might have had in that ancient king of Egypt was gone now. Bunter was thinking of the lunch that had vanished with King Edward-President Hoover—and which Osman, probably, was disposing of internally, in some secluded nook.
The Nubian had not returned with that elusive donkey, and his return with it was highly improbable, as the happy man was fast asleep in the acacias a mile away. Even Bunter realised that he was not likely to see that donkey again—unless, indeed, the excellent animal was offered for sale once more at another stopping-place along the Nile. But that was not the worst—the worst was that the provisions had gone with

King Edward-President Hoover, and there was no lunch for Bunter.
There was no lunch for the other fellows, either; but that did not worry Bunter. His concern, as usual, was wholly for W.G.B.
"Next we see celebrated Step Pyramid—" chanted Hassan, as the juniors came down after viewing Rameses the Second.
"I say, you fellows—"
"Oh, get on my donkey, you fat frump!" said Bob Cherry. "I'll walk! Get on and shut up!"
"We shall have to go back for lunch, you beast—"
"Shut up!" roared Bob,.
"Beast!" groaned Bunter.
Hassan helped him into the saddle of Bob's donkey. That was a relief, as far as it went. But Bunter was thinking of lunch. It was getting near time for feeding. And there was no grub! Not only was there no grub, but this rotten sight-seeing was to go on for hours before the party turned back, and then it was a good distance back to the dahabiyeh—and grub! Obviously, it was more than flesh and blood could stand!
Nevertheless, Billy Bunter had to stand it. He emitted a series of dismal groans as the party went on.
Afterwards, when Bunter thought of that excursion to the ruins of Memphis, it seemed like a nightmare to him.
He was hungry, and getting hungrier!
He felt that he understood now, as never before, the feelings of shipwrecked people in open boats at sea, and of famished travellers lost in the sandy wastes of the desert!
And the other fellows looked at such things as statues, tombs, and sphinxes, just as if lunch did not matter for once. When lunch was an hour overdue Bunter felt that he could bear no more.
"I say, you fellows—" he moaned.
"Shut up, Bunter!"
"I—I'm feeling awfully ill—"
"Too many breakfasts?" asked Nugent.
"Beast! I—I think I'm dying—" moaned Bunter.
"No such luck!" said Bob, shaking his head. "Anyhow, it doesn't matter; lots of tombs handy!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Beast!" howled Bunter.
And the party went on, heedless of Bunter's awful sufferings. Minutes that seemed hours; hours that seemed centuries, passed; and Billy Bunter wondered dismally and drearily whether he would survive that awful day!

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
THE "SUDDEN DEATH" OF BILLY BUNTER!

"HELP!"
It was a sudden yelp from Billy Bunter.
The Greyfriars sightseers had stopped in the shade of a tall, wide-spreading sycamore-tree for a few minutes' rest from the sun. They were, as a matter of fact, considering the idea of turning back to the Nile, and "chucking" the remainder of the lengthy programme that Hassan had marked out for them. Although not blessed with the unearthly appetite of William George Bunter, the Famous Five had healthy appetites of their own, and they were not quite indifferent to the claims of mealtimes.

Certainly Bunter deserved it all. It was his own obstinacy that had caused the loss of the provision basket, and caused the explorers to lose time by proceeding at a walking pace. As Bob remarked, so long as it was only Bunter it did not matter; but he admitted that things took on a different complexion when the Co. got hungry themselves.

Bunter, by this time, was in a state of desperation. Anyone might have supposed that Bunter was the least hungry of the party, as he had scoffed quite a large number of bunches of figs and dates before the basket vanished with King Edward-President Hoover. But anyone who had supposed that would not have known Bunter. Bunter was not only the hungriest of the party, but he was in a state of famine that was positively alarming.

Famine was one of the ancient plagues of Egypt, and Bunter realised now, with fearful clearness, what the Egyptians had felt like in the seven lean years.

So Bunter had resolved on desperate measures. Yelping suddenly for help, the fat junior slipped from the saddle and fell to the earth.

If the utter beasts saw him fall from the donkey from sheer weakness, even those unspeakable beasts would feel something like remorse—Bunter hoped so, at least.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Wharton, as the fat junior went down.

Probably the juniors would have been concerned had Bunter crashed to the ground, as he really ought to have done, when he was falling from weakness brought on by hunger!

But a crash on the ground was a painful prospect, and Bunter did not like the idea. So, although he fell to the earth, he fell carefully, picking a soft, grassy spot, and falling on it with care. Which rather spoiled the effect, so far as the beasts were concerned. Instead of rushing to him with exclamations of horror and heartfelt sympathy, they only stared at him from where they stood.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the game?" asked Bob Cherry.

Groan!

"Bunter going in for acrobatics?" asked Nugent.

Groan!

"Bunter, old fat bean—"

Groan!

Hassan, the dragoman, stared at the sprawling fat junior in the grass under the tall sycamore. The donkey-boys stared and grinned. Billy Bunter emitted deep groans, which might have moved the stony heart of Rameses the Second.

"I say, you fellows, I—I—I'm ill!" groaned Bunter. "I—I think I'm dying! Leave me here! I can't move!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Bob. "You feel as if you're dying, old chap?"

"Ow! Yes! Ow!"

"Then I dare say you'd like to die quietly. Come on, you fellows—let's get off, and leave Bunter to perish in peace."

"The perishfulness in esteemed peace is a wheezy good idea," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us bunkfully proceed!"

"Goodbye, Bunter!"

Groan!

"Any last request?" asked Bob considerately. "Any message to the fellows at Greyfriars when we get back?"

Groan!

"Any instructions what we're to do with your postal order if it's arrived while you were away, old chap?"

“Ha, ha, ha!”
Groan!
“I’ll take the donkey again,” said Bob. “Bunter won’t need it any more as he’s pegging out. We can get on a bit quicker now. Come to think of it, it’s rather considerate of Bunter to peg out like this—it will save a lot of time. I suggest a vote of thanks.”
“Hear, hear!”
Groan!
“Well, goodbye, old fat man! When you’re finished there’s a lot of tombs close to you, and you can take your choice. Come on!”
Bob mounted the donkey, and the juniors went onward. Hassan stared at them, and grinned. The dragoman understood that the small fat lord’s podgy leg was being pulled. Bunter, lying full length in the grass under the sycamore, could hardly believe that even these utter beasts were going to desert him in this awful extremity. He lifted his head, and blinked after them through his big spectacles. They were going—going—and leaving him on his own!
“Beasts!” hissed Bunter.
He half-rose—and then lay down again. Billy Bunter was not a bright youth, but he was bright enough to realise that the chums of the Remove would not really depart and leave him to be lost in the ruins of Memphis. They fancied that he was spoofing, and they fully expected him to recover and follow on. So he decided that he would jolly well show them! He stretched out in the grass again, and remained there.
The donkeys clattered away—farther and farther. The fat Owl felt a twinge of uneasiness. If the
awful rotters were really going— The clattering hoofs stopped.
Bunter grinned in the grass.
They weren’t going, after all; as he jolly well knew. And as he heard the sound of the donkeys returning he gave a long, deep, horrible groan, and lay quite still in the grass, with his eyes closed behind his spectacles. He was going to give these unspeakable beasts a shock that would wring their hearts with horror and remorse.
The party halted again under the sycamore.
“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Still dying, Bunter?” inquired Bob Cherry.
No answer.
“Not dead yet, old fat bean?”
Silence!
Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five stared down at him. Hassan stared. The donkey-boys stared. Bunter did not stir. He lay quite still, with his eyes shut, apparently insensible, In the dusky shadow of the sycamore he had a still and lifeless look.
Bob Cherry closed one eye at his comrades.
“Poor old Bunter!” he said. “This is rather sad, you fellows! I didn’t believe he really was dying— but this looks—”
“By gad, it really looks—” said Lord Mauleverer, catching on to the game, as it were.
“He can’t be quite dead!” said Johnny Bull, in a hushed voice.
“The deadfulness of the esteemed Bunter seems to be terrific!” said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sorrowfully.
“I say, this is rather awful, you know!” said Nugent. “Surely he can’t be quite—quite——” He checked himself, as if unable to utter the terrible word.
“Poor old Bunter!” said Harry Wharton, with a break in his voice. “After all, you fellows, he wasn’t a bad chap, in his way.”

“In his way!” agreed Johnny Bull.
Bob Cherry dismounted, and approached Bunter. He bent over him, and pressed his hand to a well- filled waistcoat.
“Feel the heart beating?” asked Lord Mauleverer anxiously.
“No!” gasped Bob.
As Bob was feeling on the wrong side, it was not surprising, perhaps, that he failed to detect heartbeats! He rose to his feet, and took out his handkerchief.
“Boo-hoo! P-p-poor old Bunter!” he sobbed. “He-he’s gone! We—we shall never hear him talking about his postal order again! P-p-poor old Bunter! We—we—we’ve lost him!”
There, were sorrowful exclamations from the other fellows. Remorse, as Bunter had hoped, had smitten them—hard! They gathered round the fat Owl with solemn and serious faces. Billy Bunter at that moment had hard work not to chuckle. This was what the beasts deserved—and it served them right Silent, lifeless, still, the fat Owl sprawled in the grass, in the midst of the sorrowing circle— heartlessly leaving them to the torments of horror and remorse!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN
NOT A FUNERAL!

BOB CHERRY was the first to recover from that outburst of grief. He wiped his eyes, and put away his handkerchief. He addressed his comrades in broken tones.
“After this, you fellows, we can hardly go on sight-seeing! It would be unfeeling—in the circumstances!”
“Oh, quite!” agreed Harry Wharton.
“We’d better get back to the dahabiyeh at once—”
“Yes, rather!”
“Better not lose a moment!” said Johnny Bull. Billy Bunter tried hard not to grin. But he could not help it—he grinned. Fortunately, the juniors did not seem to observe it. Had they observed it, no doubt they would have been surprised to see a lifeless fat Owl grinning. But they seemed to see nothing.
“Sooner we’re back the better,” said Lord Mauleverer, with a nod.
“Only we can’t, of course, carry the body!” said Bob.
“Oh, no; quite impossible!”
“You see, we haven’t a donkey for Bunter—and we can’t expect him to walk, in the circumstances. Hassan!”
“Yes, sar!” said the staring dragoman.
“Show us the way to the nearest tomb. We’ve got to bury Bunter!”
“Oh, sar!” gasped the dragoman.
“Lucky there’s a lot of empty tombs here,” said Bob. “It couldn’t have happened better, so far as that goes.”
“The luckfulness is terrific!”
“No need to say anything about this afterwards, you men,” went on Bob. “An inquest won’t do Bunter any good now, poor old chap! And as we’re on holiday, we don’t want to be bothered with inquests—if they have them in Egypt! The simplest way is to bury him on the spot in one of these old tombs! Take his feet, Wharton!”
Bob Cherry stooped and took the lifeless form by its fat shoulders. Harry Wharton took it by its feet. Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh came to lend aid— which they

needed. Billy Bunter was heaved up from the grass.
Hassan led the way to the nearest of the innumerable rock tombs. The four juniors staggered after him with Billy Bunter. Hassan was grinning, and the donkey-boys staring. But the Greyfriars fellows were serious and solemn.
"Here is tomb, my lordly gentlemen!" grinned the dragoman. "Here is opening over steep stair, which is difficult to descend."
"No need to go down," said Bob, gasping. "My hat! He's a weight! Just drop him in—it won't hurt him now! Then we can cover him up with rocks— the donkey-boys can chuck rocks in on him—"
"Beast!" roared Bunter.
Wringing these fellows' hard hearts with remorse was all very well; but obviously it had to stop short before Bunter was dropped into the rock-tomb in ancient Memphis, and covered with a pile of rocks. It was time for Bunter to come to life again, and he came to life quite suddenly.
"Come on!" said Bob. "Only a few steps more—"
"I say, you fellows—"
"Get on with it!" gasped Wharton, "I can't stand this weight much longer. Keep still, Bunter! What the thump are you wriggling about for like an eel when you're dead?"
"You beast, I'm not dead!" yelled Bunter, wriggling frantically. "Don't you drop me into that
black hole, you beast— Yaroooh!"
"Rot!" said Johnny Bull decidedly. "You were dead five minutes ago—so it stands to reason you're
dead now! Chuck him in!"
"Yarooooh!"
"The chuckfulness is the proper caper!"
"Help!"
"For goodness' sake, Bunter be quiet!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Don't you know that dead
people have to be quiet? It's the thing."
"Beast! Leggo!"
"This is most unseemly, in the circumstances, Bunter," said Wharton. "I think you ought to chuck
it."
"Help! Fire! Murder! Yarooop!" roared Bunter.
"Keep away from that hole, you awful beasts! I might fall in! Whooop!"
"Get some rocks ready, Hassan! We'll fill it right up when Bunter's in. Ready, Bunter?"
"Oh, you beast! Leggo! Will you leggo, you rotters?" shrieked Bunter. "I'm not dead—you know jolly well that I'm not dead! I'm only hungry! Yarooh!"
"Lay him down on the edge, and then roll him

"Beasts!" roared "dead" Bunter, coming to life!

in," said Bob. "For goodness' sake stop that row, Bunter—you ought to know better than to kick up a row at a funeral! It's in the worst of taste!"
"Beast!" howled Bunter.
The juniors laid down the fat Owl on the edge of the yawning gap. He sprawled there and roared.
"Now, all together!" said Bob. "One good shove, and over he goes— Keep still, Bunter! We can't spend the rest of the day over your blessed funeral. What the thump are you getting up for, when you're dead, you fat ass?"
Bunter bounded up.
He bounded away.
"Collar him!" roared Bob. "The cheeky ass, making out he's not dead when we've taken all this trouble over his funeral—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
There was a roar of laughter that awakened most of the echoes of the ancient city of Memphis. Billy Bunter—from a safe distance—blinked at the Famous Five, and glared at them with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.
It dawned upon his fat brain, at last, that the juniors had been aware all the time that he was "spoofing." Their hard hearts had not been wrung with remorse, after all! And they had not really been going to bury him in the rock-tomb of Memphis! They had only been pulling his fat leg!
"You—you——you beasts!" gasped Bunter. "You knew all the time—"
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.
"I—I've a jolly good mind to whop you all round—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"And I would, if—if it wasn't so jolly hot—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Beasts!"
"Now Bunter's done his funny turn let's get on!" chuckled Bob Cherry.
And they got on!
Billy Bunter's fat brow was dark with wrath. But it cleared as he discerned that the party were proceeding in the direction of the Nile. The brown banks and the glimmering water came in sight again at last, and the dahabiyeh tied up to the bank.
Billy Bunter tottered across the gangway to the dahabiyeh. He tottered down to the dining-saloon. He howled to the Coptic cook. After which there was a sound of steady munching, and Bunter began
to feel that life was worth living again.