FRANK RICHARDS

Bunter the Tough Guy of Greyfriars

COVER ILLUSTRATION
BY MARY GERNAT

ARMADA
PAPERBACKS for Boys & Girls

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"Yarooh!" yelled Bob Cherry, holding the electrified telephone

Any Port in a Storm!

“OH, lor’!” groaned Billy Bunter.
“Wish you hadn’t come, old fat man?” grinned Bob Cherry.
“Ow! Yes! Beast! Yes! Ow!”
The rain came down in torrents. Billy Bunter was not the only fellow who wished that he hadn’t come. There were six other fellows present, and they all wished they hadn’t! Harry Wharton & Co. were trailing by a wet, weary path on Courtfield Common. Mist drifted over the common. and through the mist came pelting rain. The Famous Five were wet. Peter Todd was wet. Billy Bunter was wet! They were all wet—fearfully wet! And they were still a mile and a half from Greyfriars—and the rain, instead of

easing off, as they hoped, was coming down harder and harder. Bob Cherry remarked that they would have to swim for it soon, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh agreed that the swimfulness would be terrific. Johnny Bull proposed taking Peter Todd by the scruff of the neck and swamping him in a puddle—there were plenty available. It had been Peter's idea to picnic on the river that day— and this was the result.

It had been a fine afternoon, amazingly fine for October. It had been clear and sunny and really quite warm. Also, it had been a half-holiday. Toddy had suggested the picnic, and the Famous Five, rather against their better judgment, had agreed. Still, it had been a very nice picnic. Bunter, anyhow, had no doubts. He did not give a thought to the vagaries of the weather, his fat thoughts being concentrated on the contents of the picnic basket. Fine weather had held out till the picnic was over and it was time to walk back to the school across the common. Then quite suddenly the flood had opened.

"I say, you fellows, why didn't one of you bring an umbrella?" groaned Billy Bunter.

"Why didn't you, fatty?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Beast!"

"My hat! It's wet!" said Bob. "The blessed rain's trickling down my neck! Oooogh!"

"I'm drenched!" groaned Bunter.

"The drenchfulness of our esteemed selves is also somewhat terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Beast!"

Harry Wharton came to a halt, peering through the mist and the pouring rain.

"Look here, we'd better get shelter!" said the captain of the Remove. "This is too jolly thick."

"Hardly time to get in for calling-over," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, blow calling-over! Quelch wouldn't expect us to walk through this putrid rain."

"I say, you fellows, I can feel pneumonia coming on!" groaned Billy Bunter. "I'm getting it in both legs."

There was a chuckle from the drenched juniors. The idea of Billy Bunter getting pneumonia in his legs seemed to afford a little comic relief in the distressful situation.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" moaned the Owl of the Remove. "I'm getting double pneumonia— treble, I shouldn't wonder—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" howled Bunter. "Look here, you beasts, you've got me into this, and it's up to you to find some shelter, see? I'm not going to have pneumonia and plumbago to please you."

"Oh, come on!" said Bob. "There isn't any shelter for a mile."

"Hold On!" said Harry. "There's that old house—it's called the Willows—not far from here. It's been empty for donkeys' years, and the gate's always open. We could get in easily enough."

"Good egg!" said Peter Todd. "Anything to get out of this dashed rain. Lead on, Macduff!"

"It's not far from this path," said Harry. "We can get there in ten minutes or less."

The other fellows followed Wharton, and Billy Bunter followed the other fellows. With a series of deep groans, the fat Owl of the Remove rolled on through the rain. In the rainy mist it was not easy to find the way, but Wharton had often passed the Willows on his bicycle, and he remembered where the old house lay, between the common and the river. He kept on without a pause and reached a lane on the edge of the common. Across the lane a high brick wall loomed in the gloom.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Harry.

They splashed across the lane and followed the wall till they reached a gateway. For donkeys' years, as Wharton expressed it, the Willows had been in the hands of the estate agents to sell or to let, but neither a buyer nor a tenant had been found—at least, the old place had presented its customary dismal and deserted aspect the last time Wharton had passed it, early in the term. The rather
extensive grounds within the high brick wall had gone to weeds; the old gates were never fastened, and the mischievous youths of the neighbourhood often trespassed there, especially when there were apples in the old, neglected orchard. Wharton groped at the gate.
"Oh. my hat!" he ejaculated.
"Buck up, old bean," said Nugent. "If we're going to cut call-over, for goodness' sake let's get out of the rain. Is the gate stuck?"
"It's locked!"
"It's never locked," said Peter Todd. "Give it a shove."
"Fathead! It's locked now."
"Rot!" said Peter. "How could it be locked when the lock's been broken for dogs' ages? I'll get it open."
Peter Todd grasped the rusty metal bars of the high gate and shoved with all his strength. But he shoved in vain! The gate was immovable!
"Oh!" said Peter.
"Well, aren't you going to get it open?" asked the captain of the Remove sarcastically.
"'Hem!" Peter groped over the lock. "It—it—it's locked, after all! What silly ass has come along and locked it? Must be a new lock—the old one was in bits."
Harry Wharton glanced up at the high gate. It had spikes at the top and did not look easily negotiable.
"Bother!" grunted the captain of the Remove. "Look here, we can get over the wall! No harm in getting in as the place is empty. Half the windows are broken, and we can get into the house easily enough. Might get a fire going and dry ourselves while we wait for the rain to stop."
"Go it!" said Bob. "Who wants a bunk up?"
"I say. you fellows—"
"All hands on deck!" grinned Bob, and the juniors grasped Billy Bunter and heaved him up the six-foot wall. There were six of them, and they were all sturdy, but they needed all their beef to heave the fat Owl up. There was a lot of Bunter to lift.
"I say, you fellows—ow—stop pinching me, you beasts—wow!" Bunter clutched at the coping with his fat paws and scrambled up. "Ow! Leggo my legs, you beasts! I'm up!"
"Yaroooh!" roared Johnny Bull, as Bunter's boot, perhaps by accident, caught him on the nose. Possibly it was not by accident. William George Bunter was not in a good temper.
Johnny Bull reached up and smacked at the trousers that were disappearing over the wall. There was a wild howl from Bunter as he went over the top. It was followed by a sound of crashing shrubbery from the inner side of the wall and another and louder howl.
"Ow! I'm killed! My neck's broken! Yaroooooooh!"
"Come on!" chuckled Bob, and the juniors clambered over the wall and dropped among the drenched shrubberies inside.
"Ow! I say, you fellows. I'm hurt!" howled Bunter.
"Good!" said the fellows, all together.
"Beasts! My leg's broken!"

“Then you can’t move?” asked Bob Cherry.
“Ow! No! Not a step! Ow!”
“You’ll have to stay where you are, then, old fat bean! Good-bye!”
And the juniors trampled through the dripping shrubbery. followed by a yell from Billy Bunter.
“Yah! Beasts! Wait for me!”
And the fat Owl of the Remove scrambled up, and came bolting after them, apparently not severely injured, after all.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo!”
“What—”
“What’s that?”
The dripping juniors, pushing through the shrubbery, reached the drive that ran up from the gates to the old house. They tramped up the weedy, muddy, puddly drive, and then suddenly Harry Wharton stopped, as there was a rustle in a great oak branch that jutted overhead.
It was rainy and misty and shadowy, but not quite dark yet. In the dimness the captain of the Remove stared up at the swaying oak branch, and at a figure that clung to it, clambering. A startled ejaculation came from all the party, except Bunter, who saw nothing but the rain. His big spectacles were wet with the rain, and his vision was blurred.
“What the thump?” gasped Nugent.
“Is it a—a—a monkey?”
“Great pip!”
In sheer amazement the juniors stared. The figure was small, if it was a man—hardly larger than one of the schoolboys. But could it be a man, clambering over the branches of trees in the rain? It’s movements were wonderfully swift. It seemed to perceive the juniors, and peered down at them, and they were sure that they caught the glimmer of a pair of spectacles. They were sure, too, that the figures was clothed, in which case it could hardly have been a monkey. But it was only for a second that it peered; then it whisked along the branch at an amazing speed, and vanished into the body of the tree.
Heedless of the rain for the moment, Harry Wharton & Co. stood still, staring up at the oak.
A rustling sound told that the strange creature was still in motion, though out of sight. it was swinging from one tree to another, and as they were spaced well apart, this showed an agility and a recklessness that seemed scarcely human. But if it was a monkey it was a monkey as large as a human being. And how in the name of wonder had it got there?
“What—what—what was it?” gasped Bob.
“A monkey——”
“But it had specs on! I’m sure I saw specs!” gasped Nugent.
“And it had a coat on,” breathed Wharton. “What the thump—”
“It had grey hair,” said Johnny Bull. “I’m certain I spotted a mop of grey hair. It was an old man.”
“Well, it can hardly have been,” said Harry. “An old man couldn’t climb trees like that. Blessed if I think a boy could, either!”
“I say, you fellows, come on!” squeaked Billy Bunter. “What are you hanging about and gabbing for, you dummies?”
Unheeding Bunter, the juniors looked and listened, with a vague feeling of alarm in

their breasts. That momentary glimpse of the strange, weird figure in the tree had utterly startled them.
But it was gone, and no further sound was heard from it. Their hearts were beating rather fast as they watched and listened. But there was no sign now of the strange Creature.
“I say, you fellows—”
“Oh, come On!” said Bob. “Whatever it was, it won’t damage us. And we’re getting frightfully wet.”
The juniors tramped on towards the old house.
“What did you fellows think you saw?” grunted Bunter.
“Somebody, or something, clambering in that oak,” answered Harry Wharton.
“Rubbish!” said Bunter. “Just like you fellows to be frightened by a shadow. Lot of funks. if you ask me!”
“Who’s frightened?” roared Johnny Bull.
“Yah!”
“Hallo, hallo, hallo! There’s a light in the house!” exclaimed Bob Cherry, as, following the last curve of the avenue, they came in sight of the building at last.
From the dim mist ahead, and the following October darkness, a light twinkled out. It came from some window in the black mass of the old buildings.
“Somebody’s there!” said Frank Nugent.
“Some tramp camping,” said Peter Todd. “That’s all right; we can handle him if he gives any trouble. Get on!”
“I suppose that’s it,” said Harry slowly. “But—”
“Oh, come on!”
The Willows was an old, bay-windowed, double-fronted house. In the centre was a large stone porch on which the main door opened. Now that they were close at hand the juniors could see a glimmer of light from the porch, as well as from one of the windows. It was clear that someone was in the house, which they had expected to find utterly deserted. But a doubt was growing up in Harry Wharton’s mind. It was some weeks since he had seen the place, and he had taken it for granted that it was still unoccupied, as it had been for years past. But it occurred to him now that it might, after all, have found a tenant.
His doubt became rather a certainty as he saw that the window from which the light glimmered was curtained.
There had been no curtains at the windows when he had last seen the old house.
“My hat! Hold on!” he said. “The place has been taken. There’s people living here.”
“Phew!” murmured Bob Cherry.
“That’s why a lock’s been put on the gate,” said Harry. “I never thought that— But it’s pretty plain now. And we’re trespassing.”
“I say, you fellows—”
“Dry up, Bunter!”
“Well, dash it all, we can ask for shelter from the rain!” said Johnny Bull. “There’s plenty of sheds, if they don’t want us in the house. If there’s somebody there, we’d better knock at the door.”
“We’d better let them know we’re here,” said Bob. “Might take us for tramps or burglars. We’ll knock.”
The juniors went under the high, stone porch. It was windy and damp there, but they were out of the falling rain. There was a great oak door in front of them, with a huge, old-fashioned knocker on it; but they could see now that the door was ajar. A glimmer of light escaped from the illuminated hall within.

Harry Wharton reached up to the knocker. There was some shelter in the porch without going in; but the juniors could hardly crowd there without apprising the house owner of their presence. He knocked.
Knock, knock, knock!
The knocking rang and echoed in the old house.
But there was no sound of footsteps within. There came no reply to the knocking, but the echo.
"Nobody at home," said Bob. "Looks as if the house has been taken; but there's nobody in."
"I say, you fellows, I'm going in!" snorted Billy Bunter, as a gust of wind scattered raindrops in the porch. And the Owl of the Remove pushed at the great heavy oak door, and it swung wide open.
Bunter rolled in. The juniors. a little dubious about entering without permission, looked into the hall.
Billy Bunter shook off a shower of raindrops and grunted. There was a deep, old-fashioned fireplace in the hall, but there was no fire in it. But the atmosphere inside was warm, and showed that there was heating somewhere.
"I say, you fellows——"
"I suppose we can step inside!" said Bob doubtfully.
"And suppose the owner comes along and drops on you?" asked Johnny Bull.
"Oh, blow him! " said Bunter. "I'm wet!"
There was a streak of light under a door on the left: it came from the lighted room. Billy Bunter blinked round, rolled across it to, and took hold of the door-handle.
"Knock, you fat chump!" snapped Harry. "There may be somebody there!"
"He would have heard you knocking, fathead!" growled Bunter. "There's nobody at home!"
However, the fat junior tapped on the door.
There was no sound from within, and Billy Bunter turned the handle and threw the door open. The other fellows were in the hall now, and they glanced into the room. It was a large, lofty apartment, and seemed to be fitted up as a laboratory. They could see that the fittings were new, in contrast to the old, time-worn look of the house. Glass retorts and flasks, and other things of the same kind, were packed on shelves, and there were several partly unpacked cases, which apparently contained similar things. But what attracted the wet and cold schoolboys chiefly was a bright fire that burned in the grate across the room. A large leather armchair that stood by it looked very inviting.
Harry Wharton & Co. hesitated. Obviously, there was nobody in the house at the moment: but as the front door had been left ajar, it looked as if the owner might return at any moment.
But Billy Bunter had no such hesitation. The glowing fire and the cosy armchair decided the matter for Bunter. After a blink around the room through his big spectacles, Billy Bunter rolled in at the doorway.
The next moment a fearful yell rang out—echoed in a startled cry from the juniors in the hall, as the floor opened under Billy Bunter's feet, and he vanished suddenly from their sight.
"Yaroooooh!"
That yell left Bunter's lips as he vanished.
Harry Wharton & Co., rooted to the floor in the hall, stared with staring eyes into the room.

The floor opened under Bunter's feet and he vanished suddenly from sight

For a moment or two they could hardly believe in what had happened.
Bunter was gone!
The floor of the laboratory was intact. The trapdoor through which the fat Owl had fallen had shot up instantly into place. The floor looked as it had looked before—solid oak, firm and solid to the tread. Evidently that trapdoor was worked by some hidden mechanism.
"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry, breaking the horrified silence.
"Bunter!" gasped Nugent.
"He—he—he's gone!" almost babbled Peter Todd.
Toddy's face was white as he stared at the spot where Billy Bunter had disappeared
Wharton drew a deep breath. The thought was in his mind—in the minds of all the juniors—that the trapdoor concealed some deep and dangerous pit, and that the Owl of the Remove might have sustained serious injury in the fall. But what did it all mean? Who was the mysterious tenant of the Willows who protected his property by this strange means, instead of relying on locks and bolts and bars? Who and what could he be?
"We—we've got to help Bunter!" said Harry at last, and he moved to the doorway of the laboratory.
Nugent caught his arm.
"Look out! No good tumbling in after Bunter."
"I'll be careful!"
Wharton dropped on his hands and knees and tested the floor carefully with his hands as he advanced. The other fellows watched him breathlessly. Just within the door a section of the oak flooring stirred under the pressure of Wharton's hand. The trap had replaced itself, and could not be distinguished by the eye from the surrounding oak; but evidently it was ready to drop under another footstep.
But it was not a footstep on it now; it was a hand pressing, and the trap sank a few inches under the pressure, while Wharton knelt on the safe side of it. Now that there was an aperture, a voice came from below—the voice of Billy Bunter on its top note.
"Yaroooh! Oh, crikey! I say, you fellows! Help! Gemme out of this! Oh, lor'! Help! Rescue!"
It was a relief to hear Bunter's voice again. It was clear that the fall had not much damaged the fat Owl.
"Are you hurt, Bunter?" called out Wharton.
"Yes, frightfully!" came Bunter's prompt reply.
"Smashed to pieces! My back's broken in three places——"
"You fat idiot!"
"Oh, really, Wharton! I mean, it's nearly broken! I've dropped my specs."
"Bother your specs, you fat duffer!"

“Beast!”
Wharton pressed the trap harder, till it sank almost vertically on its hidden, well-oiled hinges. Then he could see the Owl of the Remove, and the other fellows, gathering close to him, could see also. Billy Bunter blinked up at them like an owl in the light. Evidently he was not hurt, though, as the pit was a good ten feet deep, he had had rather a fall. The floor of it was covered with a large quilt, on which Bunter had plumped. It was a huge eiderdown quilt of immense thickness, and Bunter’s feet sank deep in it as he stood up. The juniors could only stare at it. Whoever had planned this trap to catch intruders in the laboratory. had desired only to catch them, not to hurt them! Plainly the owner of the Willows was a kind-hearted man, weird as his manners and customs seemed to be.
“I say, you fellows, get me out of this!” yelled Bunter. “I’m fearfully injured! I say, fancy laying a trap like this for a fellow! I’d jolly well like to punch the beast’s head! I say, I’ve dropped my specs—”
“There they are, just behind you, fathead!”
Bunter blinked round him, recovered his specs, and jammed them on his fat little nose.
“Now get me out!” he hooted, blinking up at the faces looking down.
“How?” asked Bob Cherry.
“We can’t reach you, you ass!”
“Beast!” yelled Bunter. “Find a rope! Very likely there’s a rope in the house! Root all over the place, and find one, or a ladder!”
“Might be a ladder in one of the outhouses,” said Bob. “But how the dickens could we find it in the dark?”
“Look for it!” howled Bunter. “I can’t stay here! Look here! You can get into the room by jumping over the trap. Pitch some of the furniture down—chairs and things—and I can make a stack and climb out.”
“Oh, my hat! Do you think we can handle a man’s property like that?”
“Serve him jolly well right! What right has he to set a trap like this for a fellow?” yelled Bunter.
Bob Cherry chuckled.
“Must have been set for burglars,” he said. “The jolly old sportsman didn’t know we were coming in here out of the rain.”
“We’ll try to get you out somehow, Bunter,” said Harry. “You’ll have to stick there till we find a way. You can be jolly thankful that you’re not damaged!”
“I’m fearfully damaged! I’ve got pains all over——”
“Your pains are all over?” asked Bob.
“Yes, you beasts”
“Well, you’ll have to wait a bit, old fat man,” said Harry. “We’ll do the best we can for you.”
Wharton jammed his wet cap into the edge of the trap to keep it partly open. It remained a few inches open space sufficient to allow passage to Bunter’s voice, which went on and on and on like the little brook in the poem. But the juniors did not heed it further With the trap partly sunk, its extent was visible to the eye, and the juniors were able to jump across it and land safely in the room.
But once inside they were very wary in their movements on the look-out for other traps. Some of the packing-cases standing about the room had been corded as well as nailed; and a good deal of the cord lay about. Harry Wharton began to gather it up.
“That Won’t take Bunter’s weight,” said Peter Todd
“We know how to plait, and there’s plenty of it,” said Harry. “Three plaited together

will bear Bunter, and we'll hook him out."
"Good egg!" said Bob.
And the loose cords having been gathered, the juniors prepared to plait them into a strong rope.
"I bag the armchair" said Peter Todd, and he sat down in the big leather chair by the fire. "Yooop! Whooop! What the thump—geroogh! Whooh-hoooop!" yelled Peter frantically, as the padded arms of the armchair closed in on him, Pinning him by either side and holding him a prisoner!

Amazing!

"OH my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.
The Famous Five ran towards Peter. But they could not help him. He was gripped in the thick
leather arms of the chair, a helpless prisoner— his arms waving, his legs kicking, but his body held fast. Evidently the trap into which Billy Bunter had fallen was not the only one in that strange place. Peter yelled wildly.
"Ow! What the thump—help me out—draw the thing off! Oh, crikey! What blessed lunatic has rigged this up? Oh, crumbs!"
The juniors grabbed at the arms of the chair—they dragged and pulled and lugged and tugged. But it made no difference. There was no escape for Toddy!
"Nothing doing!" gasped Nugent. "My hat! We're in a queer place, and no mistake!"
"The queerfulness is terrific."
"Who can the man be that's taken this place—what can he be?" exclaimed Wharton.
"Some scientific johnny, I suppose—the lab looks like it! But it's all fearfully odd."
"Look here, get hold of something and smash up this dashed chair!" roared Peter Todd.
"My dear man, we mustn't smash up a man's property in a man's house," said Bob.
"He never asked you to sit in his chair, whoever he is. You'll have to wait for him to roll home. Let's hope he'll be in before the milk in the morning!"
Nothing could be done for Peter. He had to wait—that was clear. He was not hurt—only rather uncomfortable. Uncomfortable or not, he had to stay where he was.
"When the thump is the man coming in?" growled Johnny Bull. "We can't clear off, even if the rain stops, and leave Bunter and Toddy here. And we're late for call-over already. Quelch will have his back up."
"The front door was ajar—the owner must be in the grounds somewhere, I should think," said Harry.
"In this rain?" said Bob.
"Well, he seems a queer sort of customer anyhow! I Wonder—" Wharton was thinking of the strange figure he had glimpsed clambering in the oak-tree.
But he broke off. It seemed impossible to imagine, for one moment, that the master of the house was that little, strange figure that had been climbing trees like a monkey! Yet the thought lingered in Wharton's mind But if so, was he some lunatic?
"Look here, what about ringing up Quelch?" said Bob. "There's a telephone on the desk there—and goodness knows when we shall get away from here. We can let Quelch know that we're hung up, before he gets his hair off, and makes up his mind to give us six each."
"Good wheeze!" said Harry at once. "Go it!"
Bob Cherry Crossed to it. Obviously it was a good idea to let their Form-master at Greyfriars know that they could not get back to the school. Bunter might be rescued

from the cellar, but there was no rescue for Toddy from the grip of the mechanical armchair: and they had to wait till the owner of the Place came in. That, for all they knew, might be hours! And already the roll had been called in Big Hall at Greyfriars School, and they had been marked absent.
He stood at the desk and lifted the receiver from the hooks. The next moment he bounded from the floor, yelling at the top of his voice.
"Whooop! Yooop! Yarooooh! Urrrrrgg! Ooooh!"
"What the dickens—— gasped Wharton. The juniors Stared at Bob Cherry in blank amazement. It seemed for the moment, as if he had taken sudden leave of his senses. Holding the telephone receiver in his hand, he was dancing and jumping and hopping frantically.
"What's the matter?" bawled Johnny Bull.
"My esteemed and idiotic Bob" gasped the Nabob of Bhanipur.
"Ow! Turn it off!" shrieked Bob, still dancing.
"Turn what off ?" yelled Nugent.
"I'm electrified!"
"Oh. Crumbs!" gasped Wharton realising that Bob had inadvertently fallen into another of the mysterious traps in that mysterious apartment "There—there must be a current of electricity on—"
"Yaroooh! Whooop!"
"Let it go, you ass!" yelled Johnny Bull. "Chuck it down."
"I can't!" howled Bob.
"Oh, crikey!"
"Wow-ow-ow-wow!" roared Bob. "Smash the dashed thing! Get hold of something and smash it to bits! Wow!"
"My dear man, you mustn't smash up a man's property in a man's house!" grinned Peter Todd, parodying Bob's remark of a few minutes before. "He never asked you to use his telephone."
"You silly ass! I'll jolly well punch your silly head when I get loose!" roared Bob.
"Hallo!" exclaimed Wharton, as there was a sound in the hall. "That's somebody coming in!"
There was a footstep in the hall without. It came from the front door, towards the open doorway of the laboratory where the Greyfriars fellows stood. They turned their eyes on the doorway breathlessly, to see the strange owner of the Willows when he appeared.
"My only hat!" gasped Wharton, as a figure came into view, moving with a quick agility that was surprising in one evidently of advanced years. But that was not all that surprised the captain of the Remove. He had seen that figure before—he knew that he had!
It was a little old gentleman who stood looking in at the doorway. He was plainly of advanced age, for his thick locks of hair were silvery white, his bushy eyebrows like snow. His eyes, small and round and bright like a parrot's, gleamed through a large pair of horn-rimmed glasses. He was bare-headed, and his silvery locks were wet—rain dripped from him. And Wharton knew, with an amazement beyond words, that this was the figure he had seen in the oak-tree. This silver-haired little old gentleman, sixty-five at the very least, was the figure that had climbed and clambered with the agility of a monkey!

"What are you doing here?"
The little old gentleman spoke in a clear, pleasant voice, in which there was no sign of

age.
Standing outside the doorway, he looked in on the juniors, with a faint smile on his old face. But the expression of his face was kindly. He did not seem surprised to see strangers in his laboratory; no doubt he had heard Bob's frantic Yelling as he came into the house. His tone Was one of polite inquiry.
"Yaroooh," came from Bob. "Will you turn it off, blow you"
"I say, You fellows——" came from Billy Bunter below.
"Please excuse us, sir!" stammered Harry Wharton.
"We were looking for shelter from the rain, and—and——"
"Ah! You are the boys I saw on the avenue?"
"Oh! Yes!" gasped Harry. If he had doubted before, he knew now that the silver-haired gentleman was the man in the oak. "The—the door was open, and—and we——"
"Oh, quite!" said the little gentleman. "I understand! Probably you noticed me taking exercise on the avenue What?"
"Yes," gasped Wharton "We—we saw you in the tree——" He hardly knew what to say. The man seemed sane enough; yet his proceedings undoubtedly seemed rather like those of a lunatic.
"Will you let me go?" bawled Bob Cherry.
"Certainly my boy," answered the master of the Willows. "I will release you at once. You should not have entered my laboratory. I have taken certain precautions against intruders—you seem to have discovered some of them However there is no harm done."
He skipped into the room, over the trap. It was a width of six feet—an easy enough jump for the juniors, but they would hardly have expected a man of such an age to skip over it so actively. But the little old man did it without a visible effort.
He leaned over the desk and touched a hidden button. The current was shut off at once, and Bob dropped the receiver. He rubbed his tingling hands and blinked at the silver-haired gentleman.
"My turn next, sir!" said Peter Todd.
"Quite!"
The little old man bent over the armchair and touched it, and the leather arms flew apart. Toddy rose to his feet.
"I say, you fellows——", came a squeak from the cellar.
"There's a fellow fallen through the trap, sir!" said Harry. "Luckily he's not hurt but——"
"I will release him! " said the master of the Willows.
He stepped to the trap and pushed it down. Apparently his touch disconnected the spring that caused it to rise into its place, for it hung down from its hinges.
"Look here, you get me out of this—see?" roared Bunter.
"Certainly, my boy! You should not have entered my laboratory, and you would not have fallen in!" said the old gentleman mildly. "Reach up your hand and give me a hold."
"Eh! You can't pull me out!" said Bunter.
"Do as I tell you!"
"We shall have to have a rope, or a ladder, sir," said Harry. "Bunter's awfully heavy——"
"I think I can manage, thanks!"
The juniors could only stare. If that little old gentleman. who looked as if he did not weigh more than seven stone, fancied that he could pull Billy Bunter's terrific weight

out of the cellar, he had a surprise in store for him. So it seemed to the schoolboys, at least.
The silver-haired old fellow lay down on the floor, and reached down into the cellar, to the full extent of his arm. Billy Bunter, standing on tiptoe and reaching up, was able to grasp his hand.
That he could pull Bunter up was manifestibly impossible. It was impossible that, in such a position. he could have pulled up a fellow half, or a quarter, of Bunter's weight.
But it was the impossible that happened!
The thin old hand closed firmly on Bunter's fat fingers, in a grip that brought a yell from the Owl of the Remove. Then the little old gentleman rose on his knees, pulling Bunter up with one hand.
"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter. "Oh, crikey!"
A moment more, and the old gentleman was on his feet, and Billy Bunter was swung out of the cellar, and landed beside the group of staring juniors.
It was difficult to believe their eyes! The strength that dwelt in that slight old figure was more than astonishing, more than amazing—it was unnerving!
There was something uncanny in it.
"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "I'm not believing this—it's a jolly old dream, and we shall wake up in the dorm!"
Taking no heed of the juniors' breathless astonishment, the little old gentleman closed the trap.
There was a click as it fastened, and they realised now that it was secure and could be walked on safely.
Then he turned and gave them a smile.
"You are wet!" he said. "You may dry yourselves at my fire, if you wish, before you leave. The rain will not last much longer. You are welcome to remain till it is over, if you wish."
"Thank you, sir!" said Harry "I hope you will forgive us for butting in as we did, but we thought the house was empty when we came——"
"It's been empty for years," said Nugent
"I quite understand. I have been here only two or three weeks and as you see, we are not in order yet." He indicated the packing-cases with a smile. "My man is absent, in Courtfield at present, or you would not have found the house unoccupied. I am Professor Sparkinson," he added. "May I ask who you are?"
"We're Greyfriars fellows sir," answer Harry, and the juniors gave their names, hoping the professor did not intend to report them to their headmaster for trespassing. Considering, they were strangers who had barged into his house in his absence, he was taking the intrusion very good-temperedly and kindly.
Billy Bunter rolled to the fire, and plumped into the armchair. The mechanism seemed to be disconnected now, for it received him in the usual way of an armchair, and did not imprison the fat Owl as it had imprisoned Toddy.
Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round the fire, still in a state of great astonishment and perplexity, but grateful for the hospitality of the mysterious master of the Willows.
"You have not, I trust, meddled with any of my apparatus," said the professor.
"No, sir!" said Harry.
"It would scarcely be safe to do so," said Professor Sparkinson. "It is not only to protect my property that I have fitted up so many defences to my laboratory but to protect any thoughtless intruder from harm. When I am tired with my work I run out to take a little exercise in the grounds and leave things just as they are."

“The juniors could not help thinking that the old gentleman took his exercise in a very remarkable way. Apparently, however, it did him good, to judge by the amazing strength he displayed. There was something mysterious, uncanny, superhuman, about that strength.
Although they assured him that they had not touched the chemistry bench, the little, silver-haired gentleman stepped up to it and ran his eye over it. He picked up a small phial, which contained a crimson fluid, and examined the stopper, and was evidently relieved to find it intact. He gave the juniors a quick, suspicious glance over his shoulder as he dropped the phial into a drawer and locked it. Then he smiled again and sat down at the desk. The Juniors’ eyes followed him. He had taken a pencil and paper, which he was covering with algebraic signs—algebra rather too advanced for Remove fellows to make head or tail of it. No doubt it meant something to the old professor, for he bent his silvery head over it, his attitude one of deep concentration, obviously forgetful that he was not alone in the room.
The juniors stood in silence, unwilling to interrupt his deep calculations, whatever they were. The lashing and splashing of the rain grew fainter, and Bob Cherry at last went into the hall to look out. He came back with the announcement that it was nearly over, and that they could get a move on.
“I say, you fellows, what about phoning for a taxi?” asked Bunter.
“Nothing doing,” said Bob Cherry.
“Good-night, sir!” said Harry.
No answer.
“Thanks very much, sir!” said Nugent.
“The thankfulness is terrific, honoured sahib!” said the Nabob of Bhanipur.
No reply—and no movement from the man at the desk! Evidently he did not even hear! The juniors exchanged glances and smiled, and trod quietly out of the room.
The rain had almost stopped. Under a few lingering drops they tramped down the drive, clambered over the wall, and took their way across the common to the school.
And as they went they wondered, and could not help wondering, about the strange old fellow at the Willows, little dreaming, or guessing, just then of the strange results that were to follow the arrival of Professor Sparkinson in the neighbourhood of Greyfriars School!

A Letter from Alonzo!

“ONE for Toddy!” said Bob Cherry
It was morning break at Greyfriars and some of the juniors had gathered round the letter-rack—some of them, no doubt, keen on letters from affectionate relatives at home; some, perhaps, still keener on possible remittances from the same quarter.
Billy Bunter blinked over the rack through his big Spectacles, and grunted. There was no letter for Bunter! Once more his titled relations had overlooked him; once more his celebrated postal order, so long expected had failed to arrive.
But there Was a letter for Peter Todd, and as Peter was Bunter’s study-mate, along with Torn Dutton in Study No 7, Bunter took a friendly interest in that letter for Peter. If there was, by happy chance, a remittance in that letter, Bunter was prepared to carry his friendliness to the extent of borrowing some of it from Peter!
“I say, hand that letter down, Bob,” said the Owl of the Remove. ‘I’ll take it to Toddy; he’s not here.”
“I’ve seen that fist before” remarked Skinner, glancing at the letter as Bob took it

down. “That’s from Toddy’s cousin, Alonzo, who’s been away so long. Let’s hope he’s not coming back!”
“What rot!” said Vernon-Smith “I’d be jolly glad to see Alonzo Todd back at Greyfriars. Life isn’t half so funny Without him.”
“Something in that,” agreed Skinner. “Its rather amusin’ to pull his leg. Never was such a born idiot”
“Oh, rotten!” said Bunter, as he took the letter from Bob. “We’re three in the study now; blessed if I want that ass, Alonzo barging in again. There’s no room in my study for four.”
“Must be,” said Bob Cherry “You count as two, old fat man, if not three.”
Bunter rolled out into the quad with the letter in his hand. If that letter was, as Skinner supposed, from Alonzo Todd, it was not likely that there was a remittance in it. It might contain only the news that Alonzo’s expected return to school was to materialise at last. On the other hand, the letter, though addressed in Alonzo’s well-known spidery hand, might not be from him at all. For Alonzo was one of those obliging youths who do anything for anybody, and it was quite probable that he had addressed the envelope for sonic elder relative. When Alonzo was at Greyfriars, Billy Bunter frequently got him to address envelopes for him and to stick stamps on them, too, if Alonzo had any stamps. So the fat Owl of the Remove still hoped for the best.
Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles in quest of Peter. Peter was not to be seen.
There was not much time left. And if there wasn’t a remittance in that letter, Bunter had no desire whatever to spend his leisure moments hunting for Toddy! He turned the letter over and over in his fat hands, wondering whether it might come open by accident, if he rumpled and crumpled it long enough.
It did! Alonzo, who was a champion duffer in most things, had left the flap only partly stuck—and it came partly open. Billy Bunter inserted a fat forefinger into the orifice to enlarge it—no doubt also by accident.
“Oh, dear! It’s come open!” said Bunter. “Fancy that! Well, no harm in looking inside before I shut it up again. After all, old Toddy’s a pal.”
Bunter hooked out the letter.
To his deep disappointment, there was no sign of a remittance. And the letter was written in the same spidery hand as the superscription. It was, after all, a letter from Alonzo.
“Beast! “ murmured Bunter.
Perhaps on the principle that a fellow might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, Bunter blinked at the letter, now that it was open. Or perhaps it was by another accident that he read it from end to end. It ran:

“Dear Peter,—You will, I am convinced, be excessively pleased to hear that Uncle Benjamin has decided that I shall return to Greyfriars without further delay. Although I take exceeding pleasure in the improving society of my elderly relations, I look forward with considerable satisfaction to resuming my studies at Greyfriars, and to beholding you once more, my dear Peter, a pleasure which I am sure you will fully share. I shall not be displeased even to see Bunter again, little as he conforms to the high-minded principles I have learned from Uncle Benjamin. I shall arrive, my dear Peter, on Wednesday afternoon, by the three o’clock train at Courtfield and it would be a great happiness to see you at the station, when we could enjoy a walk across the common and an agreeable—and, I trust, improving conversation.”

"Your affectionate cousin,
"ALONZO TODD"

Bunter snorted. That long-winded epistle was very like Alonzo. It was a bore to read such stuff: and Bunter had gained absolutely nothing by opening the letter, at the risk of a severe kicking from Peter.
"Silly ass!" growled Bunter.
He shoved the letter back into the envelope, and stuck down the flap. Then he blinked at it rather dubiously.
The flap was torn and grubby finger-marks covered it. It was obvious to the most casual glance that that letter had been opened .
A bell Clanged. Bunter thrust the letter into his pocket, and rolled away towards the House. He was going, of course, to hand that letter to Peter—it belonged to Peter. But if it happened to get lost, by some unforeseen accident, it would save a lot of trouble with Toddy—and save Bunter from a kicking, Bunter was not going to lose that letter intentionally. But he hoped that it would get lost
—and, in the circumstances, it was probable that that hope would prove well-founded.

"Playing football Peter?"
"Yes!"
"Oh, good!" said Bunter.
Billy Bunter grinned.
Peter was not aware that a letter from his cousin Alonzo had arrived at Greyfriars a day or two ago, and had been—by accident—lost!
For that letter had been lost. It had remained in Billy Bunter's pocket for a considerable time. The fat Owl, whose powers of self deception were wonderful, had persuaded himself that he was going to hand it over to Toddy—when he thought of it. But he did not think of it—and the letter happened to be used when Bunter was lighting the study fire—entirely, of course, by an oversight. And the missive having thus vanished from existence, Bunter did not see any reason for mentioning it to Toddy at all.
Anyhow, he would know that Alonzo was coming, when Alonzo came. As for meeting Alonzo at the station, Bunter had his own ideas about that. Alonzo, returning to school after a long absence, was fairly certain to return with tips from affectionate relatives—especially from Uncle Benjamin. He was not likely to remain long in funds—Alonzo's pocket-money being at the disposal of any fellow who asked him for a loan, so long as it lasted. Bunter's idea was to get in first and avoid the crush, as it were!
Hence the expressive grin on his fat face, which extended his mouth, naturally rather wide, almost from one fat ear to the other.
"Well, what's the joke, fatty?" inquired Peter, staring at the grinning face of the Owl of the Remove. "What are you grinning at?"
"Your features, old chap!" answered Bunter pleasantly. "They have that effect on a fellow, you know. He, he, he! Yarooooh!" added Bunter, as Peter took him by the neck and tapped his head on an elm. "Whooop!"
Peter strolled away, leaving Bunter rubbing his head.
"Beast!" roared Bunter.
Harry Wharton & Co., sauntering in the quad, were discussing the afternoon's game. Much to the indignation of Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Fourth Form, the heroes of the Remove regarded that match as merely footer practice, which did not require the

first-class players of the form.
Leaving Billy Bunter rubbing his head and yelping, Peter Todd bore down on the Famous Five, and barged into the discussion.
“What about Dutton?” he asked.
Harry Wharton smiled, and shook his head.
“Look here, I’m the only man from Study No. 7 in the team,” said Peter warmly, “and I think I remember telling you, more than once, that Study No. 7 is top study in the Remove.”
“I sort of remember hearing you say so!” remarked Bob Cherry. “But what about Study No. 13?”
“Oh, don’t be as ass! Dutton’s a jolly good half,” said Peter. “Look here, Wharton, put him in, and chance it, see.”
“But that means leaving out a forward to make room for Dutton,” said Harry, “and already—Nugent’s in Smith’s place, and Wibley’s in Inky’s and——”
“Stand out yourself!” suggested Peter.
“Eh?”
“I could captain the team in your place, and that would make room for old Dutton!” explained Peter.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“What are you cackling at?” demanded Toddy. “Your little joke, old man,” answered the captain of the Remove. “You’re not a bad forward, Toddy, but you couldn’t skipper a team of toffee.”
“You silly, cheeky ass—”
“When’s Alonzo coming back?” asked Bob Cherry. “Eh? I haven’t heard yet! Never mind Alonzo—I’m not talking about Alonzo—”
“I am, though!” said Bob. “Let’s talk about Alonzo instead of Soccer. Is he still as like you as he used to be?”
“I believe so! Look here——”
“Poor chap!” said Bob, with a sad shake of the head.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“You silly chump!” roared Peter. “Look here, Wharton, are you playing my pal Dutton or not?”
“Not!” answered the captain of the Remove.
“Then I can jolly well tell you you’re a cheeky ass, and I can tell you that I’m not going to stand—”
“You’re not going to stand?”
“No! I tell you I’m not going to stand——”
“Sit down, then!” suggested Bob Cherry.
“I’m not going to—yarooooh! Whoooop!” roared Peter, as the grinning five suddenly grasped him and sat him down in the quad.
He sat down quite hard and roared. The Famous Five walked away smiling, and left him to roar.
“He, he, he!” came from Billy Bunter, who had watched that little scene with great entertainment. “He, he, he!”
Peter Todd scrambled up. The Famous Five were gone—but Billy Bunter was there, cachinnating! Peter wanted to whop somebody—and there was Bunter, asking for it! So he whopped Bunter.
“Ow! Beast! Leggo! Yah! Oh, crikey! Whoop!” Bunter fled.
Peter’s face was rather morose when he went to Little Side with the Remove footballers. Peter’s belief was that Study No. 7 was—or, at least, ought to have

been—the top study in the Remove.
But a change was coming—if Peter had only known it. It was going to be a strange. startling, and dramatic change! But Peter did not know that, and still less did he dream that it was going to have anything to do with the little silver-haired old gentleman at the Willows—whose existence he had almost forgotten!

Beastly for Bunter!

"WHAT luck!" said Ponsonby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.
"Real luck!" said Gadsby.
"Just when we were lookin' for something to do!" grinned Monson.
Pon & Co. made those remarks as they watched a fat figure rolling along a path on Courtfield Common. Even if they had not known that figure by its extensive circumference, they would have known it by the big spectacles that flashed back the rays of the sun. And the knuts of Highcliffe looked quite pleased to see Billy Bunter.
The three slackers of Highcliffe were at a loose end that afternoon. Football was going on at Highcliffe, but they cared nothing for Soccer.
Pon had catapulted Coker, of the Greyfriars Fifth, from behind a bush, and the young rascals had fled before Coker could get near them. They had chanced on Solly Lazarus on the common, and stuffed his cap down his back. Now they were sauntering towards the Willows, the old house between the common and the river. Not having heard that it was now occupied, they were going to root over the place and do what damage they could.
In such pleasant ways did Pon & Co. find amusement on a half-holiday, when time hung heavily on their hands. But at the sight of Billy Bunter they forgot other things. and concentrated on Bunter. Ragging a Greyfriars man appealed to them more than anything else; if that Greyfriars man could not put up much of a scrap. And Billy Bunter couldn't!
Bunter, too short-sighted to see them at a distance, rolled on unsuspiciously. He was taking the short cut across the common to the town to save the distance by the road. It was a fine, clear afternoon—just the day for a walk. But the less walking Bunter did the better he liked it.
Pon & Co. stepped out to greet him as he came abreast. And Billy Bunter halted, with a startled blink at them through his big spectacles.
"Oh, crikey!" he ejaculated in dismay.
"Here we are again!" smiled Ponsonby. "Jolly glad to see you, Bunter! The right man at the right moment!"
"Fancy meetin' you, old podgy bean!" said Monson.
"I—I say, you fellows, m-m-m-my friends are just behind," stammered Bunter. "No larks, you know! Bob Cherry's just coming, and Toddy, and——"
Pon gave a swift glance across the grassy, furzy common. Had Bob Cherry and Peter Todd been in the offing, Pon & Co. certainly would have abandoned their idea of ragging a Greyfriars man on the spot.
But there was no one to be seen; and it was evident that Billy Bunter was—as usual—prevaricating. He was not to escape so easily as all that!
"Bunter, my young friend," said Ponsonby solemnly, "I'm afraid you're a little bit untruthful! I'm shocked to see it, Bunter! Are you fellows shocked at Bunter's untruthfulness?"
"Awfully!" said Gadsby.
"Think we ought to give Bunter a lesson on the subject?" went on Ponsonby

thoughtfully.
“You cheeky Highcliffe cad!” yelled Bunter indignantly. Then he remembered that he was at the mercy of the Highcliffians. “I—I—I mean—he, he, he! I—I don’t mind a little joke! He, he, he!”
“He doesn’t mind a little joke!” said Pon. “Well, let’s joke with him a little, as he doesn’t mind a joke!”
“Hear, hear! “ grinned Gadsby.
“I—I say, you fellows, I’m rather in a hurry!” gasped Bunter. “I’ve got to get to the station to meet a chap coming back to school!”
“That’s rather awkward!” said Pon. “I’m afraid you’ll miss him, Bunter. You see, you’re so nice, that we can’t part with you yet!”
“I—I say, I’ve really got to get to the station,” mumbled Bunter. “That silly ass Alonzo will be waiting about if he’s not met—and very likely he’ll lose his way, and—and——”
“Alonzo?” repeated Pon. “Is that jolly old freak coming back? Haven’t you enough freaks at Greyfriars already?”
“I expect Bunter’s glad!” remarked Gadsby. “When Alonzo Todd comes back, Bunter won’t be the biggest idiot at Greyfriars! Only the second biggest.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Turn round, Bunter!” said Pon. “We’re going to race you back to Greyfriars!”
“But I—I’m going to Courtfield!” groaned Bunter.
“I think not!” said Pon, shaking his head. “I think you’re going straight back, and that we’re going to help you. Feel too tired for a race?”
“Oh, yes! Yes, rather!” gasped Bunter. “I say——”
“That’s all right; we’ll help,” said Pon. “We haven’t done our good turn today yet, you men—so let’s help Bunter! You don’t mind helping Bunter?”
“Not at all!” said Monson.
“I say, you fellows——”
“Turn him round!” said Monson.
Ponsonby, grinning, caught Bunter by the collar. There was a desperate light in Bunter’s little round eyes, behind his big round spectacles. Pon, never dreaming of resistance on the part of the fat Owl, grabbed him by the collar, and Bunter desperately lashed out with a fat fist.
That fat fist took Cecil Ponsonby by surprise. It landed on his nose, drawing a spurt of red therefrom.
“Whoooooop!” yelled Ponsonby, sitting down suddenly on Courtfield Common and clasping his anguished nose with both hands.
Bunter tore off towards Courtfield as fast as his fat little legs could carry him. He eluded Gadsby and Monson and bolted.
“Ow! Ow! Wow!” spluttered Ponsonby. “After him! Collar him, you fools! Ow! My nose! Wow! Get hold of him, you fatheads! Wow!”
Gadsby and Monson rushed in pursuit. Pon picked himself up and, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief, followed more slowly.
Bunter rushed on at a terrific burst of speed. But his chance was slim because Bunter wasn’t. He had too much weight to carry for a foot race. Rapid feet overhauled him. Gadsby and Monson passed him on either side, and swung round facing him.
“Oh, lor!” gasped Bunter.
He barged off the path and ran, the two Highcliffians jumping after him. They headed him off from Courtfield, and he ran back the way he had come, dodging Ponsonby and making for distant Greyfriars.

After him rushed Pon & Co.
They had said that they would help Bunter, and they helped him. They dribbled him like a fat football. Gadsby and Monson kicked in turn, playfully. Ponsonby kicked in savage earnest, owing to the damaged state of his nose. How many kicks Billy Bunter collected during that wild race he could never have counted. It seemed to him like millions, if not billions or trillions.
"Ow, ow, ow! Groooogh! !" spluttered Bunter, as he raced. "Beasts! Yow-ow! I say, you fellows— Yaroooh! Oh, crikey! Whoo-hoop!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Greyfriars was in sight at last, and never had Bunter been so glad to see the grey old tower rising over the trees. Panting and gasping, he barged breathlessly onward, Pon & Co. still dribbling him. And a big, burly, beefy Fifth Form man, who was sitting on a fence, beheld the scene and slipped off the fence, very glad to see Pon & Co.
Without even seeing Coker of the Fifth, Bunter tore on. gurgling, and vanished up the road; but Pon & Co. stopped very suddenly at the sight of Coker. Horace Coker grinned as he bore down on them.
"Catapulting a man and bolting!" said Coker. "I rather hoped I'd see you again, and now——"
It was right-about-face for Pon & Co., and they right-about-faced and ran for their lives. After them charged Coker.
Thud, thud, thud! Coker had big and heavy feet.
Not till he was out of breath did Coker of the Fifth cease the pursuit and walk away, grinning.
Billy Bunter, in a winded state, staggered in at the gates of Greyfriars, gurgling. But Pon & Co., when Coker of the Fifth had finished with them, were feeling even worse than Bunter. It was quite an unpleasant ending to a merry rag!
Alonzo Todd stepped from the train in Courtfield Station.
He picked up an umbrella that belonged to one passenger and a bag that belonged to another, and stepped out with them.
"Hi!" said an excited voice from the carriage.
"Here!" barked another excited voice.
Alonzo glanced round with the kind and gentle smile that distinguished him.
"Did you address me?" he asked politely.
"What are you doing with that bag?" hooted a red-faced man, warmly.
"What are you doing with that umbrella?" demanded a fat man, with a ginger moustache.
Alonzo gazed at them innocently.
"I am taking them to Greyfriars with me," he answered. "My school, you know."
"You're taking my umbrella to your school?" roared the man with the ginger moustache.
Alonzo started.
"Dear me! Have I made a mistake?" he inquired. "I am exceedingly sorry if that is the case. Yes, I now perceive that the bag is not mine; the initials are not mine. And my umbrella is quite a good one, and this is a very shabby old thing——"
"You young idiot!" said the red-faced man. "Give me my bag!"
"Give me my umbrella!" hooted the owner of the ginger moustache.
"Certainly, my dear sir! I trust you do not imagine for one moment that I had any dishonest intention in inadvertently taking your bag." said Alonzo in distress.
Alonzo heaved the bag into the carriage, eliciting a roar from the owner, on whose foot it landed. Then he thrust the umbrella in, unfortunately catching the ginger

gentleman under the chin with it.
“Stand back there!” called out a porter.
“Will you have the exceeding kindness to hand out my bag and umbrella?” asked Alonzo, addressing the two passengers, one of whom was nursing his foot and the other his chin.
The ginger gentleman picked up Alonzo’s umbrella and handed it to him—across his hat! The red-faced man picked up his bag and hurled it forth, and it smote Alonzo on the chest, causing him to sit down suddenly on the platform in a state of great astonishment.
“Oh, dear!” said Alonzo breathlessly.
He dismissed the matter from his mind and looked up and down the platform for his Cousin Peter. Having rooted up and down the platform from end to end, without finding Peter Todd, Alonzo slowly but surely realised that Peter was not there.
“Good gracious! “ said Alonzo to himself. “Peter cannot have come to meet my train, That is rather thoughtless, as I told him the time of the train in my letter, and I fear that Uncle Benjamin would strongly disapprove of such thoughtlessness. But perhaps Peter has been detained, or something. I truly hope so, for I should not like Peter to act in such a manner as Uncle Benjamin would regard with disapproval.”
And Alonzo, at last, left the station and walked out into Courtfield High Street. A cabman called to him as he started: “Cab, sir?”
Alonzo glanced round.
“Thank you—no,” he answered. “It is very kind—and, indeed, thoughtful—of you to suggest it; but I fear that it would be somewhat extravagant to take a cab to the school. Moreover, on this very fine afternoon I prefer to walk. Thank you all the same, my good man.”
The cabman blinked at him.
“My eye!” he ejaculated. “Oh, my eye!”
“I was expecting to be met at the station, my good man,” went on Alonzo. “But my cousin does not seem to be here. Perhaps you may have seen him?”
“What’s he like?” asked the cabman.
He is very like me—indeed, very, very like me,” said Alonzo. “We have been mistaken for one another.
‘My eye!” said the cabman. “Shouldn’t have thought there was two of you! One’s more’n enough.”
And he turned back to his cab, apparently having had enough of Alonzo. Alonzo gazed at his back for a moment, and then resumed his way down the High Street, with his eyes open for Peter. Nothing, however, was to be seen of Peter; and he reached the end of the town and came out on the open common.
There he paused. It was two or three miles to the school by the road, but hardly half that distance by short cuts over the common. If Peter was coming late—would he come by the road? If so, Alonzo would miss him by taking the short cuts. On the other hand, Peter was most likely to come by the short cuts, if he came, and Alonzo would therefore miss him if he took the road! It was quite a problem for Alonzo to think out, and he stood in the middle of the road thinking it out for some minutes.
He decided on the short cuts, and started across the common. He walked on very cheerfully, for Alonzo was a cheerful fellow. Also, he had pleasant subjects for thought. In his bag was a brand-new copy of his favourite work, “The Story of a Potato: from the Seed to the Saucepan.” Alonzo had derived much useful information from that work, and he could not help thinking that it was very, very kind of his Uncle Benjamin to present him with a new copy when he was going back to school. The last

copy had been used to light the fire in Study No. 7!
Alonzo was feeling rather tired, after a mile and a half. His bag was feeling a little heavy. Personally, Alonzo was not strong. He resembled his Cousin Peter in looks to a remarkable extent, but he had none of Peter's wiriness or muscular power. Almost any fag at Greyfriars could have knocked out Alonzo in a scrap.
It was quite an enjoyable walk, if Alonzo had not been feeling tired. But he was—and presently he laid his bag and his umbrella down on a grassy bank, and sat down on the bag to rest. He did not sit on the grass, because it was October, and Uncle Benjamin had warned him never to sit on damp grass.
A little old gentleman came in sight, walking up the lane by the edge of the common. He came from the direction of the Willows. He was a little and rather frail-looking gentleman. with silvery hair under his silk hat—quite venerable in his aspect. He seemed to be very deep in thought, for he walked with his hands clasped behind him, his eyes bent on the ground through a large pair of horn-rimmed glasses. Alonzo, glancing at him, thought what a nice old gentleman he looked—and he was quite surprised when suddenly, without warning, the silvery-haired old gentleman uttered a fearful, ear-splitting yell and leaped into the air.
Alonzo started up in amazement. Then, from the hedge, within a few feet of him, he heard a chuckle.
"Got him!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
And Alonzo, blinking round, spotted three Highcliffe fellows peering through the hedge, one of them taking aim again with a catapult.

Plucky Alonzo!

PONSONBY chuckled.
Gadsby and Monson grinned.
Pon & Co. were still hunting mischief, and they had found some!
After escaping from Coker, the three had forgotten mischief for a time, having a good many aches and pains to occupy their thoughts. But now they were on the warpath again. They had come across the common to the hedge bordering the lane, intending to cross to the Willows and trespass in the grounds of the old house. But the sight of the little old gentleman was too much for Pon! He was tempted, and he fell!
Professor Sparkinson did not look dangerous! He did not look as if he could run after a fellow who catapulted him, or as if he could do any damage if he caught a fellow!
Pon told Gaddy and Monson that he was going to make the old beggar jump: and he proceeded to do so. Quite unaware that Alonzo Todd had sat down to rest by the hedge, on the other side, the three Highcliffians crouched in a gap and watched the little old gentleman till he was within easy range. Then the merry Pon let fly. Pon was a good shot with a catapult; he had had a lot of practice!
"Good shot!" grinned Monson.
Keeping in cover. Ponsonby took aim again, encouraged by success.
Alonzo's usually kind and benignant eyes gleamed with anger and indignation. The sight of a young rascal catapulting a venerable old gentleman was enough to make any decent fellow wrathy, and Alonzo was wrathy. It was not like the gentle Alonzo to get wrathy, but circumstances alter cases, and now he was very wrathy indeed! He jumped at the gap in the hedge and, taking Pon quite by surprise, knocked the catapult aside as Pon was letting it go.
It twanged. and the pebble whizzed—not in the direction of the old gentleman! But it

is said that every bullet has its billet, and a fiendish yell from Monson announced where that missile had gone! It had landed in Monson's neck, and Monson's voice woke the echoes as he yelled.
"What the thump—" gasped Ponsonby.
"You rotter!" panted Alonzo. Stop it! Stop it at once!"
"Todd, you meddlin' rotter——"
For the moment Ponsonby took Alonzo for Peter, whom he closely resembled. He gave him an angry shove back, and Alonzo sat down under the hedge.
"Oh!" gasped Alonzo.
Pon stared at him. Peter Todd. certainly, would never have gone down under that shove. And though Alonzo was very like Peter, his expression was much milder in every way. And Pon noted the bag and the umbrella, and remembered what Bunter had said. He realised that this was not the fighting man Peter, but his peaceful cousin Alonzo, a fellow of whom even Pon need have no fear. So he followed up his shove with a kick which rolled Alonzo over.
"Now mind your own bizney, you pie-faced freak!" snarled Ponsonby. "Squat on that Greyfriars cad, you men, while I get the old gander again."
And Pen took aim once more with the catapult at the silver-haired gentleman. Alonzo struggled to his feet.
Before Gadsby and Monson could squat on him, he grasped Ponsonby and, with a wrench, dragged him out of the hedge into the lane. Alonzo was no fighting man, it was true, but wrath and indignation lent him unaccustomed energy.
Thump, thump, thump! Three hefty thumps landed on Pon as he rolled over in the lane with Alonzo, and he roared:
"Ow! Here, I say, help me, you fools! Drag him off!"
Gadsby and Monson rushed to the rescue.
"Oh, good gracious!" gasped Alonzo. "Fair play—three to one is not fair play! Yarooooh!"
Bang, bang, bang!
Alonzo put up a fight. But though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak. Alonzo really was no fighting man.
The little old gentleman blinked at the scene. He seemed too surprised to act for some moments. But he saw the catapult fly from Pon's hand in the struggle, and he saw that three fellows were pitching into one.
The little professor made a bound towards the spot—and had the Highcliffians been looking at him they would have been astonished by the swiftness and agility of his bound! But they were not looking at him, and they did not see him till he reached them. Then a hand fastened on Pon's collar and another hand on Monson's, and they were dragged off the struggling, gasping Alonzo.
"Wha-a-at——" gasped Pon, astounded to find himself lifted as if he had weighed no more than a few ounces.
He swung in the air in one hand of the professor, Monson swung in the other. Then they were tossed through the gap in the hedge, and went sprawling on the grass of the common. Gadsby, staring round, saw that amazing sight with startling, unbelieving eyes. The little old fellow, who looked too frail to handle an infant, had tossed Pon and Monson away like skittles, and as Gadsby blinked at him dumbfounded, he reached at Caddy, grasped him, and tossed him after his friends. Caddy bumped on Pon and Monson, flattening them in the grass.
Taking no further heed of them, the little old gentleman turned to Alonzo Todd. Alonzo was in rather a sad state.

Alonzo, punched and thumped into a breathless and dizzy state, lay on his back gurgling, quite unaware whether he was on his head or his heels.
Professor Sparkinson bent over him.
“Are you hurt, my dear boy?” he exclaimed.
Really, the question was superfluous! It was quite plain that Alonzo was hurt—very much hurt—frightfully damaged, in fact! He tried to answer, but only a gurgle came.
The old gentleman blinked at him, and then picked him up. Alonzo was not by any means a heavyweight, but even in his breathless and dizzy stale he was astonished to find himself lifted so easily by the little old gentleman. Carrying Alonzo on one arm with perfect ease. Professor Sparkinson walked away towards the Willows, bag and umbrella in his other hand.
Pon & Co. sat up.
They blinked after the professor through the gap in the hedge. They could hardly believe their eyes.
“Oh, crumbs!” gasped Pon.
Alonzo Todd blinked dizzily.
He was hardly more than half-conscious as the little professor carried him up the avenue to the Willows.
Scarcely conscious of his surroundings, he was conscious enough to he amazed by the ease with which the little professor carried a fellow very nearly as big as himself. The strength that dwelt in that frail-looking form was astounding. It seemed like magic.
Professor Sparkinson, without an effort, walked swiftly on and reached the porch of the old house. The door opened as he arrived, and a broad-shouldered black man looked out.
“Golly massa!” said the black servant, staring at Alonzo.
“This lad is hurt.” said the professor. “Open the door of the laboratory, Julius.”
“Yes, massa.”
Julius preceded the professor and opened the door of the room in which Harry Wharton & Co. had had such strange adventures. Professor Sparkinson bore Alonzo in and laid him on a settee.
Alonzo lay there and gasped.
Julius Cesar—that being the full name of the professor’s man—retired and shut the door. The professor sat down on a chair beside the settee, watching Alonzo. His look was very kind and sympathetic.
Slowly Alonzo recovered. He ceased to gurgle and gasp. and breathed a little more regularly. He made a movement to sit up, and the kind old fellow slid a cushion behind his head.
“Feel better?” barked the professor.
“Oh! *Yes!* Much!” gasped Alonzo. “Oh, dear! I—I feel a—a little queer! I—I am not very strong.”
“Apparently not! Yet you tackled three fellows, every one of them stronger than yourself, in defence of an old man!” said Professor Sparkinson. “That was very plucky.”
“Do you think so?” said Alonzo.
“My name is Alonzo Todd,” added the Duffer of Greyfriars. “My Cousin Peter’s name is Peter.”
“Eh? Oh, yes!” Professor Sparkinson blinked at Alonzo. “And you are not strong—what?”
“I regret to say no,” confessed Alonzo. “I am not, I trust, a coward, but I am not of much use in a personal combat.”

“Far from a coward, I should think,” said the professor. “Even a strong lad might have hesitated to tackle three reckless young rascals at once. You would like to be strong?”
“Indeed, I should!” said Alonzo, with a smile. “I should like to have something like your strength, sir. You do not look strong, but your strength is very surprising.”
“You are not the first that it has surprised,” chuckled the professor. “But what you wish may be possible, my boy.”
“I fear not,” said Alonzo, shaking his head. “I do exercises, but they seem to make me tired, instead of making me fit.”
“Suppose I could change all that?”
“Suppose I could make you twice as strong, three times as strong, as any other boy of your age?”
“Surely that is not possible, sir?”
“You have heard of the monkey-gland theory?” barked the professor. “Old men turned into young men by the transference of a certain gland taken from a monkey—what?”
“I have heard of it,” answered Alonzo. “But I have heard my Uncle Benjamin say that it is all rubbish.”
“Your Uncle Benjamin,” said the professor, “evidently does not know everything. For years, my boy, I have studied this. And then I made my discovery—a discovery I have kept a secret, and I intend to keep a secret. Why do I tell you this? Because you have made a friend of me by your brave conduct—brave and generous conduct. You supposed that I was a frail old man, incapable of self- defence, and you defended me. Why should I not, in return, make your body as strong as your spirit?”
Alonzo blinked.
“Julius!” barked the professor.
The black servant entered the laboratory.
“Yes, massa?” said Julius.
“Lift that armchair!” The professor pointed to the big leather armchair by the fireside.
“Yes, massa.” said Julius obediently.
The negro was strong and brawny, a mass of thick-set sinew and muscle. But he had to strain every muscle to lift the great, heavy armchair of solid leather. He lifted it. however.
“You see that, boy?” barked Professor Sparkinson. “Indeed, I do!” said Alonzo. “The coloured gentleman must be very strong to raise that enormous chair from the floor.”
“Put it down, Julius.”
The huge armchair crashed on the floor, and Julius wiped his black brow.
“Now look!” said Professor Sparkinson.
He took the armchair by the back and lifted it from the floor with one hand. Alonzo gazed at him. The heavy weight that had tested the brawny muscles of the powerful black man was nothing to the little old professor. He swung the great armchair round him in a circle without an effort, and then replaced it on the floor.
“Did you see that?” barked Professor Sparkinson. “Dear me, yes!” gasped the amazed Alonzo. “Really, it is only with exceeding difficulty that I can credit the evidence of my eyesight, my dear sir. I am quite astounded!”
“No doubt. Do you believe now that I have mastered one of he secrets of Nature—the secret of strength?”
“Certainly! In any case, sir, I should hardly be so disrespectful as to doubt the word of an elderly gentleman,” said Alonzo. “Any such distrust would seem shocking to my Uncle Benjamin.”
“Would you like me to bestow on you the same strength?”

Alonzo sat silent, thinking it out.
“Well?” barked the professor.
“Undoubtedly,” said Alonzo, “it would be very agreeable, and excessively enjoyable, to possess such unusual strength. Yet a fellow so amazingly strong might be tempted to use his strength in an inconsiderate way. I am not sure whether I should, on consideration, care to have power placed in my hands which might cause me to become overbearing and tyrannical.”
“You have an excellent heart—”
‘‘Thank you so much—’’
“Whatever may be said for your head.”
‘‘Oh!”
“You shall think this over,” said the professor. “Let me see you again. Come to tea with me next week. In the meantime, you are in an exhausted state, and I will give you a nip. But keep it a secret. Not a word to anyone!”
“A nip!” repeated Alonzo, in alarm. He had heard intoxicating drinks referred to as “nips.”
“A nip—a tiny nip—of the New Elixir,” said the professor. “It will carry you on for a time. But remember that it is a secret.”
“Dear me!” said Alonzo Todd.
The professor opened a drawer in the roll-top desk, and took Out a phial containing a thick, crimson liquid. It was the phial he had locked up so carefully when Harry Wharton & Co. were there.
He removed the glass stopper, and dropped a single tiny drop of the sticky fluid on a lump of sugar held in a pair of silver tongs.
“Take that!”
“Certainly, if you wish,” said Alonzo: and he opened his mouth, and the lump of sugar was placed therein.
Professor Sparkinson looked at his watch. He allowed three minutes to elapse.
“Now,” he said, “jump.”
“Goodness gracious!” gasped Alonzo.
It was amazing! It was miraculous! Fatigue and weakness were gone as if by magic. Alonzo wondered dizzily whether, indeed, it was magic—black magic. At the professor’s word he jumped from the settee. He rose lightly as a bird. Colour flushed into his pale cheeks, a bright gleam into his eyes. He felt a new Alonzo!
The professor grinned.
“The effect of that nip,” he said, “will last some hours. Come again next week. Good-bye!”
He turned to his chemistry bench, and seemed to forget Alonzo’s existence.
Alonzo walked, or rather, seemed to float, out of the laboratory.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, looking from his study window, fixed his eyes rather curiously on a junior coming up from the gates. He was expecting Alonzo Todd back that afternoon, after a long absence from school.
It was for reasons of health that Alonzo’s anxious and affectionate relatives had taken him away for a time. Mr. Quelch was of the opinion that he might wisely have stayed away. Alonzo, he considered, was altogether too delicate, both in body and mind, for the rough-and-tumble of a Public school.
As he looked at Alonzo crossing the quad, he realised that there was a change in him since he had seen him last. His cheeks were red, his eyes bright, his step firm and elastic. He carried a well-packed bag as if it weighed nothing at all. In his other hand

he twirled an umbrella, as if in sheer lightness of spirits. Mr. Quelch, watching him, was both surprised and interested. It seemed as if Alonzo's long holiday had done him a lot of good.
The Remove master smiled faintly as Alonzo's twirling umbrella knocked the hat off a Fifth Form man as he passed him. Stronger and healthier he looked, but apparently he had lost none of his clumsiness. The Fifth Form man was Horace Coker—and as his hat went off, Coker spun round at the junior with a snort.
"What's this game?" roared Coker, in wrath. "Knocking a Fifth Form man's hat off, what?"
"Dear me! I am exceedingly sorry, Coker!" said Alonzo, in distress. "I assure you that the action was absolutely unintentional on my part! I failed to observe that you were in such close proximity."
Coker stared at him.
"Oh! You're the other Todd!" said Coker, realising that this could not be Peter.
"Wasn't there a home for idiots they could stick you in?" Horace reached out at him. "Well, you're not going to knock off Fifth Form men's hats! I'll jolly well tap your head on a tree as a warning, see? I suppose you'd fall down dead if I hit you." With a powerful grip on Alonzo's collar, he jerked him to the nearest of the old Greyfriars elms.
Then the unexpected happened!
Alonzo Todd dropped his bag and umbrella, and laid his hands on Coker! Hitherto, Alonzo's hands laid on Coker would have had about as much effect as a fly crawling on his sleeve. But there was a difference now! Coker, to his vast amazement, felt himself sitting down on the ground, placed there by a force he could not resist.
Bump!
Coker sat!
He sat down and blinked! This was altogether too surprising for Horace Coker to assimilate it all at once.
Alonzo picked up Coker's hat, and jammed it on his dizzy head. Then he picked up his bag and umbrella, and marched on towards the House—Coker gazing after him with an expression that was almost idiotic in its bewilderment.
"Bless my soul! " murmured Mr. Quelch. From his study window he had watched that strange scene, as astonished as Horace Coker. No man in the Remove, not even Bob Cherry, or Bolsover major, could have handled Coker of the Fifth! The Duffer of Greyfriars had sat him down like a baby! This was really extraordinary!
Alonzo entered the House. and came at once to his Form-master's study to report his arrival.
"Come in!" gasped Mr. Quelch, as there was a tap on his study door.
Alonzo came in. He came in with a light and springy step. He knocked against a chair on which lay a pile of papers waiting to be marked. The chair rocked, and the papers scattered over the floor.
"Oh! I am so very, very sorry!" ejaculated Alonzo.
"You may pick up the papers!" said Mr. Quelch grimly.
Then he looked at Alonzo. Much better as Alonzo looked, there were signs on his face of recent punching that caused Mr. Quelch to frown.
"Have you been fighting, Todd, on your way to school?" he demanded.
"I have undoubtedly been involved in a struggle, sir: but I am sure that you will regard my conduct as far from reprehensible when I explain that I intervened to prevent a venerable gentleman from being assaulted with a catapult."
"Very well, we will say no more about it," said Mr. Quelch. "Please do not knock that

vase of flowers over, Todd!" he hooted suddenly.
Crash!
"Oh dear! I was totally unaware that my elbow was in such very close juxtaposition to the vase!" gasped the Duffer of Greyfriars.
Mr. Quelch gazed at the broken vase, the spilt water, the scattered flowers, and clutched at his cane.
"You absurdly clumsy boy! Bend over that chair!"
"I assure you, sir, that the act was absolutely unintentional, and in the circumstances, I think— Whoooop!"
A lick of the cane interrupted Alonzo. He roared.
"You may leave my study!" said Mr. Quelch, breathing hard.
Alonzo left it quite gladly.

Astonishing the Natives!

"BEAST!" roared Billy Bunter.
Bolsover major tramped up the Remove passage, with a scowl on his face. He kicked Billy Bunter
as he passed him simply because Bunter was there!
The Form match was over, and Bolsover major, who had played back, had not distinguished himself therein.
The Fourth had been beaten; but all the Remove players agreed that Bolsover major had done a lot to help them escape their doom! Percy Bolsover would have liked to kick the captain of the Form! He couldn't do that—but he could kick Bunter! And he did!
"Take that!" grunted Bolsover. "And if you kick up a row like that, you squeaking toad, I'll jolly well kick you again, see?"
"Beast!" howled Bunter. "Yah! Rotter! 'Tain't my fault that you can't play football, is it?"
Alonzo Todd looked out of Study No. 7. He was waiting there for Peter to come up to tea. His kind face wore a frown as he looked at the bully of the Remove, and the hapless fat Owl wriggling in his powerful grasp.
"My dear Bolsover," he said mildly. "Please release Bunter! I am very, very sorry to observe that you are the same disagreeable, overbearing bully as you always were—"
"What!" gasped Bolsover.
Bolsover major stared at him. For a fellow who was no fighting man, Alonzo took a lot of risks!
"You—you—you gabbling, babbling nincompoop!" gasped Bolsover. "Wait till I've banged Bunter's head, and I'll jolly well bang yours."
"I shall not allow you to bang Bunter's head, Bolsover," he said calmly. "Please take your hands off him at once."
"Oh, crikey!" gasped Bunter in amazement.
Bolsover major glared at Alonzo, who laid a gentle hand on his arm. He released Bunter, then, and knocked Alonzo's hand off.
"You've asked for it," said Bolsover grimly. "Now you're going to get it, you pie-faced freak."
"My dear fellow—Yooop!" roared Alonzo as Bolsover major grasped him.
Then the surprising thing happened.
Bolsover swung Alonzo to the wall to bang his head thereon. Alonzo stiffened unexpectedly in his grasp, returned grip for grip, swept the bully of the Remove off

his feet, and pitched him over on his back. Bolsover landed on the floor of the Remove passage with a terrific concussion.
Alonzo gazed down at him gently.
“I regret exceedingly, my dear Bolsover, that you have driven me to use rough measures,” he remarked. “I trust that you are not hurt?”
“Oh, crumbs!” gasped the astonished Bunter. He blinked at Alonzo Todd with his eyes almost popping through his spectacles.
Other fellows, drawn to their study doors by the shindy, stared also in amazement. Bolsover major, feeling like a fellow in a dream, stared up at the gentle Alonzo! Alonzo Todd was popularly supposed, in the Remove, to have no chance against a white rabbit in a scrap! But Bob Cherry could not have put the bully of the Remove on his back as Alonzo had done!
Bolsover major staggered to his feet. He was amazed, but he was still more enraged. He doubled his big fists and came towards Alonzo, with a deadly gleam in his eyes.
“You freak!” he gasped, his voice husky with rage. “You imitation of an organ-grinder’s monkey! Put up your hands!”
“Chuck it, Bolsover!” exclaimed Monty Newland. “You’re not going to pitch into Alonzo his first day back.”
“Sure we’ll scrag ye if you do!” exclaimed Mick Desmond.
“My dear friend—I hope I may call you friend!” he urged. “Please do not force me to use further violence! I assure you that it was with the very, very greatest reluctance that I pitched you over, and only on account of your brutal and bullying conduct—Yarooooh!”
Alonzo broke off as Bolsover major’s fist reached his nose, Bolsover was about to follow it up with a drive that would have sent Alonzo spinning along the Remove passage, when the unexpected happened again. Alonzo’s left came up, knocking the burly Bolsover’s fist aside—his right shot out, and landed on Bolsover’s jaw.
There was a roar of amazement in the Remove passage. Billy Bunter fairly squeaked with astonishment! Coker of the Fifth could hardly have put in a drive like that!
“We’re dreaming this!” gasped Micky Desmond
“Oooooooh!” moaned Bolsover.
“I am very, very sorry, my dear fellow!” murmured Alonzo gently.
“Oh, crikey!” gasped Bunter.
“Oooogh!” came from Bolsover, nursing his jaw. “Moooooooh!” In his anguish the bully of the Remove mooed like a cow!
“I trust you are not severely hurt—”
“He, he, he!” cackled Bunter. “I say, you fellows, Alonzo’s been developing his muscles! He can lick Bolsover! He, he, he! I say, the beast kicked me, and I’m jolly well going to kick him!”
“Bunter! I am shocked at you!” exclaimed Alonzo. “You must not kick a fellow when he is down! Bunter—”
“Yah!” retorted Bunter. “You mind your own business! He jolly well kicked me, didn’t he?”
“That is true, my dear Bunter, but—”
“Well, I’m jolly well going to kick him, see!” And Bunter drew back his boot to suit the action to the word.
“I think not,” said Alonzo gently. “There is something to be said for your point of view, Bunter, but I am sure that my Uncle Benjamin would not approve.”
“Blow your Uncle Benjamin!” said Bunter. “Here, I say—leggo, you beast, or I’ll hack your shins!”

Alonzo took the Owl of the Remove by the collar. To the utter amazement of all beholders, he swung Bunter along to the doorway of Study No. 7 with a single swing of the arm! Bunter tumbled into the study, spluttering.
"Ow! Ow! Grooogh! Wow!" spluttered Bunter. "Why, you beast, you're as strong as that little beast of a professor! Leggo! Keep off!"
He dodged hurriedly round the study table. This new and surprising Alonzo was rather terrifying.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry.
Bob's cheery and ruddy face looked into Study No. 7. Alonzo Todd, who was unpacking books, glanced round at him with a welcoming smile.
"My dear Cherry——" he said.
"I heard you'd blown in, old bean," said Bob. "Jolly glad to see you again. Give us your fist."
Alonzo, with a bright and friendly smile, shook hands with Bob Cherry. Bob, who had a grip rather like that of a vice, turned on steam, as it were, to make Alonzo jump! Alonzo gave him grip for grip; and Bob uttered a sudden yell as he felt his fingers crushed.
"Yoooop! Leggo! Oh, my hat! What the thump—"
"Dear me," said Alonzo. "I quite forgot, my dear Cherry! I am not accustomed to being so very, very strong! I trust that I have not hurt your fingers."
"My only hat!" gasped Bob. "Where did you get that grip, Alonzo? I was going to make you jump, but—Wow! Wow!" He rubbed his numbed hand.
"The gripfulness of the esteemed Alonzo appears to be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh in wonder.
"Must have exerted yourself frightfully," remarked Johnny Bull. "Look here, let's see if you can double me up like you did Bob. I fancy I can stand any grip you can give me."
"Certainly, my dear fellow," said Alonzo, extending his hand, which Johnny Bull grasped with a good, firm grasp.
Johnny Bull had a firm grip, and he exerted all his strength to give Alonzo a hard one. But he jumped almost clear of the floor as Alonzo's fingers closed like a vice. The strength in those fingers was amazing—unheard of—uncanny. Johnny Bull yelled.
"Leggo! Ow, my fingers! Leggo!"
"Have you finished already, my dear Bull?" asked Alonzo, still keeping his boa-constrictor grip on Johnny's hapless fingers. "if you would like to continue the experiment—"
"Will you let go?" shrieked Johnny Bull, dancing with anguish. "You blithering idiot, you dangerous maniac. let go!"
"Oh, certainly, my dear Bull!" Alonzo let go; and Johnny, like Bob, started sucking his fingers, only rather more frantically.
"Wow, wow, wow!" said Johnny Bull.
"Well, this takes the cake!" said Frank Nugent blankly. "Alonzo used to be a jolly weedy specimen. He's changed a lot."
"The lotfulness is terrific."
Peter Todd blinked in at his surprising cousin. Peter was more surprised than any other fellow.
"Dear me!" said Peter. "I heard a fellow say that Alonzo had knocked Bolsover major over. I thought it was gammon. But now—"
"It was with the greatest reluctance that I knocked Bolsover down, my dear Peter. The circumstances, however, were such that I hardly think that Uncle Benjamin would

disapprove of my course of action—”
“Long-winded as ever!” said Peter. “Well, I’m jolly glad to see you, Lonzy, but I won’t shake hands with you, thanks.”
“I say, you fellows, what about tea?” asked Bunter. “I think we ought to have rather a spread now Alonzo’s come. In fact, I was going to stand a spread myself, but I’ve been disappointed about a postal order—”
“Shut up, Bunter! Look here, Alonzo, why didn’t you let me know you were coming?” demanded Peter. “I heard downstairs that you’d come—”
“But I did let you know, my dear Peter,” said Alonzo in surprise. “You must have had my letter, in which I requested you to meet me at Courtfield Station this afternoon —”
“There was a letter for you on Monday in Alonzo’s fist,” said Bob Cherry. “Didn’t Bunter give it to you?”
“Bunter! You fat villain, did you bag my letter?”
“Eh? No!” exclaimed Bunter in alarm. “There wasn’t any letter for you on Monday. Toddy, and Bob never handed it down from the rack—I never asked him to! All these fellows know; they were present when it happened!”
“You kept my letter!” roared Peter.
“Nunno! I never had it! Besides, there was nothing in it,” said Bunter. “I suppose you don’t think I’d have kept a remittance, Toddy?”
“You opened my letter?”
“Of course not!” roared Bunter. “It may have come open by accident! Accidents will happen. Not that I ever touched it, you know. If Bob thinks he handed it to me he’s making a mistake. He must have handed it to some other fellow—Smithy, perhaps. Smithy might open another fellow’s letter! I’m not that sort, I hope!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“My dear Bunter.” said Alonzo distressfully, “I am very, very sorry to see that you have all your old disregard for veracity.”
“Oh, really, Alonzo—”
“Where’s my letter?” roared Peter, snatching up a fives bat from the bookshelf. “Now, you fat villain, where’s my letter?”
“I tell you there wasn’t a remittance in it!” yelled Bunter. “So it wasn’t any good, was it? I may have used it, by sheer accident, to light the study fire last night—”
Whack!
“Whoooop!” roared Bunter, as the fives bat got into action. “Wharrer you up to, you beast? Yaroooooop!”
“My dear Peter—”
Whack, whack, whack!
Alonzo laid a restraining hand on his cousin’s arm.
“My dear Peter, I cannot permit——”
“Shut up, ass!”
“But, my dear, dear Peter, please allow me to take the bat. I am sure Bunter has had enough. Have you not, my dear Bunter?”
“Yarooooh!”
Alonzo took hold of the fives bat. Peter grasped the handle hard, but, to his surprise, it was whisked away with the greatest ease. Alonzo tossed it on the bookshelf.
“Give me that bat!” roared Peter. Peter liked his cousin Alonzo, but it was in a rather lofty and patronising way; Peter had always been the protector. The startling change that had come over Alonzo did not—for the moment, at least—please Peter. This sort of thing was a menace to Peter’s leadership of Study No. 7. Peter was not standing for

this!
“If you don’t hand that bat over this instant I’ll bang your silly head on the table!” bawled Peter.
“Order!” grinned Bob Cherry.
“The orderfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Toddy.”
Unheeding, Peter Todd laid his grasp on Alonzo to tap his head on the table. Alonzo sighed. It went very, very much against the grain to exert his newly acquired strength on his dear, dear cousin. Still, he did not want his head tapped on the table. The table was hard, and the head was a little soft, and it would have been very, very unpleasant. So he grasped Peter’s wrists and held them fast. He drew them together and held them with one hand. Peter, wondering whether he was dreaming, wrenched frantically at his hands. But they might as well have been handcuffed, for all the use his efforts were to free them. With a single hand Alonzo held both Peter’s, and Peter could not get them loose. Alonzo smiled gently at Peter as he held him a helpless prisoner.
“Well, my hat!” said Bob Cherry blankly. “This takes the jolly old cake! Where did you get all that beef from, Lonzy?”
“Let go!” yelled Peter frantically.
He gave a terrific wrench—and Alonzo obligingly let go at the same moment. The result was that Peter swung backwards and crashed into the Famous Five!

Cousin Peter was not perhaps quite pleased at first. Once the sturdy protector, he was now a child in the hands of the astonishing Alonzo. But it occurred to Peter that this was “one up” for Study No. 7. No other study in the Remove, or in all Greyfriars, could boast of a strong man like Alonzo. He was unique. And it was borne in upon Peter’s mind that with such an ally as Strong Alonzo, he would be able to realise his old ambition of making Study No. 7 top in the Remove. So, on second thoughts, Peter was pleased.
Crowds of fellows gathered round Alonzo in break that morning.
Alonzo was pleased.
Modest and unassuming as Alonzo was, perhaps he rather liked the limelight, which had never shone on him before, but of which he had now the full glare.
Certainly it was rather a fine thing to be in possession of remarkable strength—a novel thing for Alonzo, and very agreeable.
Alonzo could not help feeling pleased and satisfied.
In his pleased satisfaction, he rather overlooked what Professor Sparkinson had told him—that the effect of that “nip” of the wonderful elixir would last a few hours.
It was a mere fag—an inconsiderable fag—Nugent minor of the Second Form, who burst the bubble, so to speak.
“It’s gammon!” said Dicky Nugent to his friends in the Second, after dinner. “Just gammon! And I’ll tell you what—I’ll jolly well knock his hat off!”
And Nugent minor, greatly daring, knocked Alonzo’s hat off in the quad! And as the mild Alonzo stooped to pick it up Dicky Nugent put out a foot and sent Alonzo sprawling over his hat!
“Ow!” roared Alonzo.
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Dicky Nugent.
And as Alonzo sprawled over the hat the cheeky fag sat on him and pinned him down.
“You young ass!” shouted Frank Nugent. “Stop that!”
“Shift, you little idiot!” exclaimed Bob Cherry.
“Let him shift me, if he’s so jolly strong! “ grinned Dicky Nugent. “I don’t believe a word of it myself. Get up, Alonzo!”

“Ow! Geroff!” gasped Alonzo. “My dear fellows, pray pull him off! This is very, very uncomfortable.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Well, this beats Banagher!” said Bob.
He took hold of Nugent minor’s ear and hooked him off Alonzo. The Duffer of Greyfriars sat up, gasping for breath. Peter, in wonder, gave him a hand to get on his feet, and Alonzo stood leaning on him, still gasping.
“Sorry, old bean!” said Dicky, good-naturedly. “I knew it was all gammon!”
“Ooooogh!” gasped Alonzo.
“But what does it all mean’?” demanded Bob Cherry.
“Oooogh!”
“Last night you were as strong as a horse, you fathead! And now—”
“Urrrggh!”
“You’d better get your muscle tip again, old bean.” chuckled Nugent. “You’ll need it!”
Coker of the Fifth met him after classes. Coker had a fives hat under his coat, which he produced with a flourish.
“I’ve been looking for you!” he remarked genially. “My dear Coker—Yaroooh!” roared Alonzo as Coker’s left gripped his collar and Coker’s right applied the fives bat.
“Ow! Wow! Stoppit! My dear—ooooh—Coker——wow!”
Whack! Whack! Whack!
“Yow-ow-ow!” roared Alonzo.
“Perhaps you won’t cheek the Fifth again in a hurry,” remarked Coker, and he tucked the fives bat under his coat again and walked away chortling.
“Oh, dear!” gasped Alonzo.
He limped into the House and up into the Remove passage. Bolsover major was waiting for him there. Bolsover grinned.
“You knocked me down yesterday,” said Bolsover major.
“My dear— Whoooop!” roared Alonzo, as he went spinning.
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Bolsover. “Get up and have another.”
But Alonzo couldn’t. He lay where he was, gasping dizzily. Bolsover major, grinning, bent over him and pulled his nose.
“Wurrrrggh!” gurgled Alonzo.
Harry Wharton & Co. came along, kicked Bolsover major along the passage, and helped Alonzo into his study. They left him there, gasping and gurgling, in the armchair.
“Oh. dear!” groaned Alonzo.

“Goal!”

“LOOK out, Alonzo!”
“Pass that ball!”
“Kick, fathead!”
It was a few days later, and Harry Wharton & Co. and half a dozen other Removites were punting a footer about while they waited for the bell to ring for class.
A hefty kick from Bob Cherry landed the footer at Alonzo Todd’s feet as he came towards the House.
He kicked.
He did not get the right direction—but that could not be helped. Neither could it be

helped that the muddy football shot away straight at Mr. Quelch. And as Mr. Quelch did not know that it was coming till it came, it landed full on his scholastic countenance, blotting out the smile instantly.
"Oooooogh!" gurgled the Remove master.
"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob. "Look!"
"Great pip!" gasped Harry Wharton.
"Upon my word! Wurrggh!" gasped the Remove master. He strode at Alonzo Todd and grasped him by the collar from behind.
"Oh, my goodness!" ejaculated Alonzo in surprise as the Form master shook him.
"Ow! Ooog! Who—who is that? Please let go my—oogh—collar—and do not shoo-shoo-shake me in that brutal manner!"
"Boy!" roared Mr. Quelch.
"Oh, good gracious! Is it you, sir?" gasped Alonzo, squirming round and blinking at his Form master.
"It is I!" roared Mr. Quelch. "How dare you kick a football at your Form master! I repeat. how dare you!"
"But—but I did not, sir!" gasped Alonzo, in bewilderment. "I assure you I kicked it in quite another—ow!— direction! I assure you—groogh!—that if the ball collided with your—wow!—proboscis, sir, it was quite—yoop!— unintentional on my—yarooooh!—part! Oh! Ow! Wow!" Shake, shake, shake, shake!
Mr. Quelch was wrathy. With a pain in his nose, perhaps that was not surprising. He shook Alonzo, and he shook him again, and he shook and shook and shook, as if he found some solace in it. The hapless Alonzo fairly crumpled up. He was not a sturdy fellow; he was far from sturdy. His bony knees knocked together, and he sagged in Mr. Quelch's iron grasp like a sack of potatoes.
"Ooogh! Oooh! Wooooh!" gurgled Alonzo. "My did-did-did-dear sir. I—ooogh!—I woogh!—wow-wow!"
"He'll fall to pieces if Quelch goes on shaking him!" murmured Bob Cherry. "We shall have to collect the bits."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Obliges!

"AND a plum cake!" said Coker of the Fifth.
Billy Bunter blinked in at the doorway of the school tuckshop.
After class Bunter's footsteps naturally led him in that direction. The tuckshop drew him like a magnet.
"One of those big ones!" said Coker.
Coker of the Fifth was a wealthy fellow, and he spent his money lavishly. Tea in Coker's study was generally a feast of the gods. Coker's bosom pals, Potter and Greene, often missed him after class, and missed him at other times; but they never failed him at tea-time. At tea-time they rallied round Coker with loyal attachment.
"I think that will do," remarked Coker. "Make a parcel of that lot, Mrs. Mimble. I'll send a fag for it."
"Yes, Master Coker."
Coker, being in the Fifth, had no fag, of course. Only Sixth Form men had fags. That was a standing grievance with Coker.
"I say, Coker," gasped Bunter, in a hurry, "I'll take the parcel to your study, old chap!"
Coker looked round at him.

“Did you call me old chap?” he inquired.
“Yes, old fellow—”
“Well, don’t!” said Coker. “I don’t take that sort of thing from fags. Shut up!”
“But I say, I’ll carry your parcel—”
“You won’t!” said Coker. “You’ve carried a parcel for me before, you fat young scoundrel. And where did you carry it? Shut up!”
“Oh, really, Coker—”
“Come to think of it, I never kicked you for scoffing my tuck that time,” said Coker thoughtfully. “Here you are, Bunter!”
“Yarooooh!”
Billy Bunter left the tuckshop hastily.
Coker disappeared, and Billy Bunter stood in deep thought. Sighting Harry Wharton & Co. in the quad, he hurried over to them.
“I say, you fellows.” exclaimed Bunter breathlessly, “are you game for a lark on that ass Coker?”
“Game as pie” said Bob Cherry at once. “What’s the lark?”
“One of you go into the tuckshop and say that Coker’s sent you for the parcel of tuck————”
“What?”
“And bag it,” said Bunter, blinking at five astonished faces through his big spectacles. “And we’ll whack it out—see?”
“Is that the lark?” demanded Harry Wharton.
“Yes, old chap!”
“We’re to go and tell Mrs. Mimble lies and pinch Coker’s tuck?” said the captain of the Remove. “My hat! Bump him!”
“I say, you fellows— Yarooooh!”
Bump!
The Famous Five walked away, leaving Billy Bunter sitting in the quad, roaring. Apparently they did not agree with the Owl of the Remove in his definition of a “lark.”
“Beasts!” gasped Bunter. “Oh! Wow! Beasts!”
“My dear Bunter——” Alonzo Todd came up: “Pray let me assist you, my dear fellow! Did you fall down?”
The kind Alonzo helped Bunter to his feet. The fat junior blinked at him through his big spectacles.
“I say, Alonzo, old chap!” Bunter’s eyes gleamed. “I say, you wouldn’t mind doing something to oblige a Fifth Form man, would you?”
“Not at all,” said Alonzo. “Uncle Benjamin has always impressed up me, very, very carefully to be obliging at all times and on—”
“Coker wants a parcel taken from the tuckshop to the House,” explained Bunter. “I’d take it myself, only I’ve got to go to Quelch at once—”
“That need not prevent you from obliging Coker, my dear Bunter. Mr. Quelch has gone out.”
“I mean. I’ve got to see the Head in his study—not a minute to lose! Go and tell Mrs. Mimble that you’ve been sent for Coker’s parcel, old chap, and take it to Coker’s study, will you?”
“Certainly, Bunter!”
Alonzo, always ready to oblige, and never suspicious, went into the tuckshop. Billy Bunter grinned. Mrs. Mimble was rather a suspicious lady, so far as Billy Bunter was concerned. But the most suspicious of mortals could never have doubted the bona

fides of Alonzo Todd. It was certain that when he stated that he was sent for the parcel, the parcel would be entrusted to him.
Bunter rolled away towards the House. Just inside the door he waited, keeping a watch for Alonzo through his big spectacles.
Five minutes later Alonzo came along with a large parcel under his arm. Bunter pounced on him as he came in.
"Got it?" he gasped.
"It is here, my dear Bunter!"
"Hand it over! I'll take it to Coker's study. I don't want you to take all the trouble, old chap."
"That is very kind and thoughtful of you, Bunter, and quite contrary to your usual customs," said Alonzo, beaming. "I am glad to see you improving like this, my dear Bunter. Here is the parcel!"
Billy Bunter clutched the parcel and rolled away with it.
Billy Bunter rolled along the Remove passage. He rolled into Study No. 7. He shut the door and chuckled.
That parcel was unwrapped in record time. Billy Bunter was going strong when Tom Dutton and the two Todds came up to tea.

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Harry Wharton & Co. stood in the Remove passage in deep consultation. It was tea-time, and the subject under discussion was a serious one.
As not infrequently occurred, funds had run short. The Famous Five generally tea'd in Study No. 1—but Study No. 1 had struck a stony patch. Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh would naturally have walked their friends along to study No. 13 for tea there—but Study No. 13 was in the same financial state as Study No, 1. Study No. 14—Johnny Bull's study—was another resource—but Johnny Bull was unhappily in the same scrape, his worldly wealth at the present moment amounting to one penny, and that a French one!
"There's Dupont, the Froggy!" said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "Only he's in Bolsover's study, and—"
"Toddy's no good, I suppose?"
"Um! If Bunter's had his postal order—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Peter Todd looked out of Study No. 7.
"You fellows had your tea?" he called out.
"Nunno! Not quite!"
"Tea with us, then! Lots and lots and lots!" said Peter. "This jolly old study is a giddy land flowing with milk and honey!"
"All of us?" asked Harry, laughing.
"All of you, and any pals you'd like to bring, too!" said Toddy cheerfully. "We're rolling in it!"
"What luck!"
"The luckfulness is terrific!"
"Toddy, old man, you're a Briton," said Bob Cherry.
And the Famous Five walked along to Study No. 7 in a very cheery mood. They were quite surprised when they looked into that study. The table was spread in a way that could only be described as magnificent. A gigantic plum cake was flanked by plates of tarts, buns, and scones. There was a dish of ham—ripping ham, and plenty of it!

Billy Bunter was eating ham, and he was going strong, but there was still plenty left. There were other good things, many and various.
“Bunter’s spread!” said Peter Todd.
“Bunter’s!” ejaculated Bob Cherry.
The fat junior, with his mouth full of ham, grinned and nodded.
“Yes, old chap! Roll in Take a pew! Lots and lots!
Some fellows,” added Bunter with dignity—as much dignity as was consistent with a large mouthful of ham—“some fellows make out that I never stand a spread! Well, look at that.”
“Well, my hat!” said Bob. “Mean to say. that that jolly old postal order has turned up trumps, Bunter?”
“Exactly!”
“Gratters, old bean!”
“Dash it all, this is jolly decent of Bunter,” said Johnny Bull. “I take back a lot of things I’ve been thinking about you, old fat man.”
“Oh, really, Bull——”
“The decentfulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!” declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
‘‘Pile in!” said Bunter.
“Yes, but—”
“Wire in, old chap! I’ve been carving the ham for you —tuck into it.”
Wharton dropped into a seat. It was a ripping spread, and the chums of the Remove were hungry; and Bunter’s hospitality, certainly, was boundless. It would have been rather ungrateful to look a gift-horse in the mouth! If the captain of the Remove had a lingering doubt, he banished it; and sat down to the feed with his comrades.
Kipps of the Remove came along the passage and glanced in. Kipps was surprised at what he saw. Billy Bunter blinked at him, and waved a rather greasy and sticky fat hand.
“Trot in, Kippers! Make room for Kipps, you fellows! Lots and lots!”
“Standing room only!” said Bob Cherry, when Skinner looked in.
“Here, you keep out, Skinner,” said Bunter. “You jolly well wouldn’t whack out your toffee today—you clear off, see?”
“Is it Bunter’s spread?” asked Skinner, with a stare.
“Yes, rather!” said Bunter, “and you can buzz off!”
“Whose study did you find it in?” asked Skinner pleasantly.
“Oh, really, Skinner——”
“My dear Skinner,” said Alonzo, “that is a very disagreeable suggestion. I am shocked at you, Skinner.”
“I say, Smithy,” yelled Skinner along the passage. “Have you missed a ship-load of tuck from your study?”
“No!” answered the Bounder. “Why?”
“Well, somebody has!” said Skinner. “Bunter’s standing a spread!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Oh, my hat!” murmured Bob Cherry. “Look here, Bunter—”
“Pile in, old chap! Try the tarts.”
“Yes, but—”
“Have some more cake! It’s scrumptious cake! Our cook at Bunter Court knows how to make cakes, I can tell you!”
“Did your cook at Bunter Court make that big plum cake?” asked Bob.
“Yes, old chap. It came in the postal order—I mean the hamper—”

“Oh, crumbs!” said Bob.
“Oh, crikey!” murmured Johnny Bull.
Nobody wanted to be suspicious, but that big plum cake was a twin to the big plum cakes supplied by Mrs. Mimble at the school shop.
“Look here, Bunter——” said Wharton.
“Have some more cake, old chap.”
“If you snaffled Coker’s parcel—”
“Oh, really, Wharton—”
“Did you?” demanded Johnny Bull.
“Certainly not! Mrs. Mimble wouldn’t have handed it over to me,” said Bunter.
“She’s suspicious.”
“Well, that’s true enough,” agreed Wharton.
“You have forgotten, my dear Bunter,” said Alonzo mildly. “Do you not recall asking me to fetch Coker’s parcel from the shop——”
“What?” roared Peter Todd.
“Oh, shut up, Alonzo!” exclaimed Bunter. “You talk too much, old chap! Look here, have some cake!”
“Look here, is this Coker’s tuck?” roared Bob Cherry.
“Oh, really, Cherry——”
“You giddy ass, Alonzo! Have you been helping Bunter in grub raiding?” roared Peter.
“I should certainly refuse to do anything of the kind, Peter. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at such a thing!” said Alonzo warmly. “Bunter requested me to fetch Coker’s parcel, but he took it from me and carried it to Coker’s study——”
“Oh, my only summer bonnet! Did you see him take it there?”
“No; but he did so, my dear Peter.”
“How do you know?”
“He said so,” answered Alonzo simply. “Ha, ha, ha!” roared Hazeldene.
“Is this Coker’s tuck?” yelled Johnny Bull. “Certainly not!” howled Bunter. “It came from Bunter Court in a postal—hamper, I mean!”
“You fat brigand!” roared Johnny Bull.
“I—I say, you fellows——”
Billy Bunter blinked round Study No. 7 in alarm. Almost all the fellows were on their feet. It was Coker’s tuck—and it was absolutely certain that there was going to be a row. And a sudden tramping of heavy feet, and a voice that was not unlike that of the ancient Bull of Bashan, in the Remove passage announced that the “row” was at hand.

Horrid for Horace!

HORACE COKER wore a genial, hospitable smile. Coker stood in his study with Potter and Greene.
He was receiving guests. Coker was having fellows to tea. Tea was not yet on the table, but the guests were arriving.
“Trot in!” said Coker. “Here we are again—all of us present now, I think. Where’s that young scoundrel Nugent mi?”
Nugent minor of the Second Form had been bribed to fag for Coker. He was overdue with the big parcel from the tuckshop.
“Take a pew,” said Coker. “Sit down, old beans. I’ve sent a fag to the tuckshop for some things—”
“Here he comes,” said Price, looking out at the door. Dicky Nugent came strolling up

the passage in a leisurely way.
Dicky looked in the study: He was empty-handed.
“Well, where’s the parcel, you young ass?” demanded Coker.
“Haven’t you got it?” demanded Dicky.
“Eh? If I’d got it, do you think I should have sent you for it? Where is it?” snapped Coker.
“Blessed if I know!” answered Nugent mi. “I asked Mrs. Mimble for it, and she said it had been sent.”
“What?” hooted Coker. “It hasn’t been sent! What do you mean?”
“That’s what she said—a Remove man called for it,” said Dicky. “She handed it over to him to bring to you. It was that freak they’ve got in the Remove—Alonzo Todd.”
Coker stared blankly.
“She—she gave my parcel to a Remove kid, and—and he’s bagged it!” he gasped. “Why, my hat! I—I—I’ll——”
Coker was not amused. Coker grabbed up a fives bat.
“You men wait here,” he said. “I’ll go and find Todd! I shan’t keep you waiting long!”
“Where’s Todd?” he roared, addressing two or three fellows in the passage. “Where’s that young scoundrel Todd?”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Bounder. “Missed any tuck, old bean?”
“What did I tell you?” chuckled Skinner.
“Where’s Todd?” roared Coker.
Without waiting for an answer, he trampled up the passage to Study No. 7. He glared into that study. More than a dozen fellows were crowded there. On the table were the remnants of the feast. There was little left to greet the infuriated eyes of Horace Coker.
“Todd!” roared Coker.
“Adsum!” said Peter.
“Not you—the other idiot!” said Coker, glaring round. “Oh, here you are! What have you done with my parcel, you young villain? Is that my tuck you’ve been wolfing, what?”
“My dear Coker—” gasped Alonzo, in dismay.
“Where’s my tuck?” roared Coker.
“I greatly fear, my dear Coker, that the major part of it is no longer in existence,” said Alonzo. “I regret very, very much—”

"You've scoffed all my tuck!" roared Coker

Words failed Coker! After all, it was a time for action, not for words! Coker jumped into action!
Knocking over three or four fellows as he plunged. he sprang at Alonzo Todd, and grabbed him by the collar.

Whack, whack, whack.
“Oh, goodness gracious!” yelled Alonzo, as the fives bat fairly cracked on his bony person. “Oh, dear! Please desist, my dear Coker! Yaroooh! Whoop!”
Whack, whack, whack.
“Yaroooooooooh!”
“Rescue!” shouted Bob Cherry.
They grabbed Coker on all sides, and dragged him off Alonzo. They jerked away the fives bat: but, with great self-restraint, did not lay it around Coker. Coker struggled frantically in many hands.
“You young villains!” he roared. “My tuck— By gum, I’ll smash the lot of you! I’ll— Yarooogh!”
“Ow!” roared Alonzo. “Wow! I am considerably—ow!—wow!—hurt. My dear Coker, pray calm yourself— Wow, wow!”
“Lemme gerrat him!” gasped Coker.
With a terrific wrench, he tore himself away from the many holding hands, and hurled himself at Alonzo.
“Collar him!” gasped Bob Cherry.
“Bag him!”
“Kick him out!
The juniors piled in again. Coker was in no state to listen to reason, and Alonzo had to be saved from his wild wrath. Coker struggled once more in innumerable hands. Struggling, yelling, squirming, he was dragged to the door, and hurled out into the passage.
In Study No. 7 Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at his guests through his big spectacles. He did not like the way they were looking at him.
“I—I say, you fellows.” stammered Bunter. “Now that beast’s gone, let’s finish the spread! That cake from Bunter Court is—— Whooooooop!”
Bump!
Billy Bunter smote the study carpet! What was left of the big plum cake was crammed down his back! Taken internally, it was a very nice cake! Taken externally, it was horrid! Bunter wriggled and squeaked wildly.
“I say, you fellows—— Yarooooh! Leggo! I say—whoooop!—I say, it wasn’t Coker’s tuck—wow! —it came from—Whoooop! I say—Oh, crikey!”
Bump, bump, bump!
“Yow-ow-ow-ow!”
“Now give him the jam!” roared Bob Cherry.
“Oh, lor’! Groooogh! Oooooogh!”
When the fellows crowded out of Study No. 7, Bunter was left sitting on the floor, frightfully sticky, and making frantic efforts to extract crumbled cake from the back of his neck.
Meanwhile, Coker had got home! The waiting tea-party gazed at him as he limped into the study. They stared at him. He had not brought the tuck with him, that was clear. He staggered in, and collapsed into the armchair.
“Well, what about it?” yawned Price.
“Gurrggh!” Coker found his voice. “I say——gurrggh! — they’ve scoffed all the tuck in the Remove—wurrggh! All of you come with me, and we’ll mop them up— smash ’em—pulverise ’em—urrggh! Where are you fellows going?”
The tea-party melted away. They were going—but wherever they were going, it was not on a raid in the Remove passage. It was past tea-time, and they wanted their tea,

not a battle royal with the Lower Fourth. So they went—and Horace Coker was left to gasp and gurgle on his own!

Harry Wharton smiled.
Billy Bunter was the cause of the smile.
It was games practice that afternoon: a "compulsory" day. Compulsory football was a standing grievance with Bunter. What was the good of calling a half-holiday a half-holiday, Bunter would indignantly inquire, if a fellow couldn't do as he liked? Only in case of illness could a fellow be let off.
It followed that Billy Bunter, generally in enjoyment of quite sound health, was often ill on compulsory football days. Now he was ill again—as Wharton could see, as he came limping up with a fat hand pressed to his fat ribs! Hence the smile of the captain of the Remove.
"What is it this time?" he asked.
"A fearful pain in my side, old chap!" said Bunter hopefully. "I think you fellows did it, yesterday, pitching into me in the study! I haven't felt well since. It's like a burning dagger."
"Well, if you've got a fearful pain in your side, I shall have to let you off, and explain to Wingate!" said Harry, with a nod. "But I shall have to know how bad the pain is! Is it as bad as that?"
"Yarooh!" roared Bunter as the captain of the Remove took hold of his collar and tapped his bullet head against the wall. "Whoop! Beast! Leggo!"
"Not so bad as that?" asked Wharton.
"Ow! No! Yes! Worse!" howled Bunter. "I mean, no—yes—wow!"
"Ow! Wow! It's gone now!" yelled Bunter. "Oh crikey! Leggo, you beast! It's quite gone! Yoop!"
Harry Wharton laughed.
"Right-ho, then!" he said. "Turn up at three, Bunter. If you have another pain before then, just mention it to me, will you? I'll give you first aid."
"Beast!" Bunter rubbed his bullet head. "I say, Wharton, I—I want to get off this afternoon! Lonzy's going to tea with a man, and he wants me to go with him. He's very keen on it. That place where we got out of the rain last week, you know—the Willows! i'm going with Alonzo—"
"Games practice at three!" said the captain of the Remove.
Billy Bunter rolled away hastily. Harry Wharton, smiling, walked over to the elms, where the two Todds seemed to be engaged in a warm argument. Peter was rather excited—and Alonzo was making soothing gestures.
"What's the row, old beans?" asked Harry. "I hear you're going out to tea this afternoon, Lonzy! Forgotten games practice?"
"Mr. Quelch has very kindly given me leave, my dear Wharton," answered Alonzo. "I shall be very, very sorry to miss games practice, but it is very, very important for me to see the dear professor—"
"Well, if you've got leave, that's that!" said Harry. "I hope you'll have a jolly tea with the old bean! Mind your step while you're here—it's a weird place."
"That's all right—Lonzy's not going," said Peter. "I've told him he's to turn up for games practice. I'm going to make a footballer of him, or slay him. Study No. 7 is a Soccer Study."
"My dear Peter—" murmured Alonzo.
"'Nuff said! Your jolly old professor can go and eat coke!" said Peter Todd. "He's a weird old bird, anyhow—we've seen him climbing trees like a monkey, and he's so

jolly strong that it's uncanny—looks like a little feeble codger, and he's really as strong as a horse. You can give him a miss and play footer, see?"
"But I must really keep my appointment with Professor Sparkinson this afternoon, my dear Peter—"
"You know what to expect if you do!" said Peter grimly. "Six from a fives bat in the study. I mean it. Hallo! Where are you going?"
Alonzo suddenly scuttled away among the elms. Peter and Wharton glanced round—and sighted Coker of the Fifth in the offing. Evidently it was the sight of Coker that had caused Alonzo to beat that sudden retreat.
Horace Coker passed the two juniors with a brow of thunder, stalking Alonzo among the elms. A loud squealing sound a few moments later announced that Alonzo was caught. Only a few more moments, and a roar like a bull announced that Coker was caught in his turn—six or seven cheery Removites having rushed to the rescue of Alonzo.
Once more Horace Coker suffered severely in the hands of the Amalekites.
Leaving Coker for dead, as it were, the Remove men went down to Little Side for games practice.
"Coming?" asked Coker.
"Where?" asked Potter and Greene.
"I want you this afternoon."
"Um!" said Potter and Greene.
"Oh, come on!" said Coker impatiently. "There's no time to lose. I saw the young scoundrel go out of gates, and I don't want to miss him."
"But I say—"
"Don't jaw, Potter!
"But what—"
"Don't gabble, Greene!"
Horace Coker marched off, and his chums followed him, not very enthusiastically.
"This," Coker condescended to explain, "is a chance! Those young rascals in the Remove stick together as thick as thieves. I've been man-handled. Think I'm going to let Todd off because of that? No fear! I'm going to give him twice as much! Now there's a chance of catching him out of gates without that swarm of young villains chipping in! See?"
"Um!" said Potter and Greene.
"There he is!" Coker pointed along the road towards Courtfield Common. "Bunter's with him. Never mind Bunter! He will clear off fast enough if he's kicked."
"But look here, you don't want us to help you handle a Remove kid, old bean!" argued Potter.
"Of course I don't," answered Coker. "I could handle any man at Greyfriars without help, I hope. But he will cut and run. You fellows have got to see that he doesn't get away."
"Oh, crikey!" said Greene.
Alonzo was no fighting man, but with Coker on his track, it was probable that he would turn out to be fairly good at sprinting! Chasing an elusive fag up and down Courtfield Common did not appeal to Potter and Greene as a really agreeable way of getting through a half-holiday. They dropped a pace behind Coker and exchanged a glance and a wink. It was a tacit agreement to disappear when the chase started. If Coker wanted to race about the common after a fag, he could do it on his lonely own.
"Hallo, they're stopping!" remarked Coker.
Alonzo Todd and Billy Bunter had stopped on the road some distance ahead. They

were not looking back. Alonzo was looking at Bunter; and Bunter was blinking at Alonzo through his big spectacles.
“My dear Bunter,” said Alonzo mildly. “You will miss games practice if you come any farther.”
“Oh, shut up!” said Bunter. “Look here, fathead, you’re going to tea with that old goat at the Willows! Well, I’m coming, see?”
“But Professor Sparkinson has not authorised me to bring anyone to tea with me, Bunter! What you suggest is quite impossible.”
Billy Bunter blinked at Alonzo through his big spectacles. Their he doubled a fat fist.
“Where will you have it?” he inquired.
“Wha-a-t?”
“You’re taking me with you as a pal,” said the Owl of the Remove. “See? But if you don’t treat me as a pal, Alonzo, I’m going to knock you into a cocked hat!”
“Oh, my goodness! ‘ exclaimed Alonzo.
“Please do not be violent, Bunter!” gasped Alonzo. “My Uncle Benjamin—”
“Blow Uncle Benjamin!” roared Bunter. “Look here, am I coming to tea at the Willows or not? If not, look out for your silly nose!”
“Oh, goodness gracious!” exclaimed Alonzo, catching sight of Coker & Co. on the road, as he backed away from Bunter.
“Better let me stick to you,” said Bunter. “Suppose Coker came after you? Well, I’d protect you—”
“He—he’s coming!” gasped Alonzo.
“Wha-a-t?”
Bunter spun round.
“Oh, crikey!” he ejaculated, at the sight of Horace Coker coming up the road with long strides. Potter and Greene were following more slowly.
“I—I—I say, run for it!” gasped Bunter. And he set the example. Apparently, at the sight of the warlike Coker, Bunter had forgotten his intention of protecting Alonzo. Bunter ran—and Alonzo ran! Coker, in the rear, broke into a run also.
“After them!” he roared. He glared round at Potter and Greene. “Buck up, you slackers! Can’t you move? After them. I tell you!”
“Oh, all right!” groaned Potter.
“Ow!” gasped Bunter. “I say, stop for me, old chap! I say—ooogh!”
But Alonzo was already out of hearing. Billy Bunter plugged on desperately. But heavy footsteps were close behind Bunter, and a hand grasped his fat shoulder. A swing of Coker’s powerful arm, and Billy Bunter was on his back, like an upturned turtle on a South Sea beach!
He bent over the fat Owl of the Remove and took a businesslike grip on a fat ear.
“Now, Bunter——”
“Yaroooh!”
“Where’s that young villain Todd heading for? You were going somewhere with him. He may dodge me on the common. I want to know where to look for him if he does! Quick!”
“Yow-ow! Leggo!”
“I’m going to twist your ear till you tell me—like that——”
“Whooooop!”
“And like that—”
“Yarooop! He’s going to the Willows!” yelled Bunter. “Leggo! That old house by the—yooh—river! Leggo, you beast!”
“Good!”

Coker gave the fat ear another twist and left Bunter to yell. He raced on after Potter and Greene.
"Potter!" he roared. "Greene!"
Echo answered "Greene." But there was no other answer. Coker gave a snort of wrath and took up the chase again on his lonely own. Going strong, Coker disappeared across the common on the track of Alonzo Todd.
Coker came to a halt, gasping.
There were trees and straggling bushes in a dozen directions, and Alonzo had dodged out of sight, and was keeping out of sight. This was what Coker had foreseen might happen, and this was why he needed the help of his pals. But the mysterious disappearance of Potter and Greene left him to his own resources. Luckily, Coker, with great sagacity, had obtained information from Bunter. He knew where Alonzo was heading for. So, after a little thought, Coker started for the Willows at a rapid trot, to arrive there before Alonzo and catch him when he arrived!
Alonzo, peering out of a clump of alders, was very, very glad to see Coker go! He waited ten minutes to give the Fifth Form man plenty of time to get clear, and then resumed his walk to the Willows. It did not occur to Alonzo that Coker was heading for the same spot, and would be waiting for him there. That did not occur to Alonzo, till he came off the common into the lane where the old house stood—and beheld a burly form leaning on the gate of the Willows!
Then Alonzo halted in dismay and ejaculated: "Goodness gracious!"

The Professor Takes a Hand!

PROFESSOR SPARKINSON had expected Alonzo at four—and now it was turned four! He grunted, and then he snorted!
Finally he walked out and went down the avenue to the gates to see whether his expected guest was in sight.
"Dear me!" said Professor Sparkinson, as he sighted a burly back, belonging to a beefy fellow, leaning on his gate.
It was not Alonzo—the fellow was nearly twice as big as Alonzo. It was, as a matter of fact, Coker of the Fifth, waiting for Alonzo! And the next moment, through the bars of the gate, the professor sighted Alonzo. The Duffer of Greyfriars had come to a halt, and was regarding Coker of the Fifth with startled and dismayed eyes.
Coker, grinning, detached himself from the gate.
"Here we are again!" said Coker genially.
"Oh, my goodness!" said Alonzo.
"Waiting for you!" grinned Coker.
He made a stride towards Alonzo! Alonzo backed away across the lane. Professor Sparkinson, with a frown, hurried down to the gate and opened it. Evidently his intervention was required.
Coker—having no eyes in the back of his head—did not see the silver-haired gentleman. He advanced upon the retreating Alonzo.
"Got you!" he remarked.
"My dear Coker—" stammered Alonzo.
"Bagging a man's spread!" said Coker. "Ragging a man when he comes after it! There isn't a swarm of sneaking fags round here, what? I'm going to give you the hiding of your life! See?"
"Stop!"
Coker stared round at that unexpected injunction. He stared hard at the little silver-

haired gentleman who came bounding out of the gateway.
“Hallo, who may you happen to be?” inquired Coker.
“Probably you have heard of Professor Sparkinson!” said the little old gentleman with all the dignity of a great scientist.
“I’ve heard that some potty old chump has taken that house,” answered Coker cheerfully. “Are you the old chump?”
“Release that boy at once!”
“Cheese it!” said Coker. “I’m going to whop this young scoundrel! I’m going to give him the whopping of his life! Keep clear!”
“Release him!” rapped the professor, coming across the lane to Coker, his eyes glinting through his spectacles. “Otherwise I shall be compelled to use force.”
“Ha, ha, ha!” roared Coker, greatly tickled at the idea.
“Pray release me, Coker!” urged Alonzo. “I assure you that it was a very, very lamentable misunderstanding about your parcel—”
“Shut up! I’m going— Oh, my hat!” roared Coker as the silver-haired old gentleman hooked him by the collar. “Leggo! If you make me hit you you’ll be sorry for it! Why—what—Oh crikey! Yarooooh!”
Coker fairly howled with amazement as he was swept off his feet in the grasp of the professor.
He released Alonzo Todd—he had to! He was jerked away from him by an irresistible force. Fingers that seemed made of iron gripped Coker’s collar! To his speechless astonishment, he was swung in the air and described a circle round the professor.
“Oooogh!” babbled Coker. “Oooogh! What the thump! What the dickens—Oh, my hat! Wooooooogh!”
Having swung him round in a complete circle, the professor tossed him into the grass beside the lane.
Bump!
Coker sprawled and roared.
“Come, my boy!” said Professor Sparkinson kindly to Alonzo.
And he led the Duffer of Greyfriars towards the gate.
Coker sat up! Dizzy with astonishment, he gazed after the little old professor! Where on earth the silver-haired gentleman packed all that muscle was a mystery to Coker.
“Mum-mum-my hat!” gasped Coker.

“Sit down!” said Professor Sparkinson.
Alonzo sat down.
The professor, apparently, was going to entertain his schoolboy guest in the lab. In point of fact, the professor lived and moved and had his being in that apartment. Nine-tenths of the rambling old house was still empty and unfurnished.
“So you have decided to accept my offer!” barked the professor suddenly. He had a sudden way of speaking that made a fellow jump. “You desire to be made strong—what, what?”
“Yes, please!” said Alonzo meekly.
“I shall give you.” said the professor, “a small phial of the elixir. You will take one drop of it every night. A single drop, mind! So long as you take it you will be strong amazingly strong—astonishingly strong. You have experienced already what my elixir can do.”
“Yes, indeed!” said Alonzo.
The professor stepped to the big desk in the window. He took out a phial and handed it to Alonzo. It contained a sticky, crimson fluid.

“Take it! Keep it secret! Not a word, mind! Not a syllable! What?”
“Oh, certainly!” said Alonzo.
“Put it in a safe place! “ barked the professor.
Alonzo placed the phial in an inside pocket. The professor resumed his attitude before the fire, and regarded the Duffer of Greyfriars benevolently through his big glasses.
“You are interested in science?” he barked.
“Oh, no!” said Alonzo simply. “It makes my head ache.”
“You young idiot!” said the professor.
“Indeed, sir—”
“And a dolt——”
“Really, sir—”
“We had better have tea!” said Professor Sparkinson, changing the subject, much to Alonzo’s relief.
Alonzo expected the professor to ring for tea. But he didn’t! He touched a button in the wall. To Alonzo’s surprise, a section of the floor sank immediately out of sight, disclosing a large cavity.
As Alonzo blinked at it, with wide-open eyes, a table rose from below, exactly filling the gap. There was a click, and the floor closed again under the table.
“Goodness gracious!” ejaculated Alonzo.
The table was set for tea, and all was ready.
The professor smiled, restored to good humour by Alonzo’s admiring wonder.
“You have never seen anything like that before—what?” asked the professor.
“Never, sir!” said Alonzo.
“Come, come, sit down to tea!” barked the professor. Alonzo rose from the armchair in which he had been seated. There were no chairs near the tea table, and he glanced round for one. He was about to step to one of the chairs near the wall when the professor barked again.
“Stop!”
“Oh, certainly!” said Alonzo, wondering whether he was to stand to his tea, or whether a chair was to appear suddenly from the floor or the ceiling!
The professor touched another button. A chair, standing by the wall, slid forward over the polished oak floor, as if moving of its own volition, and stopped at the side of the table.
“Goodness gracious!” gasped Alonzo.
The professor smiled again. Apparently he liked to surprise a visitor with the weird and wonderful arrangements of his scientific home.
“Sit down!” he barked.
Alonzo sat down in the newly arrived chair—hoping that it would not start on its travels again after he was in it!
The table was well spread. There were cakes and buns and cream-puffs; there were ham sandwiches. There were other good things, many of them. It was a spread that would have delighted the heart of Billy Bunter. It had quite a pleasing effect on Alonzo, who was hungry after his walk.
Alonzo rather hoped that the professor would not talk science over tea. The professor didn’t.
The professor, desirous of suiting his conversation to schoolboy company, talked about games. Alonzo was not a whale on games—but neither, it seemed, was the professor. Regardless of the fact that it was October, he talked cricket, apparently under the supposition that that game was going on at Greyfriars. His knowledge, or remembrance, of the game seemed a little limited, too, as he asked Alonzo how many

goals he had scored in his last cricket match. Vast scientific attainments had doubtless driven more ordinary matters from the professor's powerful brain, as is not uncommon with scientific men.
"It is many years," said the professor rather superfluously, "since I played cricket! Are you a member of the fifteen?" Some hazy recollection of Rugby was perhaps in the professor's mind.
Alonzo was about to answer, when there came a sudden interruption.
"Yaroooh!"
It was a sudden, terrific yell from the hall outside the laboratory. Alonzo jumped, and spilt his tea.
"Goodness gracious!" he ejaculated. "What is that?"
The professor grinned.
"That," he said, "sounds like someone who has entered the house without permission."
Alonzo half-rose.
"Sit down!" barked the professor.
Alonzo sat down.
Billy Bunter had arrived.
He was rather late; but when there was a spread going on it was a case of better late than never! That at least was Bunter's idea.
The big oak door stood open, giving a view of the hall within. Bunter blinked into it. The hall had been furnished chiefly with packing-cases when Harry Wharton & Co. had dropped in for shelter from the rain a week or so ago.
Across the hall Bunter could see the door of the laboratory—and from that room he caught a clink of crockery and a murmur of voices. That, evidently, was where the professor was entertaining Alonzo to tea—and Alonzo was stuffing, forgetful of Bunter! He was going to be reminded of him.
He stepped in on the mat. He had, for the moment, forgotten his previous experiences at the Willows, and that it was a house of uncanny surprises.
Bunter, as he stepped on the mat, met with a surprise. It was a large, square mat, as wide as the wide doorway. It looked just like any other mat, safe to tread on.
But it wasn't!
As Bunter's weight was placed on it, there was a sound of a click below, and the inner edge of the mat suddenly rose in the air. The mat was fastened to the section of flooring beneath it; and that section of floor rose like the lid of a box.
Bunter was pitched backwards.
He gave a fearful yell as he sat down backwards in the stone porch outside. His yell rang through the Willows from end to end.
Having thus expressed his surprised feelings, Bunter sat and blinked. The mat sank back immediately into its former position.
"Oh, crikey!" gasped Bunter.
There was nothing for it, but to knock! As the door stood wide open it was difficult to reach the big knocker without treading on the mat. Bunter tiptoed on the door-sill, leaning his left hand on the door and reaching for the big iron knocker with his right. His fat fingers touched the knocker. But he did not lift it. At the contact a sudden electric thrill shot through Bunter.
"Yooooooop!" he roared.
That sudden electric shock made Bunter stagger. He staggered on the mat. Immediately the mat repeated its former performance! It rose on edge, and shot Bunter out into the porch again.

Bump!
"Whooop!" roared Bunter.
He blinked into the inviting-looking hall—inviting no longer! Nobody had come to the door, though Bunter's fearful yells must certainly have been heard all over the house.
"Beasts!" snorted Bunter.
He turned away from the door. Nobody, apparently, was going to let him in, and he did not want to try the knocker again, or the mat either. He rolled out of the porch, and along to the window of the laboratory. There he would be able to make his presence known to Alonzo.
He stood on the gravel path under the window, and blinked up. The window was too high from the ground for him to look in, or to reach to tap on the glass.
But there were bars to the window, and it was easy for even the fat Owl to catch hold of them and pull himself up, to get a view of the apartment within.
He reached up and grasped the metal bars.
"Yaroooooop!"
Millions of pins and needles seemed to be running through Bunter as he grasped the metal. Evidently the window-bars were connected with an electric wire and some beast, the professor, of course, had turned on the current. Bunter hung to the bars and wriggled and squirmed and roared and yelled.
Suddenly the current shut off. Bunter dropped with a heavy bump. He sat for long minutes rubbing his tingling fat hands and gasping for breath.
"Oh, crikey!" groaned Bunter.
He rose at last. He glared at the window with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles. He found a seat under the trees on the avenue, where he sat down to wait for Alonzo, and as he waited, hungrier and hungrier every moment, his wrath grew and grew till it was at boiling point. Alonzo, when he came out after tea with the professor, was booked for the time of his life!

Bunter Begs for it!

"WELL, good-bye, my boy!" said the professor, grinning.
"Good-bye, sir, and thank you very, very much!" said Alonzo.
"Remember, a single drop of the elixir once a day, and keep it a secret—a dead secret!"
"I shall certainly pay great attention to your injunctions in every respect," said the solemn Alonzo.
Alonzo went rather slowly down the avenue. He was thinking of Bunter, while he sat at tea. Professor Sparkinson had passed those yells by, like the idle wind which he regarded not, evidently not interested in the intruder who yelled. But the kind-hearted Alonzo was wondering what had become of Bunter.
He soon discovered as he went down the winding avenue, and passed out of sight of the house. A fat figure rose from a seat beside the drive, and two vengeful eyes blinked at Alonzo through a big pair of spectacles.
"You rotter!" howled the Owl of the Remove, rolling into Alonzo's path.
"My dear Bunter—"
"You cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "I've been waiting for you."
"Shall we walk back to Greyfriars together, my dear Bunter?" asked Alonzo amicably. "I cannot say that I shall be glad of your company, because I owe it to my Uncle Benjamin always to tell the truth. Nevertheless—Yaroooh!"

Thump!
A fat fist, with all Bunter's weight behind it, landed on Alonzo's nose.
He shot backwards and sat down on the drive.
"Oh, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo. "Oh dear! Oh, goodness gracious!"
"Get up!" roared Bunter, dancing round him, and brandishing his fat fists. "Get up, you rotter! Get up, you funk! I'm going to give you a jolly good hiding, see? Gerrup!
"Mum-mum-my d-did-did-dear Bunter—" stuttered Alonzo.
Alonzo tottered to his feet. He put up a feeble guard as the fat junior rushed at him. Bunter swept it aside and smote.
Crash!
"Ooooogh!" gurgled Alonzo, as he hit the earth again. "He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "That's what you're going to get! That's the stuff to give the troops! He, he, he!"
"Ow! Wow! Ow!" gurgled Alonzo. "I shall—ow!—certainly do my best to—wow!—treat you as you deserve, Bunter! Ow!"
But Alonzo did not immediately get on his feet. He remembered the priceless phial in his inside pocket. He groped for it, removed the stopper, and placed it to his mouth.
Billy Bunter blinked at him in amazement! What Alonzo was up to was a mystery to the Owl of the Remove.
He still sat looking at Bunter. But he was smiling now. As Alonzo did not get up, the Owl of the Remove reached out with his foot to give him a dig in the ribs.
Alonzo caught his ankle.
Bunter hardly knew what happened next.
His foot shot up into the air as Alonzo jumped actively up. The rest of Bunter shot downwards and hit the earth.
Bump!
"Urrrrrgh!" spluttered Billy Bunter.
Alonzo released his fat ankle, and looked down at him, with a gentle smile. Bunter blinked up at him quite dizzily.
"You—you—you rotter!" gasped Bunter. "Catching a fellow! Pitching a fellow over! I'll jolly well smash you!"
The Owl of the Remove scrambled up. He doubled both fat fists, and jumped at Alonzo Todd. But it was Strong Alonzo that he had to deal with now.
The Duffer of Greyfriars gave him a tap on his podgy chest. It was only a tap, but it was Strong Alonzo's tap!
Billy Bunter spun off his feet and collapsed with a roar.
"Yarooh! Oh, crikey! Stoppit! Keep off, you beast! Oh, crumbs!"
Alonzo grinned.
"Will you have some more, Bunter?" he inquired.
Bunter sprawled, and blinked up at him in amazement and alarm. He remembered what had happened on Alonzo's first day back at Greyfriars; the weird and wonderful strength that the Duffer of Greyfriars had displayed that day, and that day only.
Alonzo grinned, and walked on out of the gates of the Willows. Billy Bunter rolled after him dismally. He had had no tea, he had not, after all, whopped Alonzo, and he was feeling as if a sledgehammer had tapped him! It was not Billy Bunter's lucky day!

"I say, you fellows—"
"How did Bunter know we had a pot of jam?" asked Frank Nugent.
"Oh, really, Nugent—"
"Wingate wants to see you in his study, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "You're up for

six, for cutting games practice."
"Wingate had better take care how he hands out six!" said Bunter darkly. "I may ask my pal to whop him."
"Wha-a-at?"
"Alonzo could do it," said Bunter. "There isn't a man at Greyfriars that Lonzy couldn't handle! And he's my pal—my best pal!"
"Has he had a remittance?" asked Bob Cherry.
"No," roared Bunter, "he hasn't!"
"Then what makes you pally?"
"You can jeer if you like!" sneered Bunter. "Lots of fellows are down on poor old Alonzo because he's a bit of a freak. Well, I'm not!"
"A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind," remarked Johnny Bull.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I'll have some of that jam," said Bunter, coming into the study. "I'll have some of the biscuits, too. I never got any tea at the Willows, as that beast Alonzo—I mean as my pal Alonzo left me behind by accident. Hand over those biscuits, Wharton!"
It was not a request; it was an order. The captain of the Remove gazed at Billy Bunter as if that youth's fat and fatuous face fascinated him.
"Sharp!" said Bunter.
"My old hat!" said Harry Wharton. "Is the fat ass potty—or what?"
"I don't want any cheek!" said Bunter. "I can tell you—"
Herbert Vernon-Smith looked into Study No. 1. The Famous Five were at tea there when Bunter barged in.
"Heard the latest?" grinned the Bounder.
"No. What's the jolly old latest?" inquired Bob Cherry. "You remember Alonzo was doing terrific physical stunts his first day back?" said Vernon-Smith. "Well, he's started again. Sounds like jolly old magic, doesn't it? I say, I'm goin' to be jolly civil to Alonzo. Must make it a point not to tell him what I think of his looks and his brains— what?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You fat, cheeky rhinoceros—" began Johnny Bull.
"Shut up!" Bunter waved a fat hand at Johnny. "Don't give me any lip! If I ask my pal to handle you, you'll be sorry!"
"Why, you—you———" gasped Johnny.
"Shut up! Hand over that jam, Nugent! Hand over those biscuits, Wharton! And look sharp!"
Harry Wharton rose to his feet and picked up the jar of jam.
"Here's the jam," he said.
He grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar with his left hand. Billy Bunter was immediately up-ended on the floor of Study No. 1.
Holding him there with his left, the captain of the Remove up-ended the jam-jar over his fat face.
The contents poured out in a stream.
"Urrrrrgh!" spluttered Bunter.
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co.
"Like it?" asked Wharton.
"Urrgh! Wurrrggh!"
Bunter's mouth was open and the jam streamed into it. Bunter liked jam, and he liked it in bulk. Still, he did not like taking it like this! He choked and spluttered and gurgled! The jam overflowed round his capacious mouth, over his fat little nose, his

fat ears, his fat cheeks, his spectacles, and his collar and tie! It was nice jam—quite good jam! But, taken like this. it was horrid!
"Beasts!" gasped Bunter. "Urrgh! You wait till I start Alonzo on you! Ugh! Oooo'h! I'll jolly well ask him to— Uurrrrggh!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd frowned.
Peter was wrathy, and he was growing wrathier.
He sat in Study No. 7, with a fives bat lying on the table in front of him. That fives bat was ready for Alonzo when he came in.
In spite of Peter's commands, as head of the study, Alonzo had cut games practice that afternoon. Peter had warned him what he had to expect if he did so.
Peter was resolved on that. He had his position as head of the study to maintain.
The study door opened. The Duffer of Greyfriars appeared on the threshold. He cast his usual mild glance into the study, and gave his Cousin Peter a gentle smile. Behind him the Remove passage was crammed with juniors. Nearly all the Form seemed keen to witness that whopping of Alonzo.
"Oh, here you are!" grunted Peter.
"Yes, my dear Peter," said Alonzo gently. "I have returned, and you will be pleased to hear that I had a very agreeable tea with Professor Sparkinson at the Willows."
"Oh, frightfully!" said Peter. "You cut games practice, you frowsty slacker!"
"As I informed you at the time, my dear Peter, I had leave from Quelch to—"
"Who's head of this study?" roared Peter.
Alonzo regarded him thoughtfully.
"Hitherto, my dear Peter, you have been head of the study," he remarked. "But in the circumstances that have arisen, no doubt you will realise the suitability of stepping down—"
"Eh?"
"I think, my dear Peter, that it would be more suitable for me to be regarded as head of the study," said Alonzo. "But that is a matter which we will discuss in an amicable spirit."
"Will we?" said Peter grimly.
"I trust so, my dear Peter. I—I—I say, what are you going to do with that fives bat, my dear fellow?"
Peter Todd had risen to his feet, and taken the fives bat in his hand. Alonzo blinked at it.
"Guess," said Peter, with grim humour.
Alonzo backed away across the room. Peter, bat in hand, followed him up. The doorway was crammed with eager faces. Peter, in his study, had not heard the latest. Probably he was the only fellow in the Remove who did not know that Alonzo Todd was Strong Alonzo once more. He was going to learn.
"My dear Peter," murmured Alonzo, "pray put down that bat! It would be excessively uncomfortable to be batted, but, at the same time, I am extremely reluctant to treat you roughly—"
"You pie-faced, piffling, footling frump!" said Peter Todd, in measured tones. "I'd like to see you treat a white rabbit roughly. Will you bend over that table, or shall I bend you over?"
He made a jump for Alonzo. He grasped him!
Alonzo returned grasp for grasp.
Bump!

Peter, in dizzy astonishment, found himself sprawling. face down, across the study table. He hardly knew how he had got there. The table rocked as he landed. Alonzo handled him like a feather.
“Now, my dear Peter,” murmured Alonzo, holding Peter there with a hand on the back of his neck, “pray do not be so very, very cross!”
Peter heaved wildly, but the hand on the back of his neck pinned him down like a giant’s hand. He wriggled, and thrashed the air with his legs. There was a roar of laughter from the passage.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Aren’t you going to whop him, Toddy?” inquired the Bounder.
“Ha, ha, ha!
Peter struggled frantically. He could not get loose. But one of his boots jammed on Alonzo’s chin, and there was a roar.
“Ow! Oh, my goodness! Wow!”
Alonzo seemed wrathy now. The crash of Peter’s boot on his chin had stirred the wrath of even the kind Alonzo. He jerked the fives bat from Peter’s hand.
Whack, whack, whack!
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Removites.
Peter, yelled, too—but not with laughter. The fives bat was getting to work in Study No, 7, after all. But Alonzo was not getting the batting. It was Peter who was getting it!
Whack, whack, whack!
“Oh, my hat!” said Peter.
He slid from the table. He looked at Alonzo. He did not speak; his feelings, perhaps, were too deep for words. Alonzo laid down the fives bat, but Peter did not make a movement towards it. It was clear that if anybody was going to be batted in Study No. 7, it was not going to be Alonzo.

Fed Up!

“TROT in, Alonzo!”
That cheery welcome greeted Alonzo Todd of the Greyfriars Remove as he looked into Study
No.1.
Harry Wharton & Co. were at tea in that celebrated apartment. They were discussing poached eggs and the next football match at the same time.
“Just one egg left!” said Johnny Bull. “Better late than never, Lonzy! Squattez-vous!”
Alonzo Todd stepped into the study. But he did not take a seat at the tea-table. He stood and gazed at the Famous Five of the Remove with his serious and thoughtful gaze.
“My dear fellows,” said Alonzo, “I trust that I am not interrupting you.”
“What a trustful nature!” murmured Bob.
“I have come here to make a few observations to you, Wharton, as head boy and captain of the Form!” explained Alonzo.
“Have tea instead!” suggested Harry Wharton. “You’ll like the tea better than I should like the jolly old observations.”
“My dear Wharton—”
“Put some more tea in the pot, Franky! Shove over the toast, Bob! Sit down, Alonzo! There’s a box.”
Alonzo shook his thoughtful head.

“I have considered the matter carefully,” said Alonzo, “and I trust that you will give me your attention, Wharton! I am not wholly satisfied with your conduct as head boy of the Form.”
“Not!” ejaculated Wharton.
“I regret to say, no!”
“Too bad!” said Wharton gravely. “But I’ll try to survive it! I may pull through.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Shut the door after you!” said Nugent.
“I have not yet made the remarks that I came to make, Nugent.”
“Look here,” said Bob Cherry. “I’ll tell you what! Stand in the passage and talk, Alonzo, with the door shut! That will please both parties! You can jaw as much as you like, and we shan’t hear you.”
“My dear fellow, pray do not be frivolous. The matter is serious,” said Alonzo. “I am bound to tell you, Wharton—”
“Couldn’t you tell them in Study No. 7?” suggested Wharton. “Toddy and Dutton and Bunter are your study-mates, you know, and it’s up to them to stand your chin-music!”
“Hear, hear!” said Bob.
“But it is to you, my dear Wharton, that it is necessary for me to address my remarks, as you are head of the Form!” explained Alonzo. “You are aware, my dear fellow. that since my return to Greyfriars, I have developed rather unusual physical strength. Far be it from me to brag, or swank, or anything of that kind; but is it not a fact that I am now the strongest fellow in the Remove, and quite able to handle any of you fellows as if you were infants?”
“For instance,” went on Alonzo, “owing to a deplorable misunderstanding, my dear Wharton, I had a scrap with you recently. You may remember that I knocked you out with a single blow.”
Wharton’s face reddened.
Alonzo was a good fellow, but he was not tactful!
Certainly, no fellow need have been ashamed of getting knocked out by “Strong Alonzo.” The amazing strength Alonzo Todd had developed was the talk of Greyfriars.
“You blithering, burbling, babbling bandersnatch!” said the captain of the Remove. “Is that what you’ve come here to talk about?”
“Not at all, my dear fellow! I was merely mentioning it—I trust without offending you!”
“Idiot!”
“It is no disgrace to you, my dear fellow, to be knocked out by a single blow from me! I could knock out Wingate of the Sixth just as easily.”
“Fathead!”
“In fact, I could mop up this whole study if I were disposed to use my great strength in an unworthy manner!” said Alonzo cheerfully. “But I trust that I shall never so far forget the instructions of my dear Uncle Benjamin as to become an overbearing or bullying fellow.”
“Oh, shut up!” Politeness was wearing very thin in Study No. 1.
“However, to resume,” said Alonzo, “being in possession of remarkable strength. and able to handle any fellow, or fellows, in the Form, I feel it my duty to use my advantages for good. There are many things going on in the Remove, my dear Wharton, of which I cannot approve, and of which I am convinced that my Uncle Benjamin would not approve.”

“Now, look here, fathead!” said Wharton. “We all like you, more or less, and we know you mean well, and you can’t help being the biggest fool at Greyfriars, or anywhere else. But if you fancy that you can butt into a man’s study and law him, you’re making a mistake! Get out!”
“I shall certainly not leave this study, Wharton, until I have completed the observations I came out here to make,” said Alonzo Todd calmly.
“Get out! “ roared Johnny Bull.
“Kindly be silent, Bull!”
“Kick him out!” roared Johnny Bull.
“My dear fellows, pray do not get excited! I should be very, very sorry to hurt you—” Alonzo was interrupted. Like one man the Famous Five rushed at him, collared him, swept him off his feet, and hurled him headlong into the Remove passage. There was a heavy bump as Alonzo smote the floor, and a loud yell.
“Whoop! Oh, my goodness gracious! Yarooop!”
“I say, you fellows!”
Billy Bunter yelled in the Remove passage in great excitement. Fellows looked out of six or seven studies along the passage. The bump of Alonzo Todd smiting the floor had reached every ear.
“Hallo! What’s the row?” called out Vernon-Smith from Study No. 4.
“I say, you fellows. Alonzo’s mopping up Wharton’s study! “ yelled Bunter. “He, he, he!”
“Looks as if Wharton’s study is mopping up Alonzo,” grinned the Bounder.
“Oh dear! Oh, my goodness!” gasped Alonzo, as he sat up.
He blinked at five excited and wrathy faces in the doorway of Study No. 1.
Peter Todd came out of Study No. 7.
“What the dickens are you up to, Lonzy?” he demanded.
“He isn’t up: he’s down!” grinned the Bounder.
“Now travel, you ass!” said Harry Wharton. “Take that as a hint, and go!”
“Groogh!” gasped Alonzo.
Strong as Alonzo was, he seemed rather damaged by that terrific bump on the floor of the Remove passage.
Alonzo staggered to his feet. But it was not to go. He made a step towards the doorway of Study No. 1, which was blocked by the Famous Five. His Cousin Peter caught him by the arm.
“Look here, Lonzy! What are you rowing in that study for’? Come away, and don’t be an ass!”
“My dear Peter—”
“Oh, shut up and come away!” said Toddy, jerking at his arm.
“Please release my arm, my dear Peter.”
Mild as Alonzo was, there was a strong vein of obstinacy in him.
“Well, I won’t!” said Peter. “Who’s head of the study, I’d like to know? I’m not letting you row.”
“Then I shall have to push you away, my dear fellow, though I very, very much regret having to do so,” said Alonzo.
And he gave Peter a push, which sent him spinning along the passage.
“Oh, crikey!” gasped Peter, as he collapsed a dozen feet from Strong Alonzo. “Oh, my only hat!”
Having disposed of Peter, Alonzo turned to Study No. again. He was calm again now, and determined— very determined.
“My dear fellows——” said Alonzo.

“Shut up, and bunk!”
“I decline to do anything of the sort! I came here to make some very, very urgent observations to Wharton—”
“Ring off!”
“To which he will have to listen,” said Alonzo calmly. “I am coming into the study. Please stand aside.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Alonzo Todd marched straight into the doorway of Study No. 1. A crowd of fellows in the Remove passage watched him breathlessly.
The Famous Five stood firm. They stood shoulder to shoulder to resist the invader. But it was in vain.
Strong Alonzo simply walked through them.
He received without heeding several hefty punches that would have knocked an ordinary fellow off his feet. He swept out his arms, and Bob Cherry tumbled over on one side. Harry Wharton on the other.
Johnny Bull and Nugent and the nabob jumped at him, grasping him. Alonzo grasped them in turn, and pitched them in a heap on the floor.
Five fellows—the best fighting men in the Remove—strewed the floor of Study No. 1, dizzy and panting. And Alonzo, who had not turned a hair, stood gazing down at them calmly.
“My dear fellows———” he said.
“Ha, ha, ha!” came a roar from the passage.
Alonzo Todd blinked round as if surprised by the merriment in the passage. He stepped farther into Study No. 1, and closed the door. The view was shut off from the interested crowd in the passage.
Harry Wharton & Co. sat up. They gasped for breath, and blinked dizzily at the strong man of Greyfriars.
“Now, my dear Wharton——” said Alonzo gently.
“Get out!” gasped the captain of the Remove.
“Not until I have completed my observations!”
Wharton staggered to his feet.
“Back up, you men!” he panted.
“Yes, rather!” gasped Bob Cherry.
“The ratherfulness is terrific!”
“Please do not compel me to use further violence,” urged Alonzo Todd. “My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked if—”
They hurled themselves at him. For two or three minutes there was a Homeric battle in Study No. 1.
The five of them could not handle Strong Alonzo. It was a bitter pill to swallow, but they had to get it down. The Duffer of Greyfriars was not only victor, but an easy victor. He was not even breathing quickly as he gazed at the five sprawling figures.
“Now,” said Alonzo mildly, “perhaps you will listen to me patiently? I very, very much wish that you had done so at first. Believe me, my dear fellows, I very, very much regret to be forced to handle you in this way.”
“Oooogh!” gurgled Bob Cherry.
“Urrrrggh!” groaned Johnny Bull.
“My remarks, Wharton, are chiefly addressed to you, as captain and head boy of the Remove,” continued Alonzo calmly. “I trust that you will now listen with patience.”
Wharton had to listen, whether with patience or not.
For the moment he could do nothing but gasp for breath.

An inkpot caught Alonzo fairly in the face

"I am far, far from satisfied with your actions as head boy," resumed Alonzo. "Do not assume that I blame you, my dear fellow! No doubt you do your best, according to your lights! But you have never had, as I have had, the inestimable benefit of the instructions of my Uncle Benjamin. Many things go on in the Remove which would, I am sure, shock my Uncle Benjamin extremely were he aware of them. Did you speak?"

"Groooogh!"

"Smoking," said Alonzo, "goes on in some studies, strickly against the rules of the school. I may instance Skinner's study and Vernon-Smith's. I feel that this ought to be stopped!"

"Urrrgh!"

"Money-lending," said Alonzo, "is a very, very deplorable thing, yet I cannot doubt that it is indulged in by Fish, who makes detestable and illicit profits by lending money at interest among the fags! This must be stopped!"

"Oooooooh!"

"Breaking of bounds," resumed Alonzo, "is far from unknown! That is a very serious matter! What do you think, my dear Wharton?"

"Gurrrggh!"

"To come to the point"—even Alonzo Todd could come to the point, at long last—"I have decided that it is my duty, having the power in my hands, to take up the task of reforming the bad characters in the Form, my dear Wharton. I shall now take the matter in hand—I feel it my duty! What did you say?"

"Yurrrggh!"

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet. The Co. sat up, still gasping and gurgling. Wharton clutched up an ink-pot,

"I have now completed my observations," said Alonzo Todd, "and if you desire it I will depart from your study. I—yaroooh—-groogh—wooooooch!"

A stream of ink shot from the ink-pot! It caught Alonzo Todd fairly in his countenance, and as his mouth was open to speak, a considerable quantity splashed therein. Alonzo spluttered wildly.

"Urrrrggh! My dear—wurrrgggh! Oooooch! Grooogh! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Now, you cheeky fathead!" gasped Wharton.

Bump!

One tap from Strong Alonzo laid the captain of the Remove on his back again. Then Alonzo, still spluttering ink, left the study, greeted by a roar of laughter as his inky visage dawned on the crowd in the passage.

The Famous Five, in Study No. 1, sat up. They gasped for breath—they gazed at one another.

“Well, my hat!” said Bob Cherry.
The study door opened. A fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered in! Billy Bunter chortled.
“He, he, he! I say, you fellows, you look a moulting lot! He, he, he! You can’t handle Alonzo! He, he, he!”
Five pairs of hands clutched the Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter yelled in anticipation as he was swept off his feet. He yelled still more loudly as he landed with a terrific bump on the passage floor. The study door slammed on him, and nothing more was heard from Bunter, which was one comfort.

Wibley is Wrathy!

WILLIAM WIBLEY, of the Remove, gave a howl. It might have made any fellow howl!
Wib had run up the box-room stairs, at the end of the Remove passage, run across the little landing at the top, and turned the handle of the box-room door. He was in rather a hurry. Wibley, the president of the Remove Dramatic Society, was in official charge of the theatrical “props” belonging to that society.
Wib’s study, No. 6 in the Remove, overflowed with such things. But there was no space in a junior study for all of them, and Wib kept a box in the box-room stacked with all sorts of theatrical things—wigs and beards, false noses and masks, and costumes. When Wibley wanted something from that box he would run up for it—as he had run up now. Naturally, a fellow expected a door to open when he turned the door-handle. Nobody would have expected to find a box-room door locked.
So William Wibley, as he turned the door-handle, barged on, taking it for granted that the door would open at his push.
It didn’t!
The result was that William Wibley’s nose banged on the door with a rather severe bang. And Wibley’s howl could have been heard at quite a good distance.
“Ow!” howled Wibley, letting go the door-handle and clasping his damaged nose. “Wow! What idiot’s locked that door? Yow! What blithering cuckoo’s locked that door? Whooop! What benighted bandersnatch—”
There was a faint chuckle from within the box-room. Someone, evidently, was there! It was followed by silence.
Bang! Bang!
Wibley smote on the panels with his clenched list.
“Who’s locked this door?” yelled Wibley. “I’ve got to come in to my box. What blithering idiot’s locked himself in her. I’d like to know? Open the door or I’ll dot you in the eye!”
Silence!
“Will you let me in?” howled Wibley.
No answer.
“You rotter!” roared Wibley. “I’ll spiflicate you. Do you hear me? I’ll spiflicate you!”
There came no reply. Since that chuckle, caused by the bang of Wib’s nose on the door, the unseen occupant of the box-room had given no sign.
Breathing wrath, Wibley stooped to peer through the keyhole. Then he had a view of the interior—and of Skinner, Snoop, and Stott, sitting on boxes and smoking cigarettes, and grinning, through the smoke. It was, after all, one of Harold Skinner’s little smoking parties—which he did not want interrupted. Judging by their grinning

faces, Skinner & Co. were rather amused by Wib's helpless wrath outside.
"Skinner, you rotter!" roared Wibley. "Chuck that filthy smoke away and open the door! I can see you, you worm! Like me to call a prefect here to catch you smoking. you unclean animal?"
Skinner laughed! Exasperated as Wibley was, he was not likely to "sneak" to master or prefect.
"Will you open this door?" roared Wibley.
Skinner did not answer, but he leaned towards the door and blew a cloud of cigarette smoke through the keyhole. It caught Wibley in the eye, and he yelled. He jumped away from the door, clapping his hand to his smarting eye. He had a pain in his nose already. Now he had a smart in his eye. And his temper was on the boil.
"By gum. I'll smash in the door!" hooted Wibley.
Skinner & Co. chuckled. They had no intention whatever of letting any fellow in while they were smoking and playing banker. And the lock on the door was a good deal too strong for Wibley to burst.
Crash!
Wibley, boiling with rage, drove his shoulder against the oak, to crack the lock and hurl the door open. The door stood fast. There was a fearful howl from Wibley. That crash had not damaged the door in the least, but it had, apparently, damaged Wib's shoulder. He had a third pain now, added to the other two.
"Oh! Ow! Wow!" gurgled Wibley as he rubbed his shoulder. "Oh, you rotters! Oh, you blighters! Ow!"
He did not heave his shoulder at the door again. The result was altogether too painful. There was no getting at his property-box in the box-room. He tramped down the box-room stairs, crimson with wrath.
Fellows in the Remove passage glanced at his crimson countenance and grinned.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" sang out Bob Cherry. "What's the jolly old trouble, old bean?"
"I'll smash 'em!" gasped Wibley.
"Who is to receive the esteemed smashfulness?" inquired Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
"I'll spiflicate 'em!"
"But what's the row, old chap?" asked Harry Wharton soothingly. William Wibley often got excited, as a fellow with an artistic temperament was entitled to do. But he was in a quite unusual state of excitement now. He breathed fury.
"I've a jolly good mind to call in a prefect, and give 'em away!" he hooted. "It would make the smoky rotters jump if Wingate or Gwynne tapped at the door. I've a jolly good mind to call Quelch!"
"My dear Wibley," came Alonzo Todd's gentle voice from the doorway of Study No. 7, "what ever is the matter? I trust you have not had an accident with your nose, my dear Wibley."
"He, he, he!" contributed Billy Bunter.
Bunter seemed to find something entertaining in the aspect of Wibley's nose.
"Those smoky rotters!" gasped Wibley. "They're locked in the box-room, smoking, and won't let me in."
"Oh, goodness gracious!" said Alonzo Todd. "I trust, Wibley, that smoking is not going on in the box-room.
"You blithering ass! Skinner and Snoop and Stott are in there, smoking like chimneys, and playing cards, too, and they won't let me in. I'll jolly well get a hammer, or something, and bash in the lock. My nose—"
Alonzo Todd looked very, very serious. He was so keen, and so serious, on his good intentions, that he had no time to think about minding his own business! Schoolboy

smoking was a rather dingy and disreputable sort of thing and it was unhealthy, and it was very much against the rules. For that reason, Sixth Form prefects administered the ashplant to offenders when caught—which was very right and proper. But it really was not the business of one Remove fellow to bring up another fellow in the way in which he should go. Alonzo, in his anxiety to do good, forgot that.
"Leave me to deal with this, Wibley," said Alonzo. "I have decided to put down such disreputable and malodorous practices——"
"You cheeky, meddlin' ass!' said Herbert Vernon- Smith, from the doorway of Study No. 4. "Can't you mind your own bisney, you freak?"
"I regard this as my business, my dear Vernon-Smith. I am not satisfied with the way Wharton acts as head boy—as I have, indeed, informed him. But I regard it as my duty to persuade Skinner and his friends to give up the deleterious practice of smoking, and I consider myself entitled to use compulsion; and I shall certainly do so."
Alonzo started for the box-room stairs.
Peter Todd yelled after him from Study No. 7.
"Don't be a fool, Lonzy!"
"My dear Peter——"
"What's the good of telling him that?" asked Hazeldene. "He can't help it, can he?"
"My dear Hazel——"
"You'd better mind your own bisney, fathead!" said Squiff.
"I have already remarked, my dear Field, that I regard this as my business!" said Alonzo gently. "And my Uncle Benjamin would be shocked if I should neglect to follow the path of duty!"
Alonzo marched up the box-room stairs.

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Skinner was grinning, in the box-room.
"Cheeky ass!" he remarked.
"Pass the smokes!" said Snoop.
"Here you are, old bean! I suppose that ass wanted some of the rubbish he parks here. Let him want!"
"Hallo, here he comes again!" said Stott, as there was a footstep on the little landing outside the box-room door.
Tap!
"Oh, buzz off!" called out Skinner. "You're not coming in, Wibley! You should keep your rubbish somewhere else."
"My dear Skinner—"
"Oh, my hat! It's the freak!" exclaimed Snoop. "What the thump do you want, Alonzo? Go away and play."
"I understand that you are smoking here," said Alonzo through the keyhole.
"You do?" exclaimed Skinner.
"Yes, my dear fellow."
"Amazing!" said Skinner. "I never knew that you could understand anything! How do you do it?"
"Please open the door, Skinner!"
Skinner & Co. exchanged glances. Behind a strong oak door, safely locked, they felt safe, even from Strong Alonzo.
"He can't get at us!" murmured Snoop. "Let him rip!"

“Call again next week,” suggested Skinner.
“I very, very much regret to use force, but you will realise yourselves, my dear fellows, that you leave me no alternative,” said Alonzo.
“He’s wound up!” remarked Skinner.
Crash!
Under that hefty barge from Strong Alonzo the lock cracked and the door flew open.
“Oh, crumbs!” gasped Skinner, leaping to his feet.
Alonzo Todd strode in. He coughed a little as he entered: the atmosphere of the box-room was thick with smoke.
Skinner & Co., on their feet, glared at him furiously. They were breaking the rules of the school and were liable to six if spotted by a prefect! But the idea of being called to order by a junior like themselves was intensely exasperating to the black sheep of the Remove.
“You cheeky rotter!” bawled Stott. “Get out!”
“Hook it, you frowsy freak!” howled Snoop.
“Look here, you cheeky rotter!” roared Skinner.
“Grooogh! This disgusting smoke is excessively unpleasant!” gasped Alonzo. “I am shocked at you—nay, disgusted! You have been playing cards as well as smoking, Skinner!”
“Mind your own business!” yelled Skinner.
“Take all those cards and all those cigarettes and place them in the grate!” said Alonzo calmly. “You will then set fire to them!”
“Shan’t!” bawled Stott. “Look here, you men, turn him out! The three of us can handle him!”
Alonzo smirked!
“I fancy not, my dear Stott! But you may try if you like.”
“Hold on,” muttered Snoop uneasily, “that beast’s as strong as a horse—he mopped up all Wharton’s crew yesterday—”
“Back up, I tell you!” yelled Stott, and he hurled himself at Alonzo.
Skinner and Snoop hesitated to “back up.” It was just as well for them! Alonzo gave Stott a tap, and Frederick Stott shot across the box-room, banged on the wall, and collapsed on the floor. There he lay, spluttering. Alonzo blinked at him.
“I trust, my dear Stott, that you will not compel me to punch you again!” he remarked gently.
“Urrrgggh!” was Stott’s only reply. He could only gurgle.
“You rotten bully!” gasped Skinner.
“My dear Skinner—”
“Get out, you rotter!
“I have already directed you, my dear Skinner, to apply a match to your cards and cigarettes——”
“Shan’t!” howled Skinner desperately. “Here, leggo—Oh, you rotter—Yaroooh! Whooop! Yoooop!”
With a swing of his mighty arm, Strong Alonzo tossed Skinner to the floor, where he lay gasping beside Stott. Sidney James Snoop, wriggling in Alonzo’s left hand, fairly cringed.
“Leggo!” he gasped. “I—I—I’ll do anything you like—Oh, crikey!”
“Very well, my dear Snoop!” said Alonzo, “pray carry out my directions without undue waste of time.”
He released Snoop. With an expression on his face like that of a demon in a pantomime, Sidney James Snoop gathered up the cards and the cigarettes and stacked

them in the grate, and applied a match to the heap.
Skinner and Stott crawled to their feet and stood watching the blaze. They were not disposed to resist, but their feelings were deep. Alonzo turned to them with a gentle smile.
“Please turn out your pockets!” he said.
“Wha-a-at?” gasped Skinner.
“Please lose no more time,” said Alonzo gently. Skinner & Co. looked at one another! To be ordered to turn out their pockets as if they stood in the presence of a suspicious Form master was the last straw! But they dared not resist! The pockets were turned out. Another packet of cigarettes came to light from Skinner, and a racing paper from Snoop. Both were added to the fire.
“Oh, you rotter—you meddling cad!” groaned Skinner. “We’ll make you sit up for this!”
“You are welcome to try, my dear Skinner!” smirked Alonzo. “I fail to see how you will do it, however. Now leave the box-room, and do not come into it again. You are forbidden to use this box-room at all.”
“By whom?” hissed Skinner.
“By me!” said Alonzo Todd calmly.
“You cheeky rotter——”
“Please say no more, Skinner, or I may become angry and sling you down the stairs, and I should be very, very sorry to do that!”
Skinner & Co., with feelings too deep for words, marched out of the box-room. Alonzo Todd followed them out, and followed them down the box-room stairs.

Herbert Vernon-Smith smiled rather sardonically as he glanced at the clouded face of his chum and study-mate, Tom Redwing.
Prep was going on in the Remove, but the Bounder was not giving it much attention. Redwing worked steadily; but the expression on his face showed that he was thinking of other things as well as his work.
“Penny for ’em, Reddy!” said the Bounder suddenly.
Tom glanced up at him.
“You know what’s in my mind, Smithy,” he said gruffly. “I think you’re a fool! You’ve made friends again with that cad Ponsonby at Highcliffe, and I’ve got an idea that you’ve arranged something with him for tonight. If you’re going out of bounds—”
“Why worry?” grinned the Bounder. “I’m not askin’ you to come.”
“I shouldn’t if you asked me!” said Tom curtly. “I wish you wouldn’t play the shady fool, Smithy! And you’re risking a lot.”
“Risk makes life worth livin’!” yawned the Bounder. “I—” He broke off as there was a tap at the study door. “Who the dooce is comin’ here in prep! Trot in, fathead!”
The door opened, and Billy Bunter blinked into the study. Smithy and Redwing stared at him. Fellows were not supposed to leave their studies in preparation, and prep was not yet over.
“I say, you fellows—” began Bunter.
“Buzz off, fathead!” said the Bounder. “If Carne of the Sixth spots you out of your study you’ll get six.”
“That’s all right,” said Bunter cheerfully. “You know Carne—I’ll bet he’s smoking a cigarette somewhere with Loder or Walker instead of keeping an eye on the Remove! I say, Smithy, I’m coming.”
“What?’’

“I heard you ask Skinner,” explained Bunter.
The Bounder’s brow darkened.
“You hear too much, Bunter!” he said.
“Oh, really, Smithy! I happened to be near the corner when you were speaking to Skinner, and I couldn’t help hearing what you said. Skinner’s got the wind up, and won’t come! You don’t want to go alone, do you, old fellow?”
“Shut the door after you!
“I’ll come!” said Bunter. “I’m not exactly pally with Ponsonby; but I can stand the fellow! Dash it all, I’ll be civil to him—civility costs nothing. Is it the Three Fishers or the Cross Keys, Smithy?”
Vernon-Smith’s eyes glittered, but he kept calm.
“Neither,” he answered; “I was only pulling Skinner’s leg! There’s nothing on tonight, Bunter, and you can go back to prep.”
Billy Bunter grinned and bestowed a fat wink on the Bounder. Bunter was not taken in so easily as all that.
“Gammon, old bean!” he answered cheerily. “You’re going to meet Pon at the corner of Oak Lane tonight after lights out, and that looks like the Three Fishers! Well, I’ll come! Nothing goody-goody about me, I hope. Why shouldn’t a fellow shake a loose leg at times, what?”
Vernon-Smith rose to his feet. The expression on his face did not indicate that he was going to welcome the fat and fatuous Owl as a companion in his excursion out of bounds that night. It indicated that he was going to make Billy Bunter sorry that he had rolled into Study No. 4.
Bunter eyed him warily.
“No larks, Smithy!” he said. “If you don’t want me—”
“You know I don’t!”
“I hope I’m not the fellow to barge in where I’m not wanted,” said the fat Owl, with dignity. “But if you don’t treat me as a pal, Smithy, you can’t expect me to treat you as one. You see that?”
“What do you mean, you blithering fat idiot?” The Bounder’s eyes gleamed at William George Bunter. “If you dared to sneak—”
“I hope I’m not a sneak!” said Bunter. “It’s not sneaking to mention things to other fellows in the Remove, I suppose?”
The Bounder stared at him.
“You can tell all the Remove, if you like, you fat Owl! You can tell all the Lower school! Sing it out in the Rag, if you want to.”
“Oh, all right—I’ll tell Alonzo!” grinned Bunter.
Vernon-Smith started.
“Alonzo Todd?” he said.
“Exactly! Alonzo will be glad to hear!” grinned Bunter. “You may be able to get out of bounds tonight, if Alonzo knows—and you may not! I rather fancy not, myself.”
Herbert Vernon-Smith’s eyes gleamed with rage as he stepped towards the Owl of the Remove.
“You’ll tell Alonzo?” repeated the Bounder.
“Yes, I jolly well will! “ declared Bunter.
“Well, you can tell Alonzo Todd that I’m going out of bounds tonight,” said Vernon-Smith. “Tell him at the same time that I banged your head on my study table——”
“Here, I say—” roared Bunter, as the Bounder grasped him. “I say, old chap—Let go, you beast— Whooop!”
Bang!

“Yow-ow-ow-ow!”
“You want something to tell Alonzo—”
“Leggo! Help!”
“I’ll give you lots to tell him—”
“Help!”
“Tell him I shoved your head into the coal-locker—”
“Yaroooh! Gug-gug-gug! Ugggh!”
“Tell him, anyhow, that I chucked you out of my study on your neck!” said the Bounder.
Bump!
Billy Bunter spun into the passage. He landed there with a crash. He sprawled and roared.
“Oooogh! Oh, crikey! Beast! Keep off! I’ll tell Alonzo! Yarooooh!”
“Oh, good! You want something more to tell Alonzo! Tell him I kicked you along the passage!”
“Yooop! Whooop! Yarooooh! Oh, crumbs!” Billy Bunter squirmed away from a lunging boot, and fled along the Remove passage. The Bounder went back into his study and slammed the door.

Alonzo the Reformer Going Strong!

HARRY WHARTON awoke suddenly.
It was ten o’clock, and, as bed-time for the Greyfriars Remove was half-past nine, most of the Form were fast asleep. All of them, certainly, should have been. But in the Greyfriars Remove, as elsewhere, things were not always as they should have been!
It was a bump against his bed that awakened the captain of the Remove. He started out of slumber and blinked round in the darkness.
“What the thump—” he ejaculated. “Is that somebody up?”
“Oh! No!” came back a gasping voice. “I’m not up, old chap!”
“Bunter, you fat idiot——”
“I’m fast asleep—I mean, I’m not up—that is——— You go to sleep, and mind your own business, Wharton!”
“You woke me up, you howling ass!”
In the glimmer of winter starlight from the high windows, Wharton made out Bunter’s fat form—and another. The other was dressing quickly in the dark, and, after what Bunter had said, Wharton could guess that it was the Bounder.
“Is that you, Smithy?” he asked.
“Yes. Don’t wake the house.”
“Better go back to bed, and don’t play the goat!”
“Thanks for your advice. When I want any more, I’ll ask for it!”
“You’ll get a dot in the eye, without asking for it, if you’re not a bit more civil, you dingy worm!” grunted the captain of the Remove.
Vernon-Smith made no reply to that.
Billy Bunter, groping in the gloom, bumped into another bed.
“Oh, gad!” came Lord Mauleverer’s voice. “What’s that?”
“Nothing, old chap. Shut up!” said Bunter. “I say, Smithy. I haven’t finished dressing. Wait for me.”
“Hold your silly tongue, you fat fool!”
“I’m coming, old chap!”
The Bounder breathed hard through his nose. Reckless as the scapegoat of Greyfriars

was, he wanted to get out on his shady excursion without waking all the Remove, and causing general remark. A fellow who was risking the "sack" had to be a little careful.
"Mind, if you start without me, look out for squalls! said Bunter, in a deep whisper. "I haven't told Alonzo yet—I'm giving you a chance! But if you're going to let me down, Smithy—Yarooooh!"
Smack!
The Bounder, in his rage, forgot caution. His open hand came across Billy Bunter's fat face with a terrific smack.
Bunter roared and staggered against a bed.
"Ow! Beast! I'll tell Alonzo—"
Smack!
"Yaroooooh!"
Bunter's roar echoed through the dormitory! Every fellow in the Remove woke up at that roar.
"What on earth's that row?" exclaimed Peter Todd.
"Smithy's going out of bounds," yelled Bunter. "Ow! Wow! I say, you fellows, Smithy's going on the tiles."
"Shut up!" snapped Tom Redwing.
"Shan't!" roared Bunter. "I say, Alonzo, Smithy's going out to meet Ponsonby of Highcliffe and go to the Three Fishers!"
The Bounder breathed fury. He hastily got on with his dressing. Alonzo's voice came from the gloom.
"My dear Vernon-Smith———"
"Shut up, freak!" snarled the Bounder.
"I trust, my dear Vernon-Smith, that Bunter's allegation is unfounded—"
"Mind your own bisney!"
"He's going!" howled Bunter vengefully. "He refused to take me with him—I mean, I refused to go with him! I say, Alonzo—"
Alonzo Todd rose from his bed. He groped for a match-box, struck a match, and lighted a candle. Then he gazed at Vernon-Smith, who was putting on his boots with hurried hands.
"I fear, my dear Vernon-Smith, that there can be no doubt about the matter,' said the Duffer of Greyfriars gently. "If it is not your intention to break bounds, why are you dressed, and why are you putting on your boots?"
"Find out!"
"Is is possible, Bunter, that you intended to go out of bounds with Vernon-Smith?"
"Oh! No! Nothing of the kind! I didn't stay awake and listen for him to get up—"
"Then why have you got your trousers on?"
"I fear, Bunter, that you are prevaricating!" said Alonzo. with a sad shake of the head. "The habit of prevarication grows on you, Bunter."
"Oh, really, you cheeky beast!"
"Please go back to bed at once, Vernon-Smith," said Alonzo. "I cannot allow you to break bounds at night."
The Bounder made no answer. He was dressed now, and he started for the door. In the flicker of the candle the Remove fellows looked on from their beds. Alonzo made a bound after Smithy, caught him by the shoulder, and spun him back. Vernon-Smith reeled helplessly, crashed against a bed, and went sprawling to the floor.
"Man down!" said Bob Cherry.
"The downfulness is terrific!
"I am very, very sorry to have to use such drastic measures, my dear fellow," said

Alonzo gently. “But in the circumstances—”
The Bounder leaped to his feet. His face was crimson with rage. He had no chance against Strong Alonzo— none whatever! But he did not stop to think of that! He fairly hurled himself at the self-appointed reformer of the Remove!
“Go it, Smithy!” gasped Skinner.
The Bounder was a splendid boxer, and Alonzo knew as much about boxing as he did about football, or the Einstein theory of relativity. The Bounder got home two terrific punches, but they did not even make Alonzo blink. Then Strong Alonzo’s grasp closed on him, and he was swept off his feet.
Struggling frantically, and panting with rage, the Bounder was tucked under Alonzo’s left arm and held there.
“Ha, ha, ha!” came from the Remove.
“Back up, you rotters!” shrieked the Bounder. “Are you going to let this meddlin’ cad throw his weight about like this? Wharton—you call yourself captain of the Remove——”
Harry Wharton laughed.
“If you expect a fellow to back you up in breaking bounds after lights out and playing the shady blackguard, Smithy, you’re expecting rather too much!” he said.
“You rotten funk!”
“Alonzo’s a meddling ass,” said the captain of the Remove. “But a meddling ass is better than a shady blackguard! If I chipped in, it would be to lend Alonzo a hand!”
“Hear, hear!” grinned Bob Cherry.
“He, he, he!” cachinnated Bunter.
“I shall also tie you, Bunter—”
“Wha-a-at?” squeaked Bunter.
“You were going out also——”
“I—I say, I’ll promise—”
“I fear that I could not trust your promises, Bunter!
You have so often broken them! I shall certainly tie you up as well as Smithy!”

He grasped the fat Owl of the Remove, and tucked him under his arm

“Why, you cheeky rotter—”
“Come here, Bunter!”
“Shan’t!” yelled Bunter.
Alonzo strode at him. He carried the Bounder under his arm as he strode as if the hefty Bounder had been an infant. Vernon-Smith foamed with rage. But he was powerless. Alonzo grasped the fat Owl of the Remove and tucked Bunter under his other arm. Bunter roared and squeaked. He was rather sorry, by this time, that he had awakened Alonzo. But it was rather too late to think of that.

“Now, Vernon-Smith, if you will give me your word—” murmured Alonzo gently.
“Hang you! I’ll smash you!” yelled the Bounder. Smithy struggled frantically, and Bunter squirmed and wriggled like an eel. But Strong Alonzo was too much for the pair of them—much too much! He dragged them together and held both their collars with a single hand.
Back to back, they struggled and wriggled and kicked. It was amazing to see Alonzo pinning them together by their collars in the grip of a single hand—but he did.
Taking up a sheet from the Bounder’s bed with his left, Alonzo twisted it, and passed it round Smithy and Bunter like a rope.
He twisted it tight, and then, releasing their collars, proceeded to fasten the twisted sheet with elaborate knots.
“Oh, you rotter!” panted the helpless Bounder. “Ow! Beast! Lemme go!” wailed Bunter.
“Ha, ha, ha!” came from the fellows sitting up in bed, staring on at the scene in the candle-light.
“I am very, very sorry for this,” said Alonzo gently. “I feel that it is the only thing to be done, but I am very, very sorry.”
“Will you let me loose?” choked the Bounder. “I’ll yell and bring a prefect here, you potty rotter.”
“Better not, old bean!” chuckled Bob Cherry. “The jolly old prefect would want to know why you’re up and dressed.”
“If you desire to call a prefect, or a master, I have no objection, my dear Vernon-Smith,” said Alonzo. “I am very, very willing to place the matter before Wingate or Gwynne—or, indeed, Mr. Quelch—if you desire.”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Removites.
The Bounder, mad with rage as he was, was not likely to welcome the appearance of a prefect or a “beak.” Even to get out of that ridiculous and humiliating position he would not have been glad to see Mr. Quelch arrive in the dormitory.
“I shall now return to bed,” said Alonzo. “I think, my dear fellows, that you will be able to wriggle loose in time. My object is not to keep you up all night—”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Removites.
Alonzo blew out the candle and went back to bed. There was a ripple of laughter along the dormitory. Smithy and Bunter, tied back to back, swayed and wriggled, gasped and gurgled.
The Bounder, choking with rage, as silent. But Billy Bunter’s voice was heard, almost without a pause. Bunter was quite eloquent.
‘Shut up, old fat bean, and let’s go to sleep!” said Bob Cherry. “You’ve asked Alonzo for this, you know.”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Beast!
The Remove settled down to sleep again in spite of Billy Bunter’s incessant squeals and squeaks. Smithy set himself to the task of getting loose. But it was not an easy task. Alonzo had twisted that sheet hard, and knotted it firmly.
It was eleven o’clock—Smithy could hear the strokes booming from the clock tower in the November night—before he was free at last——aching, fatigued, breathless and furious. With feelings to deep for words, Vernon-Smith crept back to bed—his thoughts running on vengeance on Alonzo Todd. And even Billy Bunter crawled into bed, not too tired and sleepy-eyed to think of vengeance.

“It’s the giddy limit!” said Bob Cherry.
“The jolly old limit, and no mistake!” said Johnny Bull.
“I say, you fellows, Smith will be wild!”
“The wildfulness will be terrific!”
“Here comes Redwing!”
A crowd was gathering outside Study No. 4 in the Remove passage towards tea-time the next day. Excitement reigned.
Redwing, puzzled, stepped into the doorway of Study No. 4. Then he stopped dead, and stared.
“What the thump—” he ejaculated.
The study looked rather dishevelled. Alonzo Todd was pulling out the table drawer. He blinked cheerily at Redwing.
“It is all right, my dear Redwing,” he said amicably.
“All right?” gasped Redwing. “What the thump are you rooting over my study for? What do you mean by it?’
“I am searching for Vernon-Smith’s smokes, cards, and sporting papers,” answered Alonzo. “After due consideration, my dear Redwing, I have decided that it is my duty to put down that sort of thing in the Remove. And I am, I trust, not the fellow to shrink from the path of duty.”
“You’re searching my study!” gasped Redwing.
“Vernon-Smith’s study,” corrected Alonzo. “I have already found a box of cigarettes, which I have placed on the fire.”
“You cheeky ass!”
“Oh, here they are!” said Alonzo. He sorted a pack of cards out of the table drawer, and tossed them on the fire. “Now, my dear Redwing, perhaps you can tell me where Vernon-Smith keeps his sporting papers. It will save me considerable time, and—”
“Get out!” roared Redwing wrathfully.
“My dear Redwing—”
“You cheeky idiot!”
“I am very, very pained to hear you utter such opprobrious epithets, my dear Redwing. And I shall certainly not take my departure until I have done what I regard as my duty, and what I am convinced that my Uncle Benjamin would regard as my duty,” said Alonzo firmly.
Tom Redwing’s face was crimson with wrath. He was very far from approving of the Bounder’s shady manners and customs, which had more than once caused trouble in that study. But to have a fellow Removite taking it upon himself to search the study like a suspicious beak, was rather too much for any fellow to stand with patience.
Redwing tramped into the study, his face aflame.
“Get out!” he roared.
“My dear Redwing—”
“Get out, before you’re chucked out, you meddling ass!
“My dear Redwing,” he said soothingly, “you could not possibly chuck me out of the study! Pray do not make a fruitless attempt.”
“I’ll jolly well try, if you don’t hook it this minute! exclaimed Tom.
“I have not yet completed my search of the study—”
“That’s enough!”
Tom grasped Alonzo Todd. He was a sturdy fellow—one of the sturdiest in the Remove. But he went over like a skittle as Alonzo pushed him. He bumped on the floor.
“I am very, very sorry for this, my dear Redwing,” said Alonzo mildly; “but in the

circumstances—”
“Look here, you cheeky fool!” roared Bob Cherry.
“My dear Cherry —”
“Better call Wharton!” said Squiff. and he ran along the passage to Study No. 1. He came back with the captain of the Remove.
Harry Wharton’s brow was dark as he looked in at Alonzo! So far as anyone in the Remove had authority over the Form, that authority was in the hands of the captain and head boy! Alonzo had borrowed that authority, and improved upon it! Wharton certainly would never have considered it his duty to search a fellow’s study for smokes! That duty belonged to masters and prefects.
Redwing staggered to his feet. It was so evidently his intention to renew the combat, unequal as it was, that Alonzo gave him another push, which landed him, gasping, in a corner.
“Stop that!” rapped out Harry Wharton.
Alonzo glanced round mildly.
“My dear Wharton—” he said gently.
“Get out of Redwing’s study!” said Harry. “I suppose you mean well, and you can’t help being a fool! But you’re going over the limit, and you’ve got to stop it! Get out at once!”
“I should he very, very sorry to enter into a dispute with you, my dear Wharton,” said Alonzo. “but I have my duty to do—”
“Has the Head made you a prefect?” howled Johnny Bull.
“Not at all, my dear Bull! I am acting in this matter entirely on my own responsibility!” explained Alonzo. “I should be glad, very, very glad, if you fellows approved! But I have, at least, the approval of my own conscience—”
“Back up, you men!” exclaimed Harry Wharton, and he led a rush into the study. And the next moment a terrific combat was raging.
Strong Alonzo had never needed his strength more! Harry Wharton & Co. were in deadly earnest, and the Co. backed up their leader as one man! Redwing scrambled up and joined in—Squiff and Torn Brown lent their aid.
Eight fellows grasped Alonzo Todd on all sides.
“Go it!” yelled Skinner, mindful of the scene in the box-room.
He was almost tempted to lend a hand himself—but not quite.
“I say, you fellows, chuck him out!” yelled Billy Bunter. “I say, pitch into him! Thump him! Give him up! Give him beans! Chuck him out!”
“Here he comes!” gasped Snoop.
A whirling figure flew doorwards!
But it was not Alonzo!
It was Bob Cherry, and he crashed into the crowd and sprawled! Another whirling figure followed him! It was Harry Wharton! Then Frank Nugent was tossed on the two of them, and then Squiff was added to the heap!
Amazing as it was—unbelievable as it almost was— Strong Alonzo was getting the upper hand! Eight fellows could not handle him!
Bump! Johnny Bull was added to the pile! Crash! Tom Brown came headlong across Johnny.
“Oh, my hat!”
“Yarooooh!”
“Gerroff!”
Redwing came spinning, and then Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Sprawling fellows filled the doorway, rolling over one another, gasping and breathless.

Alonzo, breathing a little hard, but quite calm, looked at the staring faces in the doorway.
"My dear fellows—" he began.
"I say, you fellows, go for him!" yelled Billy Bunter from the rear.
"Please keep the peace, my dear friends!" urged Alonzo. "I am very, very sorry to have to act in. this
somewhat violent manner, but in the circumstances——"
"Oh! Ow! Oh, crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry, sitting up dizzily. "Oh, my only winter bonnet! Wow!"
"I am terrifically winded!" gurgled the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Oh, my esteemed hat! Ow!"
Harry Wharton struggled up. He staggered against the door, panting for breath. He was game; but for the moment what he wanted was his second wind! There were gurgles on all sides. Breathless fellows blinked at Alonzo Todd.
Alonzo apparently considered the matter at an end. Regardless of almost wolfish looks from the fellows he had handled, he was looking through the table drawer again. A sporting paper caught his eye, and a pleased smile dawned on his face.
"Ah, this is it!" said Alonzo. " 'Racing Tips'—I am sure, my dear fellows, that you will agree that such a periodical ought never to find a place in any study at Greyfriars——"
"No bizney of yours!" snarled Skinner.
"You meddling ass!"
Alonzo, unheeding, turned to the study fire. 'Racing Tips,' crumpled, went into the flames and flared up. The self-appointed reformer of the Remove had completed his task now, and he turned to the door.
"My dear friends," he said mildly, "pray let there be no more violence! I am finished here, and I shall be very, very pleased to take my departure without further unseemly scuffling!"
The fellows made room for Strong Alonzo to pass, and he walked out of the study. Two or three hisses followed him, and Alonzo looked quite pained. Reformers are seldom popular, and undoubtedly the reformer of the Remove was getting towards the lowest ebb of unpopularity in that Form! Peter Todd followed him into Study No. 7 with a frowning brow.
"You silly ass!" said Toddy.
"My dear Peter——"
"You meddling, howling nincompoop—"
"If Uncle Benjamin could hear you using such expressions, my dear Peter, he—"
"I've a jolly good mind to give you the fives bat!" roared Peter.
Alonzo smirked.
"But that, my dear Peter, is a task far beyond your powers!" he said. "Indeed, if you do not moderate your expressions, I shall seriously consider whether to give you the fives bat, my dear Peter. I should be very, very sorry to do so; but you are aware, my dear Peter, that I could handle you like an infant! Are you not, my dear fellow?"
Peter Todd gazed at his hopeful cousin. Had it been practicable, Alonzo certainly would have got the fives bat—hard! But it wasn't! Peter left the study, and slammed the door after him with a slam that rang the length of the Remove passage.

The Bounder's Way!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH smiled.
The Bounder seemed to have come back from Courtfield in an unusually good temper. Even a
good-humoured fellow might have been irritated by Alonzo's high-handed proceedings. And Smithy was not generally good-humoured. But as he looked into Study No. 4, and half a dozen voices told him what had been goin on. Smithy only smiled. He really seemed amused.
"Where's jolly old Alonzo now?" he asked.
"In his study!"' said Skinner. "But if————"
"I ought to thank him for looking after me like this!" said the Bounder. "It's jolly good of him, isn't it?"
"Oh, my hat!"
Vernon-Smith strolled along to No. 7. He still had his coat on, as he had come in; and his hands were in the pockets. From one of the pockets came slight metallic clinking. Smithy had something there which he was not revealing to view. The smile was on his face, but there was a peculiar glimmer in his eyes. Quite a crowd of fellows followed him along to Alonzo's study, wondering what was going to happen.
The Bounder tapped politely at the door of No. 7, and opened it. Alonzo Todd was preparing tea at the table; his study mates leaving him to himself for the present. He paused, and glanced at the Bounder benignly.
"Come in, my dear Vernon-Smith!" he said.
The Bounder stepped in.
"I hear you've been going over my study!" he remarked casually.
"Precisely, my dear fellow! I am happy to say that I have discovered your smokes, and cards, and racing paper, and destroyed them!" said Alonzo, with a beaming smile. "I trust that, after lengthy and serious reflection, my dear fellow, you will thank me for what I have done."
"Oh, quite!" said the Bounder. "Awfully good of you, Alonzo!"
"I am so very, very glad to hear you say so, my dear friend! " beamed Alonzo. "This is most, most gratifying."
"I've been thinking how I could show you how jolly grateful I feel, old top!" said the Bounder.
"How very, very pleased I am to hear you say so."
"I've been down to Courtfield, old bean," he remarked. "I dropped in at old Lazarus'. He's got lots of queer things in his second-hand shop. Guess what I've bought?"
"Some very, very good book, I trust, the perusal of which will improve your mind and elevate your thoughts."
"Oh, my hat! I mean, nunno! Look here!" There was a chink of metal again, as the Bouncier drew his hand from his overcoat pocket.
"What the thump!" ejaculated Hazeldene, in the doorway.
"Handcuffs!" gasped Skinner.
It was a pair of heavy, rather rusty, old-fashioned handcuffs that the Bounder held up before the surprised eyes of the Duffer of Greyfriars. Old Mr. Lazarus had, as Smithy said, all sorts of queer things for sale; and plenty of fellows had noticed that set of rusty old manacles in his dusty window. Nobody, hitherto, had thought of buying them.
"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "What a very extraordinary purchase, my dear Vernon-Smith! To what possible use can you put a pair of handcuffs?"
"Well, they might be useful," said Vernon-Smith.
"I'll show you how they work! It's quite simple! Just hold out your hands—so——"

There was a breathless gasp from the fellows in the doorway! They understood now what the Bounder's game was! But suspicion never entered the mind of the Duffer of Greyfriars.
He was not particularly interested in the handcuffs. But as Smithy seemed to want to show him how they worked, he obligingly held out his hands for the purpose. Alonzo was always obliging!
Click!
"Oh, gum!" gasped Skinner. "Ha, ha, ha!"
The Bounder slipped from the corner of the table. There was a grin on his face—a rather unpleasant grin.
"You see now?" he asked. "They're locked on your wrists, old bean, and only this key can open them!"
"I quite understand, my dear Vernon-Smith!" said Alonzo. "It is very, very kind of you to show me, my dear fellow; but now please take them off, as they are somewhat uncomfortable."
"Oh, you're so jolly strong; you'd better snap them!" suggested the Bounder.
Alonzo blinked at him. Strong as he was, he was not equal to snapping a pair of hefty steel handcuffs. Professor Sparkinson's Wonderful Elixir did not invigorate him to that extent!
"I fear that that would he impossible, my dear Vernon-Smith," he answered.
"Think so?" asked the Bounder.
"I am sure, my dear fellow. Pray unlock them."
Vernon-Smith slipped the key into his pocket. There was a ripple of laughter at the doorway.
"My dear Smithy, I am waiting!" said Alonzo mildly.
"Go on waiting!" said Smithy cheerfully.
"Pray release me at once!"
"Rats!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Alonzo blinked in surprise at the Bounder's grinning, sardonic face. A fellow who had handled another fellow, as Alonzo had done Smithy, might really have known what to expect if he let that fellow lock a pair of handcuffs on his wrists! But the Duffer of Greyfriars had suspected nothing! The truth was dawning on him too late!
"My dear Vernon-Smith, you cannot possibly intend to leave me in this exceedingly uncomfortable situation?"
"You've got it!" assented the Bounder. "You're too jolly strong for me to handle, you see, or I'd have given you the thrashing of your life already, you meddling, officious fool! I fancy I can handle you now!"
"Oh, my goodness!"
"Take that as a start!" said Vernon-Smith, picking up the butter from the tea-table. With accurate aim, he landed it on Alonzo's nose.
"Urrrggh!" gasped Alonzo.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Goodness gracious! Urrrgghh!"
Alonzo wrenched wildly at the handcuffs. He wrenched in vain! Even Strong Alonzo had met his match at last—in that rusty, second-hand pair of handcuffs! Alonzo was a helpless prisoner!
"Have some more?" asked the Bounder.
He hurled the loaf at Alonzo, catching him under the chin.
Bump!

Alonzo sat down.
“Here’s the jam!”
The Bounder upended the jampot over Alonzo’s head, and the contents streamed out.
“Oh! Urrgh! Oh, my goodness!”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Removites.
They crammed the doorway of Study No. 7, looking on with the keenest interest.
Alonzo struggled to his feet with some difficulty. As he gained them, the Bounder gave him a shove, which sent him sprawling again. He hit the floor rather hard and roared.
Vernon-Smith snatched the shovel from the fender. Kneeling on Alonzo’s shoulders, as he sprawled with his nose grinding into the study carpet, the Bounder whacked with the shovel. Alonzo was well-placed for a whopping!
The flat of the shovel fairly rang on his trousers. “Yooop! Oh, my goodness! Please stop it, my dear— Yarooop! Oh, goodness gracious! Yaroooop!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Alonzo sat up dizzily.
“You—you—you rotter!” he gasped. “Let me go at once—take off these handcuffs! I—I——”
The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.
“I’ve paid you what I owe you, old bean!” he remarked. “But there are other fellows! Good-bye!”
Vernon-Smith sauntered out of the study. Alonzo struggled to his feet. He was buttery, he was jammy, and he had a lot of aches and pains! And it was borne in upon his mind that there was more to come!
“Oh, my goodness!” gasped Alonzo Todd.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“My dear Peter—”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled Toddy.
The reformer of the Remove gazed distressfully at the shrieking crowd in the passage. There was no helping hand for him.
Skinner, Snoop, and Stott exchanged a glance, and came into the study. They could deal with Alonzo now! The Bounder had paid his score: but, as he had said, there were other fellows! It was Skinner & Co.’s turn.
“My dear Skinner, if you will kindly release me, I shall he exceedingly grateful!” said Alonzo. “I shall— Yaroooop!”
Skinner picked up a cushion, swung it through the air, and caught Alonzo on the side of the head. The strong man of Greyfriars staggered, stumbled, and landed on the floor with a bump.
“Pin him!” grinned Skinner.
“Hold on!” said Snoop. “He’s jolly strong, even with his fins fixed. Shove the table over on him.”
“Good egg!”
Three pairs of hands grasped the study table. It was heaved over on the sprawling Alonzo. Upside down on Alonzo’s back, it pinned him to the floor, and Skinner & Co. stood on it to add their weight.
“Urrrrggh!” came in a prolonged gurgle from Alonzo Todd.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Get the ink. Snoopy!” said Skinner.
“Rather!” chortled Snoop.
Alonzo heaved and struggled under the upturned table. But the table, with three

fellows standing on it, pinned him down. Snoop proceeded to pour the ink down the back of his neck.
“Halo, hallo, hallo! What’s the jolly old rumpus?” exclaimed Bob Cherry. The Famous Five came along from tea in Study No. 1, drawn by the roars of laughter in the Remove passage.
“Oh, my hat!” exclaimed Harry Wharton, as he stared in at the amazing scene in Study No. 7.
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled Johnny Bull. “Alonzo’s getting jip!”
“The jipfulness is terrific!”
“Urrrrggh!” gurgled Alonzo. “Wurrh! Stop pulling my ears, Skinner—it is excessively painful! Please let go my hair—Yaroop!”
“I say, you fellows, I’ve got some gum!” yelled Billy Bunter.
The Owl of the Remove rolled into Study No. 7 with a gum bottle in his fat hands. Alonzo twisted wildly, with apprehension on his face. But there was no escape for Alonzo!
A steady stream of gum poured over his helpless head. It mixed with his tousled hair and flowed over his face and round his ears and down his neck. Alonzo gurgled and gurgled.
“Oh, my goodness!” gasped Alonzo.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
He heaved frantically. The table rocked. Skinner & Co. had to cling to the upturned legs to save themselves from being rocked off.
“Here, get on, Bunter!” gasped Skinner.
Billy Bunter plumped on the table. There was a gasp from Alonzo, like the air escaping from a badly punctured tyre. Bunter’s weight did it. There was no arguing with that! The hapless Alonzo fairly flattened out.
“Ooooooooooh!”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Got him safe now! “gasped Snoop.
“The gotfulness is preposterous!”
“Mum-mum-my dear Wharton—grooogh——” articulated Alonzo. “Please lend me your—grooogh—assistance—ooooooogh—”
“I say, you fellows, fetch some more ink—”
“Ha, ha, ha!
“My dear—urrrrggh——Wharton———”
“You’ve asked for this, old bean,” said the captain of the Remove, laughing. “No bizney of mine!”
“The askfulness was terrific!”
Harry Wharton & Co. went back to Study No. 1 to finish their tea. Alonzo was left in the hands of the Amalekites.
“Pip-pip-please release me, my d-d-dear fellows!” stuttered Alonzo. “Pip-pip-please leave off pulling my—yow-ow-ow!—ears—wow!”
“I say, you fellows, get some soot out of the chimney—”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Let him have it!” chortled Stott; and he shovelled down soot from the interior of the study chimney.
“My dear fellows—” gasped Alonzo, shuddering with apprehension. “Oh! Oooooogh! Ow! Groooooogh! Gug-gug-gug!”
“There!” gasped Skinner. “I fancy that will do. It’s getting a bit thick here. Come on!”
The raggers, yelling with laughter, left the study.

Alonzo Todd, gasping for breath, breathing soot, pitched off the table and sat up. He turned a dizzy, sooty, inky face on the yelling crowd at the doorway. They shrieked as they looked at him.
“I say, you fellows, ain’t he a picture?” gurgled Billy Bunter.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Alonzo Todd tottered along the passage to Study No. 4. He turned the door-handle, and blinked in at Smithy and Redwing, who sere sitting down to tea. They stared at him, and the Bounder yelled, and Redwing chuckled.
“My d-d-dear Smithy——” gasped Alonzo.
“Ha, ha, ha!” shrieked the Bounder.
“This is not really a—groogh!—laughing matter! Urrrgh! I—I must get washed!” gasped Alonzo.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Pip-pip-please remove these handcuffs!” gurgled Alonzo. “I must—Ooogh!—go and get myself—urrgh— clean ——”
“You can stay as you are!” answered the Bounder coolly. “You’re a sight for gods and men and little fishes, and you can stay like it. Go and cat coke!”
“Better give up playing the goat, old bean, and make it pax,” suggested Redwing, laughing.
“In the circumstances—grooogh—I have decided not to—woogh—continue the work of——ow! —reformation in the Remove—ooogh! I am very, very much surprised that the fellows have—urrrgh——received it in such a—woogh—spirit. I shall certainly—ugh——take no further steps to uplift the Remove to a—groogh—higher level. Wurrggh!”
“You mean you’re going to mind your own business?”
“Urrrgh! That is not how I should—oooggh——describe it, my dear—groogh—Redwing. But—”
Vernon-Smith, chuckling, unlocked the handcuffs.
Alonzo tottered away, seeking the nearest bath-room. What he wanted chiefly was steaming hot water and plenty of soap! And he went at once in search of them.

“Help!” roared Billy Bunter.
Bunter roared in vain.
“Take that!” hooted Bob.
“Help!”
Bang!
Billy Bunter wriggled and roared. He was hurt. Bunter’s head was hard; but the door of Bob Cherry’s study was harder.
There were four other juniors in the study—Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. They looked on while Bob banged Bunter’s head on the door. They were all looking wrathy.
Really, there was cause for wrath. When a fellow asked four friends to tea, and led them to his study to sit down to an unusually lavish spread, it was distinctly annoying to find a fat grub-raider in the study, and the last crumb vanishing down a fat throat! Hungry after footer practice, the Famous Five had been rather looking forward to that spread. But while they had been busy at footer, Billy Bunter had also been busy.
Bang!
“Yaroooh! I say, you fellows, make him leggo!” roared Bunter. “I say, Wharton, old fellow—”
“Give him beans!” said Harry Wharton.

Bang!
“Whooop! Help! Fire! Rescue!” roared Bunter.
“You fat villain!” gasped Bob Cherry. “We’re all as hungry as hunters, and not a crumb left—not a blessed crumb! And it’s too late for tea in Hall! By gum, I’ll——”
Bang!
Bunter gave a wild howl.
“I say, Alonzo! I say, Lonzy! Help, old chap!”
Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars, had stepped out of Study No. 7, doubtless drawn by the terrific yelling of Billy Bunter.
Alonzo saw the fat junior wriggling and roaring in Bob Cherry’s grasp, and his bullet head tapping hard on the door, and that was enough for Alonzo.
“My dear Cherry, stop that at once!” he exclaimed, as he sprinted up.
Bob Cherry glared at him.
“Mind your own business, fathead!” he roared. Alonzo strode forward.
The crowd of fellows in the passage watched him breathlessly. When “Strong Alonzo” got going, he was worth watching.
The strong man of Greyfriars grasped Bunter with one hand, Bob Cherry with the other.
He jerked them apart without an effort, Bunter was swung out into the Remove passage with one hand, Bob Cherry tossed back into Study No. 13 with the other.
Bunter staggered against the wall, rubbing his head and gasping for breath.
“Ow!” gasped Bob.
“Oh, my hat!” stuttered Nugent.
“My esteemed hat!” panted Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
Alonzo gazed kindly into the study.
“My dear fellows——” he began.
He was interrupted. Harry Wharton & Co. came at him with a rush. Amazing as it was, even the Famous Five, in a body, could not handle Strong Alonzo. But they were ready to try.
“Oh, my goodness!” gasped Alonzo, as the rush swept him back into the passage.
“My dear fellows— Oh, goodness gracious!”
“Mop him up!” yelled Johnny Bull.
“Give him jip!” panted Nugent.
Alonzo was borne across the passage under the rush. But he rallied at once, and there was even a grin on his face as he tackled the five.
Harry Wharton & Co., one after another, were hurled back into Study No. 13, sprawling breathlessly on the floor there.
“My clear fellows,” said Alonzo, blinking in amiably at the sprawling heap in Bob Cherry’s study. “Please do not continue this futile scuffle! I am very, very sorry to be driven to handling you like this!”
“He, he, he!” cackled Billy Bunter.
“Please let there be no further ragging, my dear fellows!” said Alonzo.

A Batting for Bunter!

“YOU ass!”
“My dear Peter—” murmured Alonzo gently.
“You fathead!”
“But why, my dear Cousin Peter—”
“You blithering bandersnatch!” said Peter Todd, in measured tones. “You howling

idiot! What have you been kicking up a shindy again for?"
Alonzo Todd gazed at his cousin, Peter Todd, in mild reproach. Shindies were not in Alonzo's line at all. He was the most peaceable fellow on earth. Ever since he had derived wonderful strength from the daily dose of the elixir given him by Professor Sparkinson, Alonzo had never dreamed of using it in an overbearing or bullying manner. He was quite pained by Peter's suggestion that he had been kicking up a shindy.
"You appear, my dear Peter, to be labouring under a misapprehension—" began Alonzo.
"Cut it short!" shrieked Peter.
"I trust, my dear Peter, that I make my meaning clear," said Alonzo. "I felt that I had no alternative, but to intervene when Bunter was being used with what I can only described as unparalleled violence. Bunter is our study-mate, dear Peter, and though we cannot, of course, be proud of him—"
"Oh, really you beast—"
"What do you think Bob was banging the fat villain's head for?" demanded Peter.
"I am sure I do not know, dear Peter! It did not occur to me to inquire." Alonzo started. "I trust, my dear Bunter, that you have given Cherry no just cause for offence?" he exclaimed hastily.
"Oh, really, Alonzo—"
"What had you been up to in Cherry's study?" roared Peter.
"Nothing!" answered Bunter promptly. "I never touched the tuck! I never heard Bob mention to the other fellows that there was to be a spread after the footer."
"Oh, my goodness!"
"Suspicious lot of beasts, you know!" said Bunter indignantly. "They didn't give a fellow a chance to explain. They fancied I had had the spread, because they found me in the study, and it was gone, and I happened to have jam on my mouth, and——"
"Goodness gracious!"
"Besides, I left them the eggs!" said Bunter warmly.
"This is very, very distressing! " said Alonzo. "I fear, my dear Peter, that Bunter was receiving only a justly merited punishment when I intervened, it is very, very unfortunate!"
'You blithering chump!"
"I shall express my heartfelt regret to those fellows," said Alonzo mildly. "I am sure that they will, on calm reflection, be prepared to forgive an action founded wholly upon an unfortunate misapprehension. In the meantime, if you will kindly hand me the fives bat, Peter, I will administer to Bunter the chastisement he so richly deserves."
"Now you're talking!" said Peter.
He tossed the fives bat over to Alonzo. Alonzo missed the catch, of course; Alonzo had never been known to catch a catch! The fives bat clumped on his chin, and Alonzo gave a howl.
"Wow! My dear Peter—wow——"
Billy Bunter made a jump for the door. In these circumstances, the Owl of the Remove had no use for the sheltering wing of Alonzo! He reached the door. Unfortunately for Bunter, Tom Dutton, the fourth member of the study, arrived for tea at that moment. He opened the study door from without as Bunter reached it from within.
Crash!
"Ooooop!" spluttered Bunter, as he staggered back, fairly into the arms of Alonzo

Todd.
Alonzo grasped him.
Regardless of the fat Owl's terrific weight, Alonzo slung him across the armchair with one hand, taking the fives bat in the other.
Whack! Whack!
"Whoop! Leggo, you beast!" roared Bunter. "Why, you're a worse beast than that beast Cherry! Yaroop!"
"My dear Bunter. I trust that you realise that I am administering this chastisement for your own ultimate benefit———"
"Beast!" yelled Bunter.
Alonzo laid down the bat. Bunter wriggled off the armchair, and gave Strong Alonzo a glare that nearly cracked his spectacles.
"Oh, you rotter!" he gasped. "I'll pay you out! You wait till I get hold of that stuff you take, that you got from that old idiot Sparkinson, at the Willows——"
Bunter dodged round the armchair.
"Keep off, you beast! I was only j-j-joking! I don't know anything about the bottle that old ass gave you, and I've never found out that you keep it locked up in your desk! Gerraway!"
"Is that true, Lonzy?" asked Peter. "Did you really get a bottle of some queer stuff from that old scientific johnny at the Willows?"
"I am afraid that I cannot answer that question, my dear Peter, as Professor Sparkinson desired me to keep the whole matter a secret!" said Alonzo.
"Oh, my hat!" said Peter.
"I shall now proceed to Bob Cherry's study, and express my regret for the very unfortunate misunderstanding that has arisen!" said Alonzo.

Bob lifted the dish of eggs from the study cupboard, to be conveyed to Study No. 4, to add to the supplies there for a large party to tea. But, as the kind, simple face of Alonzo Todd dawned in the doorway, all the breathless juniors realised that there was a better use to which the eggs could be put. They gathered round the table, and grabbed eggs from the dish.
"My dear friends"—Alonzo Todd blinked in, with his kind and benignant smile—"I have made a disconcerting discovery, and I realise that I was somewhat hasty in intervening here."
"And we're going to show you how we like your goings on, old bean," said Smithy. "We're going to make you a present of these eggs!"
"That is very, very kind of you," said Alonzo, both surprised and pleased. "It shows a kind and forgiving spirit. Yaroooop! Gurrrrggggh!"
Alonzo said that quite unintentionally, as the Bounder hurled an egg and it cracked over his mouth. Alonzo Todd staggered back, gurgling wildly.
Crack, crack! came two more eggs, breaking on his chin. "Ooogh!" gasped Alonzo. "My dear fellows— Urrrrrgggh!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Go it!"
Crack, crack, crack, crack! An egg cracked on Alonzo's nose, another on his forehead, another on either ear, as he staggered and spluttered in the doorway of Study No. 13.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I've got some ink here!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The eggs are all gone, but the ink—"

“Quick!” exclaimed the Bounder.
“Oh, goodness gracious!” gasped Alonzo.
He did not stay for the ink! The eggs seemed to be all that Alonzo wanted! He scrambled out of the doorway, and departed in haste. He was badly in want of a wash!
Considerably consoled by the egging of Alonzo, the juniors went along to the Bounder’s study for tea. Fortunately, the loss of the eggs did not matter. In that lavish study there was always plenty.
Quite a cheery party sat down to tea with the Bounder.
Tea was going strong, when there was a tap at the door. It opened, and Alonzo Todd looked in. He had washed, and had a newly swept and garnished look— though there were still traces of egg about him.
As he looked in, the tea-party jumped to their feet as if all moved by the same spring. They had no doubt, of course, that Strong Alonzo had barged in to avenge the egging. And they gave him no time to get going.
“Barge the brute!” shouted Smithy.
“Up, Guards, and at ’em!” yelled Bob Cherry.
“Bag him!”
“Collar him!”
“Scrag him!”
“My dear—” Alonzo Todd got no further. Under the rush of the seven juniors, he was hurled backwards into the passage, and he went down on his back with a terrific thump.
He was given no time for action! Once on his feet, Strong Alonzo could have handled the whole crowd! The Bounder snatched up an inkpot, and up-ended it over Alonzo as he sprawled on his back.
“My dear fellows—urrrggh!” gurgled Alonzo, as the ink streamed into his open mouth. “Urrgh! My dear—Yurrgggh—”
“Jump on him!” roared the Bounder. “Tread him out flat! We’ll jolly well show him whether he can throw his weight about in the Remove!”
“Ow! Wow! Urrgh! But I only came to tell you that I was very, very sorry!” gurgled Alonzo.
“Wha-a-at?”
“Oh, my hat!”
“My dear fellows, I assure you that I came with no hostile intention!” gasped Alonzo. “I simple desired to say that I was very, very sorry that you received my expressions of regret in such a very disagreeable way, by flinging eggs at me, and —”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“Urrrgh! I have had a great deal of trouble washing off the eggs and now I am all inky——”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the juniors.
“And I only came to say—”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Evidently there had been a misunderstanding. The juniors got off Alonzo, and that inky youth staggered to his feet.
“And I only came to say that I was very, very sorry—”
“Well, that’s all right,” chuckled Bob Cherry. “Now you’ve got the ink. you’re very, very
sorrier——”
“Ha, ha, ha!”
Alonzo trailed away up the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. went back into

the Bounder's study, roaring, to finish their tea. Alonzo went for another wash—which he needed even more badly than before!

Catching Fish!

AFTER class, Fisher Tarleton Fish was in his study, No. 14 in the Remove. Fishy was busy.

The American junior was always busy, though what he found to be so busy about was rather a puzzle. Certainly he did not shine in class, and he was no good at games. At the present moment his occupation was one of the most congenial possible to Fishy. He was counting his money.

Deep in that enthralling, entrancing occupation, Fishy naturally did not want to be interrupted—least of all by Bunter.

Bunter lately had done him out of twopence. Two-pence was not a large sum, but it was money, and the loss of money gave Fishy a pain.

Fishy grabbed up the inkpot. He was very sick with Bunter, and probably he would have shot the ink at the fat face blinking in at his study doorway, but for a consideration that occurred to him in time. Ink cost money.

"Beat it!" snapped Fishy. "I'm sure fed-up with you! You owe me twopence—git!"

"I've come to pay you," said Bunter, with dignity.

"Aw, can it!" said Fisher T. Fish.

A more credulous youth than Fishy would hardly have believed that William George Bunter really intended to pay anybody anything.

"Honest Injun!" asseverated Bunter.

"Got it in your rags?" sneered Fishy.

"Well, not exactly," admitted Bunter. "But I dare say you've heard me mention that I was expecting a postal order."

"Great jumping snakes!" roared Fisher T. Fish, in great exasperation. "Have you moseyed in here to spin that yarn to me, you pie-faced clam?"

"It's come!" yapped Bunter.

"Let's see the colour of it!" jeered Fishy.

"I'll explain how it is," said Bunter.

"Alonzo's gone to Courtfield—"

"What the great horned toad has Alonzo got to do with it?''

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "I mean—I—I wonder what made me mention Alonzo? Of course, he's got nothing to do with it. What I mean is. I put the postal order in my desk, meaning to cash it after class, and I've lost my key."

"Tell that to Mauleverer," suggested Fisher T. Fish. "He may swallow it. No use to me."

"I want you to lend me—"

"Now we're getting down to brass tacks!" snorted Fisher T. Fish. "Well, I ain't going to lend you anything but what's in this hyer inkpot."

"Your bunch of keys—"

"Oh!" said Fisher T. Fish, rather taken aback. He had guessed, reckoned, and calculated that it was cash that Bunter wanted.

"To open my desk," concluded Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish eyed him.

If Bunter only wanted to borrow Fishy's bunch of keys, Fishy was ready to do business. But he expected, of course, the usual consideration. Fishy was not the man even to lend a bunch of old keys for nothing.

“Waal I guess you know the terms,” said Fisher T. Fish, more amicably. “Hand over two cents, and the keys are yourn to try.”
“I’ve been disappointed about a postal order—”
“What?” howled Fisher T. Fish.
“I—I mean about getting that postal order out of my desk,” amended Bunter hastily. “I—I haven’t any money at the moment.”
“I calculate I could have guessed that one,” growled Fisher T. Fish. “Git, you fat jay! Absquatulate, you pie-faced geck! Vamoose!”
“I—I—I say, Fishy—”
“Git!”
Billy Bunter glared at the American junior through his big spectacles.
Once more a deep scheme was working in Bunter’s fat brain.
He had remembered Fishy’s bunch of keys, and that seemed to solve the problem for him. Surely one of that vast assortment of varied keys would fit Alonzo’s desk in Study No. 7. And Alonzo had walked down to Courtfield after class. He was gone to fetch a brand-new copy of his favourite work— “The Story of a Potato, From the Seed to the Saucepan”—the old copy having suffered severely in the wear and tear of life in the Greyfriars Remove. This was Bunter’s chance—if he could get hold of Fishy’s keys.
And for want of the miserable sum of one penny, the keys were not to be had. It was enough to make Bunter glare.
Fisher T. Fish turned to his calculations again, regardless of Bunter.
Billy Bunter, unregarded in the doorway, blinked round the study through his big spectacles. He spotted the celebrated bunch of keys lying on the mantelpiece. But to grab them and bolt was a rather difficult matter. The bony Fishy was at least three times as swift in his movements as the fat and podgy Owl of the Remove. Bunter had simply no chance in a foot race.
But necessity is the mother of invention. Bunter had to have those keys. Fishy’s attention being deeply absorbed in his accounts, the fat junior slyly abstracted the door key from the inside of the lock and slipped it into the outside of the door. Fishy did not even look up.
Then he stepped across the study to the mantelpiece. Fisher T. Fish looked up at that.
“Let them keys alone, you pie-faced jay!” he barked. “You figure that you can mosey into this study, and borrow things for nothing? Forget it! You finger them keys, and I’ll sure make potato-scrapings of you!”
“I’m not touching the keys, Fishy!”
Clink, clink, clink! Jingle! Jangle!
“Not touching them at all—”
“Let ’em alone, you clam!” roared Fisher T. Fish, jumping up from the table.
Bunter grabbed the keys.
Fishy grabbed Bunter!
Crash!
“Thunder!” howled Fisher T. Fish, as the big bunch of keys crashed on his bony chest. “Wake snakes! Whoop!” He staggered backwards, and sat on the study carpet. “Great gophers! I guess— Ow! Ow! Wow!”
Bunter bounded for the door. He had knocked Fishy down—with his own bunch of keys! Only speed could save Bunter’s life after that! He reached the door with a frantic bound, slammed it after him, and turned the key in the lock outside.
Even as he turned the doorkey. Fishy reached the door, grabbed it, and dragged. Only just in time the lock clicked! Bunter was saved by a split second!

“By the great horned toad! Have you locked that pesky door?” shrieked Fisher T. Fish. “Great snakes! I guess I’ll make potato-scrapings of you! You’ve pinched my keys, you pie-faced gink! I guess I’ll lynch you!”
“He, he, he!” gurgled Bunter.
He was safe—saved by a second! He stood gasping in the passage, with the clinking bunch of keys in his fat hand. Within the study, Fisher T. Fish raved and roared. Bunter did not heed his raving and roaring. Fishy was safely locked in, and the fat Owl was secure from his bony translantic knuckles.

“Oh!” gasped Bunter. “You here. Toddy?”
Peter Todd looked at him. Bunter, rolling into Study No. 7, found Peter there—which really was not surprising, as it was Toddy’s study as well as Bunter’s. But it was rather dismaying to the fat Owl. With Fishy’s bunch of keys, he had no doubt that he would be able to open Alonzo’s desk; but such a proceeding was obviously impracticable in the presence of Peter Todd.
“Well, why shouldn’t I be here?” asked Peter. “What the thump do you want, Bunter? It’s not tea-time yet! Roll away and don’t interrupt a chap when he’s getting on with his legal studies!”
Peter had a large law-book open on the table. Peter was a solicitor’s son, and hopeful some day of following in his father’s footsteps. He had brought several legal volumes to school with him for study in leisure moments.
“I say, never mind that rot, Peter!” said Bunter. “I say, they’re punting a footer about in the quad—I heard Wharton calling you——”
“Don’t jaw, if you’re staying here,” said Peter. “There’s a chance to be quiet, now Lonzy’s gone down to Courtfield. Too bad for you to butt in and jaw!”
“Oh, really. Toddy—”
“Shut up!”
“I say, Peter——” he began.
“Dry up!
“That looks a jolly interesting book!” said Bunter.
“Does it?” grunted Peter. “Then appearances are deceptive!”
‘I say, let’s have a look at it, old chap!”
“Rot!”
“I’m frightfully interested in—in law, you know, and I’m sure you’ll be a great lawyer some day, Peter,” said Bunter, blinking at him.
“For goodness’ sake don’t keep on talking!” hooted Peter. “How’s a chap to study while your chin-bone is going at sixty miles an hour?”
“Well, let’s have a look at the book!” said Bunter; and he picked up the big volume from under Peter’s nose.
The early winter dusk was falling. That gave Bunter an excuse for carrying the legal volume to the window. It was a fine winter’s day, and the window was open.
“I say, what does it mean?” asked Bunter, blinking at the open page in the failing light.
“Don’t drop it out of the window, fathead!” snorted Peter.
“Oh, it’s safe enough, resting on the sill—Oh, crikey! it’s gone!” ejaculated Bunter, as the legal volume dropped into the quad. “Fancy the beastly thing falling out of my hands like that!”
“You fat frump!” roared Peter. “You dropped it on purpose.”
“Oh, really, Toddy—”
“I’ll kick you all the way to the quad to fetch it back—”

“I—I say, Peter, young Tubb’s picked it up—he’s cutting off with it!” gasped Bunter. “Oh, my hat!”
Peter Todd rushed from the study. His only thought was to save his precious volume, if it had fallen into the hands of a fag of the Third. Bunter chuckled. His strategy had succeeded. Peter was gone; and Bunter had only to lock the study door to keep him out. He rolled across to the door.
Slam!
Click!
The door of Study No. 7 was shut and locked at last! Billy Bunter gasped with relief.
Click!
“Oh, good!” gasped Bunter.
His little round eyes glistened behind his big round spectacles.
Fishy’s bunch of keys had worked the oracle! There were at least fifty keys on the bunch! it was the eleventh that opened Alonzo’s desk.
Bunter fairly gloated.
Almost the first article that met his eyes as he lifted the lid of the desk was a small phial, containing a sticky, crimson-coloured fluid.
This was “it.”
Bunter grabbed it!
The fat Owl had no scruple whatever about annexing that phial. Indeed, he was very indignant that Alonzo had not shared such a valuable secret with such a pal as Bunter! It was the contents of that phial that enabled Alonzo Todd to “bat” Bunter! It was going to enable Bunter to bat Alonzo, in his turn! One good turn deserved another—and so did a bad one, in Bunter’s opinion!
“Oh, crikey! That’s it!” gasped Bunter. “Oh, good! Let ’em wait! I’ll surprise ’em! Just let ’em wait! He, he, he!”
Bang! Thump! came at the study door. Peter Todd had returned, with his legal volume under his arm, and had joined Tom Dutton there.
“What’s this game?” roared Peter, in great wrath.
“What’s that potty Owl locked us out of the study for?”
“Let us in, you frabjous freak!” yelled Dutton. “I want my footer!”
“I guess I’ll make potato-scrapings of him!” came a nasal howl. Somebody had turned the key in the outside of Fishy’s door and released him. The American junior was outside Study No. 7 now, beating a tattoo on the panels with his bony knuckles.
Bang! Thump! Kick! Bang!
Three enraged and exasperated fellows banged and thumped at the door of Study No. 7.
Bunter did not heed!
He was not likely to heed when Alonzo’s bottle of marvellous mixture was in his fat hands!
His podgy fingers trembled with eagerness as he unscrewed the stopper. His eyes gleamed!
The little phial was half full. Alonzo, as Bunter had discovered by active spying, took a sip every day from that phial. Obviously, the doses could only be very small. Bunter decided on a single nip.
He lifted the bottle to his lips.

"Use me to mop up the study, would you?" said Bunter

He allowed a large drop of the crimson fluid from the bottle to fall on his fat tongue, and slowly absorbed it.
He was prepared to wait for the effect! But he did not have to wait! The effect was almost instantaneous, and quite electrical! It seemed to run through Bunter's fat veins like fire!
New and wonderful energy ran through the fat and flabby form of William George Bunter!
He felt an entirely new Bunter!
"Oh, my hat!" he gasped.
He screwed up the stopper and slipped the phial into an inner pocket. Then he closed and locked Alonzo's desk.
Bang! Thump!
"I guess I'll slaughter him!"
"I'll burst him!"
"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.
There was not going to be any slaughtering, smashing, or bursting—now! Not for Strong Bunter!
"What's the fat brute up to?" gasped Peter Todd. "He's cackling! I'll give him cackle! Bunter, you benighted freak, open this door!"
"I say, you fellows—"
"Open the door!" roared Peter.
"Just going to, old bean!" chuckled Bunter.
He stepped to the door, turned back the key, and threw it open.
"Don't make a row, you fellows!" said Bunter calmly.
"What?" roared Peter.
"You can come into the study! But be quiet! I don't like a row in the study! I shan't allow anything of the kind!"
"Wha-a-at?"
"You can cut off, Fish!"
There was a rush! What Billy Bunter's majestic attitude meant and his calm defiance, the three Removites did not know. But they knew they were going to mop up the study with the cheeky Oss! of the Remove. At least, they thought so not yet knowing that they had to deal with Strong Bunter.
"Now, you fat freak—"
"Now, you cheeky slug——"
"Now, you pesky mugwump——"
Three pairs of hands were laid on Billy Bunter together! And then the unexpected happened!

Bunter ought to have been swept off his feet! He ought to have been bumped on the study floor!

But he wasn't! Instead of that, Bunter swept round a fat arm, and it had the effect of a flail! Three astounded juniors went spinning, and sprawled over one another on the floor of Study No. 7!
Bump, bump, bump!
Billy Bunter grinned down at them.
"Try again!" he suggested.
"Well, I'm blessed!" gasped Peter, sitting up dazedly. "What the jolly old dickens—"
"Ow! I guess I'm damaged a few! Wow!" gasped Fisher T, Fish.
"He, he, he!
Peter Todd leaped up and charged. Tom Dutton charged after him. They were not fellows to be handled by Bunter—if they could help it!
But they couldn't!
Billy Bunter grabbed them by their collars! In utter amazement they found that they could not resist the swing of his fat arms. They were swept off their feet, one in either fat hand. Then, with a cheery grin, Billy Bunter brought their heads together.
Crack!
"Whooop!" roared Peter and Dutton simultaneously.
"He, he, he!"
Billy Bunter calmly tossed them across Fisher T. Fish, who was still sprawling on the floor.
There was an agonised gurgle from Fishy as they collapsed on him.
"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.
"Oh, my hat! Ow! Wow! What the—Woooogh!"
Billy Bunter, with his fat little nose in the air, rolled out of the study. Three fellows, dazed and dizzy and breathless, sat up on the carpet and gazed after him as he went.

Hard Pressed!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Looks like a moving job!" remarked Bob Cherry.
"It's the jolly old professor!"
Harry Wharton & Co. were taking a walk across Courtfield Common that afternoon. The Famous Five were keeping an eye open for Ponsonby & Co. of Highcliffe School. They had spotted some Highcliffe caps in the distance, but those caps had vanished again. While not exactly keen on a row with their old enemies of Highcliffe, the Famous Five would not have objected to giving Pon & Co. a rough house. However, the Highcliffians were not to be seen; but a little, old gentleman, with locks of silver hair escaping under the brim of his hat, came in sight, trampling on a footpath over the common, heading for the distant town.
The professor glanced at the juniors through his horn- rimmed glasses, and, recognising them, gave them a nod and a smile. They saluted him politely as they came up to him on the path.
"Ah, you are the boys who came in out of the rain—what, what? How is my young friend Alonzo Todd getting on?"
"Fine!" said Bob with a grin. "He's started as a Sandow, and nobody knows where he parks the muscle."
The professor grinned.
"Going away for a time, sir?" asked Nugent.

“Eh? Yes. Probably for a long time,” said the professor. “Here today and gone tomorrow—what, what? Very soon I shall be well on my way to Central Africa. I am glad to have seen you once more, to say— Urrrrgggghh!”
The professor had probably been going to say “goodbye,” but he broke off with a gasping gurgle as a turf suddenly landed on his mouth. He staggered, spluttering, dropped the suitcases, and sat down.
“Oooooh!” he remarked.
The Greyfriars fellows stared round. Close at hand was a belt of trees and leafless bushes. As they glanced round a volley of turfs flew, and smashed all over them.
“Oh, my hat!” gasped Bob Cherry, as he staggered and sat down beside the professor.
“Oh, crumbs!”
“Those Highcliffe rotters!”
“Oooooh!”
Whiz, whiz, whiz! came the showering turfs. Hats and caps could now be seen among the thickets, which grew on a rather steep bank beside the path. Pon & Co., it was plain, had been watching the Greyfriars fellows from a distance, and had picked that favourable spot for ambushing them. And it was clear that they were in strong force.
“Upon my word!” gasped the professor. “If I had not a train to catch I would go and give those young rascals what they deserve! But I must not lose my train!”
He jammed his hat on his silvery hair, picked up the two heavy suitcases, and strode on. Turfs whizzed after him as he went.
Harry Wharton & Co. were accustomed to getting the upper hand of the Highcliffians in their frequent rows. But this time the boot was on the other leg, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh would have expressed it.
Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson came running down the bank, followed by Merion and Drury and Vavasour and Pelham, and then six or seven more of the nutty crowd of Highcliffe. Then odds were overwhelming, or Pon & Co. certainly would not have ventured to close quarters.
“Mop up those Greyfriars cads!” yelled Ponsonby.
“Collar them!” yelled Monson.
The Famous Five came to a sudden halt. Down the slope came the crowd of Highcliffians, hurling turfs as they came.
“Stand together!” panted Wharton.
“Shoulder to shoulder!” shouted Bob Cherry.
“The shoulderfulness is terrific!”
“Back up!” gasped Bob Cherry. “That’s for your nose, Pon!”
“Yarooh!”
“One for you, Gaddy—”
“Oh, gad! Wow!”
“Give ’em socks!” roared Johnny Bull, landing his right in Drury’s eye, and his left in Vavasour’s neck.
Heavy as the odds were, the Highcliffians backed away after a few minutes. They seemed to be tired of close quarters.
“Don’t scuffle with the Greyfriars cads!” panted Ponsonby. “Pelt ’em! Drive ’em home!”
“Absolutely!” gasped Vavasour.
And, keeping out of hitting range, the Highcliffe crowd gathered missiles, and pelted hard and fast. The Famous Five followed suit. But the enemy’s fire was much heavier, and a continual shower of missiles smashed all over the Greyfriars fellows.
It went against the grain to retreat, but there was no alternative. Slowly, with their

faces to the enemy, and stopping every minute or two to hurl turfs, the Famous Five retreated in the direction of the Courtfield road, where there was a chance of picking up help.
By the time they reached the Courtfield road the chums of the Remove were feeling thoroughly battered. How many turfs they had stopped they could not have computed.
On the road Harry Wharton cast an anxious glance up and down, towards Greyfriars, and then towards Courtfield. From the latter direction a Remove fellow came in sight. It was Alonzo Todd, returning from Courtfield with that valuable work, "The Story of a Potato," under his arm!
"Only that duffer!" grunted Wharton. Then he remembered. The Duffer of Greyfriars was "Strong Alonzo" now. He shouted at him at the top of his voice.
"Wake up, Alonzo! Back up! Rescue, Remove!"
Alonzo started and stared.
"Oh, my goodness!" he exclaimed.
Then he came on at a run. Alonzo had always had pluck. Now he had wonderful strength, also! He was the most valuable ally the hard-pressed Removites could have found at that moment.
"Stick together!" shouted Bob. "Here they come!" Ponsonby & Co. were coming at a rush now.
"Barge the rotters into the ditch!" said Ponsonby. "What-ho!" chuckled Monson.
"Absolutely!" said Vavasour.
There was a deep ditch beside the road. The rains had filled it almost to the brim.
The Highcliffians jumped the ditch and gathered in the road.
Alonzo came up at a burst of speed! He smote the Highcliffians like a thunderbolt. A runaway lorry could hardly have surprised them more.
Alonzo hit out right and left.
"Oh, gad!" yelled Ponsonby as he went spinning into the ditch.
Splash!
"Oooooch!"
"Oh, crikey!" gasped Gadsby, as he went after Pon. There was another splash.
"Go it, Alonzo!" shrieked Bob Cherry.
Alonzo was going it!
His arms swung round like flails, knocking the Highcliffians right and left.
Less than a minute after Alonzo's arrival, two of the Highcliffians were in the ditch, frantically trying to scramble out, six or seven were sprawling on the bank, and the rest were in full flight—tearing away up the road as if for their lives.
"Our win!" gasped Nugent.
"Alonzo's win!" chuckled Bob. "Good old Lonzy! Good old Duffer!"
The fallen Highcliffians scrambled up. They were not thinking of renewing the combat. The moment they were on their feet they ran. They had had enough of Strong Alonzo!
"Have some more, Pon?" chuckled Bob Cherry.
"Ooogh! Oh, gad! Leave us alone!" groaned Ponsonby. "Ow! Oooooch!"
"Oh, crikey!" groaned Gadsby.
Alonzo Todd gazed at them with kind concern.
"My dear fellows," he said gently, "I am very, very sorry that I had to knock you into the ditch. But you will, I am sure, realise, on calm reflection, that no alternative was presented to me in the circumstances."
"Urrrrggh!"
"Groooogh!"

“I fear,” went on Alonzo kindly, “that you are in danger of catching cold, my dear fellows, and I recommend you to get into motion without undue delay. I should advise you to run all the way to Highcliffe in order to restore your temperature and keep up the circulation——”
“They’ll run all right!” said Johnny Bull. “I’m going to start them!”
“Yaroooh!” roared Ponsonby as Johnny Bull started him with a kick that landed with what a novelist would call a sickening thud.
Ponsonby started. He started with a bound, and he went on at top speed.
“Now you, Gaddy—”
But Gadsby did not wait to be started. He bolted after Ponsonby.
The dusk was falling as they reached the school gates. Light rain was also falling. Heedless of this, Peter Todd was waiting at the gates, watching the road anxiously.
‘Oh here you are, you blitherer!” he exclaimed as Alonzo came up with the Famous Five.
“My dear Peter, why such a discourteous greeting?” asked Alonzo gently.
“What’s biting you, old bean?” asked Bob Cherry. Peter, unheeding that question, glared at Alonzo.
“You howling ass!”
“But what——”
“You—you—you burbling, bandersnatch! You jabbering jabberwock! Have you been giving Bunter any of that stuff?” roared Peter Todd.
“Certainly not, my dear Peter!” answered Alonzo. “I do not admit that there is any stuff, as you call it, for, far as it must always be from me to prevaricate, I have engaged to keep the matter a secret, and, therefore, I am bound not to mention to you, or anyone else, that Professor Sparkinson gave me a bottle of his Wonderful Elixir!”
“Ha, ha, ha!” yelled the Famous Five.
“Has Bunter got hold of it?” yelled Peter.
“Not to my knowledge, my dear fellow.”
“Then what’s come over him?”
“He’s as strong as a horse. He’s as strong as an elephant. He’s as strong as a rhinoceros. Did you leave the stuff in the study?” snorted Peter.
“I always lock my desk, my dear Peter—”
“Oh, crumbs! That’s why he had Fishy’s bunch of keys!” howled Peter.
“But what’s happened?” exclaimed Harry Wharton.
“Bunter’s happened!” yelled Peter. “He’s knocked three of us right and left, and walked off grinning!”
“Oh, my hat!”
“The hatfulness is terrific!”
“Surely Bunter would not be so unscrupulous as to abstract the mixture surreptitiously from my desk?” exclaimed Alonzo. “I must ascertain at once!”
He hurried away to the House. Peter Todd and the Famous Five followed him. They lost no time in getting to Study No. 7 in the Remove.
There Alonzo hastily unlocked his desk. He gazed at the empty space where Professor Sparkinson’s phial had reposed.
“Oh, my goodness!” ejaculated Alonzo.
“Is it gone?” howled Peter.
“It certainly appears to be gone, my dear fellow! As it is no longer in the desk it appears to be indubitable that it is gone!”
“Fathead! Now all the fat’s in the fire!”
“The fatfulness in the esteemed fire is terrific!”

“However,” said Alonzo thoughtfully, “I have no doubt that, on explaining the matter to Professor Sparkinson I shall be able to obtain a new supply of the mixture—”
“Guess again!” said Bob Cherry. “We met the jolly old professor this afternoon, and he told us he’s off to Central Africa—”
“Oh. my goodness!”
“And may not be back for years—”
“Goodness gracious!”
“You’d better get that jolly old bottle of muck back from Bunter if you want to go on playing Sandow!” chuckled Bob. “What about tea, you fellows?”
The Famous Five went along to Study No. 1 to tea. A surprise awaited them when they arrived at that celebrated study.

Strong Bunter Going Strong!

“I GUESS—”
“Hold your tongue, Fishy!”
“Look hyer—”
“Silence!” rapped Billy Bunter.
“You fat clam—” hissed Fisher T. Fish.
“That’s enough! Get the fire going and the kettle boiling! Have everything ready for tea. Don’t waste time!”
“I guess—”
“Another word, and I’ll give your silly head another crack on the table!”
There was silence.
Harry Wharton & Co. halted in the Remove passage in sheer amazement. That dialogue reached their ears as they came towards Study No. I. As Study No. I belonged to Wharton and Nugent, Billy Bunter and Fisher T. Fish had no business there. Both, however, were there; but that was not so surprising as the remarks they made. The study door was open, and Harry Wharton & Co. stared in before entering.
Billy Bunter was seated in the study armchair, with his feet on another chair, his fat thumbs stuck in the armholes of his waistcoat in the objectionable way he had. Bunter’s attitude was one of ease, if not of elegance.
There was a cheery grin on his fat face, indicating that the fat Owl of the Remove was satisfied with himself and things generally.
Fishy’s expression was quite different.
Fishy was fagging!
There was an expression on his bony face like that of a demon in a pantomime. His narrow eyes glittered; his thin lips were tight; his bony nose seemed to dilate with fury.
The tea-table was laid in the study. Fishy, apparently, had laid it, at Bunter’s orders. Now he was getting the fire going preparatory to boiling the kettle for tea.
It was the first time on record that a Remove fellow had fagged another Remove fellow. But that, evidently, as what Bunter was doing.
Billy Bunter, without rising, blinked at them from the armchair and gave them an affable nod.
“Trot in, you fellows!” he said amicably. “You can come in!”
“We can come into our own study?” ejaculated Nugent.
“Yes, old chap.”
“Do we need your permission for that?” inquired Nugent.
“Yes, rather!

“Oh, crumbs!
“Seen Toddy?” grinned Bunter. “I thought I heard you go up the passage with him. Hasn’t he told you?”
The Famous Five gazed at Bunter.
“You fat frog—”
Bunter raised a fat hand.
“Chuck that, Wharton! I don’t like it—”
“You frabjous, foozling frump—”
“Chuck it, I tell you! You may get hurt!” warned Bunter. “I’m a good-tempered chap, I hope. But there s a limit. I want it distinctly understood that I’m not taking any cheek from you, or any man in the Remove!”
“Look here, you guys—” began Fisher T. Fish. Bunter’s fat hand was waved at Fishy.
“Silence!” he rapped.
Fisher T. Fish gave him a wolfish look.
“Will you get out of the study, Bunter?” inquired the captain of the Remove.
“No!” answered Bunter coolly.
“You’re waiting to be put out?”
Bunter laughed.
“Don’t be funny!” he said. “The lot of you couldn’t put me out! You can try if you like, but you may get damaged!”
“Well, my hat!” said Bob.
“But let’s be friends,” said Bunter airily. “I’ve come here to tea, if you fellows like the idea.”
“We don’t!”
“The don’tfulness is terrific.”
“Oh, think it over,” said Bunter in the same airy way. “I’m willing to be friends, and you may find it pays. You’ll be sorry if I get annoyed with you, I can tell you that much. I’m going to stand the tea. I’m not the fellow to sponge on anybody, I hope.”
“Oh, Christopher Columbus!”
“Only I’ve been disappointed about a postal order,” went on Bunter. “In the circumstances one of you can lend me—say, a quid, or club together. I want to stand you a decent tea. See? I’ll settle out of my postal order tomorrow morning. That all right?”
“If you’ve finished there’s the door!” said Harry Wharton.
“Yes! Get that kettle filled at once! Nugent, go and get the grub for tea! You other fellows can get out! I don’t want you. And—Yarooooh!”
Harry Wharton made a jump at the Owl of the Remove. He grasped him, to hurl him through the doorway.
Bump!
It was not Bunter who bumped.
It was Wharton!
One shove from Billy Bunter sent him spinning right across the study, and he crashed on the wall, and bumped on the floor.
“Oooooh!” gasped Wharton.
“Oh, crumbs!” stuttered Bob Cherry.
Billy Bunter grinned.
The fat Owl, with his rotund figure. his podgy face, and his big spectacles, looked the same Bunter as of old. Evidently, however, he was not the same Bunter.
He was quite a new Bunter!
Harry Wharton lay gasping. The other four fellows gazed at Bunter. He grinned at

them cheerfully.
“That’s enough for Wharton, I fancy!” he remarked. “You fellows want some of the same? You’ve only got to say so! He, he, he!”
Wharton sat up dizzily, gurgling for breath.
“Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen!” said Bob Cherry. “This is a case for all hands on deck! Collar that fat, frumptious freak and boot him out.”
“Yes, rather!”
“The ratherfulness is terrific!”
“Oh, come on,” said Bunter carelessly. “Come on, the lot of you! I may as well give you a lesson! It may do you good.”
They came on fast enough!
Bunter did not give an inch!
He grinned as he swept round his fat arms, rather like the sails of a windmill. But there was terrific vim in that swing of Bunter’s fat arms. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull spun over to the right, Frank Nugent and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh spun over to the left.
They crashed!
“He, he, he!” cachinnated Bunter.
Vernon-Smith stared in at the doorway with an astonished face.
“I say, what’s this game?” he exclaimed. “What are you fellows letting that fat frump pitch you about for?”
“Ugh! Urrgh! Oh crikey! Ooooh!”
“He, he, he! They jolly well can’t help it!” chortled Bunter. “You couldn’t, either, Smithy! He, he, he! I’d pick you up in one hand and chuck you across the study! He, he, he!”
“Would you?” said the Bounder. “I’ll give you a chance.”
And he strode across the study at Bunter, and grasped him by a fat ear. The next moment, hardly knowing what had hit him, the Bounder was sprawling over the famous Five.
“He, he, he!”
“C-c-collar the fat freak!” stuttered Johnny Bull.
They scrambled up!
Billy Bunter charged at them, as they gained their feet. Over they went again, knocked right and left.
“He, he, he!” squeaked Bunter in great delight. He rolled to the door. Six or seven fellows had gathered there, staring in amazement into the study. Bolsover major was in the doorway, and Bunter coolly pushed him aside. Bunter had had many a kick from the bully of the Remove, and now it was time for Bunter to get his own back.
Bolsover staggered from the push, and glared at Bunter.
“You fat frump, who are you shoving?” he roared. “Do you think you can barge me about?”
“Yes, if I jolly well like!” grinned Bunter. “Shut up, Bolsover! I don’t want any impudence from you.”
“Any whatter?” gasped Bolsover major.
“Impudence! Shut up!”
“Why, I’ll bang you head along the wall from one end of the passage to the other!” roared the enraged Bolsover.
He grasped at Bunter! Bunter grasped back! Bolsover major went whirling off his feet and crashed on the floor.
“Stand clear, you fellows,” said Bunter. “I’m going to kick that beast back to his

study!"
"Oh, my only hat!" gasped Skinner.
The juniors stood clear! Bunter started to kick! It was sheer joy to the fat junior to return some of the many kicks Bolsover major had given him. The bully of the Remove rolled over, roaring.
He leaped to his feet, his face crimson with rage, and charged at Bunter like a bull! Strong Bunter tapped him on the chest! Bolsover flew!
Crash!
Bunter restarted kicking! This time the bully of the Remove scrambled away to his study! Bunter followed him up the passage to Study No. 10, kicking all the way in the midst of a buzz of amazement from a crowd of Remove fellows. A hefty kick rolled Bolsover into Study No. 10.

More Strategy!

BILLY BUNTER was the cynosure of all eyes in the Rag after tea.
Strong Alonzo had hitherto captured the limelight. Billy Bunter was capturing it now. Fellows eyed him on all sides with peculiar expressions as he rolled into the Rag, with his fat chin held well up and self-satisfied importance written all over him.
Bunter grinned serenely. He liked this!
He rolled across to the fire.
Skinner was seated in an armchair there. Bunter blinked at him.
"I'd like that chair, Skinner," he remarked.
"Certainly, old chap!" said Skinner.
He rose at once and gave Bunter the chair. The Owl of the Remove sat down, with a cheery grin.
"Fishy!" he yapped.
"Yep!"
"Bring me that footstool."
Fisher T. Fish hesitated for an instant. But it was only for an instant! Then he brought the footstool for Bunter.
Alonzo Todd came over to Bunter.
"My dear Bunter———" he said.
Billy Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. Alonzo was the only fellow in the Remove with whom Bunter did not want trouble—yet! Without Professor Sparkinson's wonderful elixir, as Bunter had no doubt, the Duffer of Greyfriars would soon lose his amazing strength. When that happened Bunter was ready for trouble—but not before.
"I am unable to entertain any doubt, my dear Bunter, that you have abstracted a bottle belonging to me from the desk in my study." said Alonzo. "I must insist upon your returning it immediately."
"What bottle?" asked Bunter.
"A small bottle containing a crimson fluid—"
"Never heard of it!"
"My dear Bunter—"
"If you think I've been taking any medical muck, you're quite mistaken," said Bunter calmly. "I don't need it, like you do, Lonzy! I'm not a weedy specimen like you, I hope! I was always athletic."
"If you do not immediately return that bottle, Bunter, I shall take it from you, very, very much as I regret to be driven to use violence," said Alonzo.

“Think I’ve got it in my pocket?” jeered Bunter. “No jolly fear!”
“Then where are its present whereabouts?”
“That’s telling!”
“Please tell me at once my dear Bunter,” said Alonzo gently.
“I don’t know anything about it, you see!” explained Bunter. “I’ve never seen it, and never touched it. I never borrowed Fishy’s bunch of keys this afternoon, and never opened your desk in the study. I hope I’m not the sort of fellow to root over another fellow’s desk.”
“I fear, Bunter, that in view of your contradictory statements I can place no reliance on your word,” said Alonzo, shaking his head.
“Oh, really, Alonzo—”
“Mop him up. Alonzo, you blithering duffer!” growled Peter Todd. “You’re the only fellow that can do it!”
“I shall act upon your suggestion, my dear Peter!” said Alonzo. “I am sure that, in the circumstances, my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my taking somewhat drastic measures.”
“Look here——” Bunter jumped up.
Alonzo grasped him.
But there was no tussle. Billy Bunter jerked himself away from Alonzo and dodged round the armchair! This was more like the old Bunter!
“I—I say, old chap—” he gasped.
“Go for him, Lonzy!” roared Peter.
“Bag him, you gink!” yelled Fisher T. Fish.
Alonzo pursued Bunter round the chair. The fat junior made a break for the door. Alonzo, of course, stumbled over the footstool, and measured his length on the floor.
“Oh, my goodness!” he gasped. “Stop him!”
Five or six fellows grasped at Bunter as he streaked for the door. But if Strong Bunter could not tackle Strong Alonzo, he could tackle anybody else. He swept them aside with a swing of his arm.
Then he tore open the door of the Rag and rushed out.
“After him, Lonzy!” yelled Peter.
Alonzo rushed in pursuit.
Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Fourth, were coming into the Rag. Alonzo met them in full career.
“Oh gad!” yelled Temple. “What the—”
The Fourth Formers went spinning. Alonzo spun over them. There was a mix-up in the doorway.
By the time Alonzo had sorted himself out Billy Bunter had vanished. Alonzo reached the door of Study No. 7 in the Remove—too late! That door was locked on the inside.
“My dear Bunter—” gasped Alonzo through the keyhole.
“Yah!” gasped Bunter, from the inside of the door.
“Please let me in——”
“Go and eat coke!”
“It’s all right!” said Peter. “You’ll catch him in the dorm, Lonzy! And if you don’t get that bottle of muck back from him I’ll bat you!”
Alonzo smirked.
“But, as I have on several occasions pointed out to you, my dear Peter, it is quite beyond your powers to bat me!” he remarked.
“It won’t be tomorrow, if you don’t get that stuff back!” grinned Peter.
“Oh, my goodness!”

Wingate of the Sixth, who was to see lights out for the Remove that night, could not help observing the suppressed excitement among the juniors. He gave them a suspicious look, suspecting a "rag."
All the fellows were eyeing Bunter! After lights out, his time was coming!
Bunter, however, did not seem very uneasy.
The juniors turned in, and Wingate put out the lights, and went. There was no move for ten minutes or so; it was necessary to give the prefect time to get clear. Then Peter Todd turned out of bed and lighted a candle.
"Up with you, Lonzy!" he rapped.
"Certainly, my dear Peter!" Alonzo Todd turned out, and came across to Bunter's bed.
"Now, my dear Bunter, I insist——"
"Yarooooh!" roared Bunter, at the top of his voice. "Help! Fire! Yoop! Whoooooop!"
"My dear Bunter," said Alonzo in surprise, "there is no occasion to utter those exceedingly discordant yells. I have not touched you yet. But it is certainly my intention—"
"Yoop! Help!" roared Bunter.
There was the sound of a footstep in the passage outside.
Possibly Wingate, already suspicious, had lingered within hearing. Anyhow, he could hardly have been out of hearing of Bunter's frantic bellow.
The door opened, and the captain of Greyfriars strode in. He stared wrathfully at the scene in the candle-light.
"What's this?" roared Wingate.
"Ow! Help! Wow!" roared Bunter. "I say, Wingate— Yaroooooh! Whooop!"
"What are you ragging Bunter for?" demanded Wingate. "Get hack to bed at once, you young rascal! Take two hundred lines!"
"My dear Wingate—"
"Do you want six?" snapped the prefect.
"Oh, my goodness! Certainly not! But—"
"Get back to bed!"
Strong Alonzo could have handled Wingate! But Alonzo had too much respect for authority to think of doing anything of the kind. He went back obediently to bed.
Wingate gave the staring Removites a glare.
"I shall keep an eye on this dormitory!" he snapped. "Any more disturbance, and I shall ask Quelch to come up here! Now go to sleep, you young rascals!"
He took the candle, marched out of the dormitory, and shut the door.

Clang, clang!
Bob Cherry, as usual, was first out of bed in the Remove dormitory, when the rising-bell rang. He got out with a bound—other fellows following his example more slowly.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob "Want helping out, Mauly?"
"Oh, dear! No, thanks!" said Lord Mauleverer hastily, and he turned out before the exuberant Bob could give him any aid.
"Want any help, Bunter?"
Snore!
The Owl of the Remove was still asleep—at all events, he was still snoring—when some of the fellows were ready to go down. Washing never kept Billy Bunter long—and he generally barged into Hall for early prayers with his collar undone, and frantically fastening a brace.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Aren't you turning out, old fat

bean?"
Snore!
Bob Cherry grinned cheerfully, dipped a sponge in water, and walked over to Bunter's bed. Bob was too good-natured to let a fellow oversleep himself, also, he had little mercy on slackers.
The wet sponge squeezed over Bunter's fat face, and he opened his eyes wide, and his mouth still wider, with a terrific roar.
"Yoooooop! Urrrgh! Beast!"
"Turn out, old fat man——"
"Ooogh! You cheeky rotter!" roared Bunter, sitting up in bed, and dabbing at his wet face. "I've a jolly good mind to whop you!"
"Fathead! You'll be late for prayers!" said Bob.
"Yah! Take that!" hooted Bunter, and he hurled his pillow at Bob Cherry.
The missile came with terrific vim, and Bob, swept off his feet, sat down on the dormitory floor with a heavy bump.
"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bob. He had rather forgotten that the fat Owl was Strong Bunter. He remembered it now.
Billy Bunter turned out of bed, frowning.
Alonzo Todd gave him a reproachful glance.
"My dear Bunter!" he said gently. "Is that not somewhat ungrateful, indeed, brutal, considering that Cherry was performing an act of kindness in calling you from over-prolonged slumber——"
"Oh, shut up!" snapped Bunter.
Bunter picked up his pillow.
Taking aim at Alonzo Todd, he hurled it.
Bunter was being strategic again! If Alonzo was no longer strong, he would discover it by that means. If he was as strong as ever, Bunter was going to pass off the hurling of the pillow as a little joke!
The whizzing pillow smote Alonzo on the side of the head. It sent him spinning! There was a crash as he landed on the floor.
"Oh, goodness gracious!" gasped Alonzo.
Bunter blinked at him eagerly through his big spectacles.
Strong Alonzo would hardly have gone down like that! And Strong Alonzo would have bounced up like a ball!
But Alonzo did not bounce up! He lay gasping for breath—quite in the style of the old, familiar Alonzo, before he made the acquaintance of Professor Sparkinson!
Bunter grinned with triumph.
It was all right now! Strong Alonzo was no longer strong——and Billy Bunter, in his turn, was the strong man of Greyfriars!
Peter, with a wondering expression on his face, gave his weedy cousin a helping hand to his feet.
It dawned on him what had happened. Alonzo had said that unless he renewed the regular dose of the "stuff," his strength would depart from him, like Samson's, shorn of his hair! Evidently that had come to pass! Alonzo was strong no more!
Billy Bunter rolled up and grasped the pillow again. As Alonzo gained his feet, Bunter swiped with the pillow.
"Ooooogh!" gasped Alonzo, and he went spinning once more.
Peter rushed to his aid. One swipe of the pillow, in Bunter's fat hands, sent him spinning backwards, and he crashed on a bed. Tom Dutton jumped at Bunter, bolster in hand, but a swipe caught him under the chin, and he spun headlong.

“He, he, he!” cachinnated Bunter. “Anybody else want any? He, he, he!”
“You cheeky fat fool!” said Harry Wharton.
“What’s that?” roared Bunter truculently.
“Cheeky fat fool!”
“So you want some, do you?” grinned Bunter. “Well, I’m the fellow to oblige. I’ll give you all you want, and some over. He, he, he!”
And the Owl of the Remove rushed at Wharton.
Like one man the Co. jumped to the aid of their chief.
Bunter heeded not.
Under the amazed eyes of all the Remove he hurled himself at the Famous Five, swiping with the pillow.
They staggered right and left, under those hefty swipes. It was in vain that they tried to get at Bunter. He knocked them spinning without an effort. Obviously, Professor Sparkinson’s mixture was wonderful stuff. It had turned the fat and flabby Owl into almost a giant of strength.
The Famous Five sprawled gasping round Bunter. “He, he, he!” chortled Bunter. “Now get out of the dorm! Get going! I’m going to wallop you till you bunk! He, he, he!”
Swipe, swipe, swipe!
Bunter turned back into the dormitory. Vernon-Smith was giving him a black look. He did not speak; but that look was enough for Bunter. He rolled up to the Bounder with a bullying expression on his fat face that was worthy of Bolsover major at his worst.
“Don’t scowl at me!” said Bunter: and he swiped Smithy, sending him spinning to the door with a yell.
“You fat fool!” roared Redwing.
Swipe!
Redwing spun after the Bounder.
Billy Bunter glared round.
“Any more coming on?” he roared.
There was no answer.
“For two pins,” said Bunter victoriously, “I’d wade in and thrash the lot of you! The whole dashed Form, by Jove! Look out, that’s all!”
He threw down the pillow, and proceeded to dress. He had left himself no time for washing: but that did not bother Bunter.
“Fishy!” rapped Bunter, sitting on the edge of his bed. “Come and put my boots on for me—sharp!”
“Aw, great snakes!” gasped Fisher T. Fish. “I guess—”
“Do you want me to come over to you?”
“Aw, nope!” said Fishy, in a great hurry. “I calculate I don’t mind putting on your boots for you, old chap.
And Fishy did.
“Mauly!” rapped Bunter.
“Yaas!” drawled Lord Mauleverer.
“I want a clean collar!”
“You generally do, old bean!”
“No cheek, Mauly! Bring me one of your collars!”
His lordship gave the fat Owl a look, and walked out of the dormitory.
Bunter glared.
“Skinner, get me a clean collar!”

Skinner drew a deep breath. Without a word, he sorted out a clean collar for Bunter. Bunter was enjoying life. This sort of thing, from Billy Bunter's point of view, made life worth living. Bunter, the fibber, Bunter, the frowster, Bunter, the grub-raider, the Remove were used to. Now they had to get used to Bunter, the bully. That was likely to be the worst of all the Bunters—if it lasted.

Billy Bunter Enjoys Life!

IN morning break Bunter rolled out of the Form-room, with his fat, little nose high in the air.
In the passage he smacked Alonzo's head, and, receiving a glare from Peter, smacked Peter's head, also.
Then he rolled, grinning, into the quad.
The Remove fellows looked at him. Bunter the Bully was something new—interesting as a study, perhaps, but far from pleasing.
"Ain't he a bute?" said Bob Cherry, watching the fat Owl as he rolled importantly in the quad. "Ain't he a jewel?"
"The fat rotter!" growled Johnny Bull.
"Fancy that fat foozler beginning as a bully!" said Frank Nugent. "Of course, he's more a fool than anything else."
"We've got to stop him!" said Harry Wharton, frowning. "A Form ragging will bring him to his senses—if he's got any."
"The ragfulness will have to be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But perhapsfully it may be possible to snaffle the esteemed muck he snaffled from the idiotic Alonzo."
"Where does the fat fool keep it?" cut in the Bounder. "He doesn't carry it about him."
"How do you know, Smithy?"
"Because I went through his pockets in the dormitory last night," answered the Bounder, with a sour grin. "That's how."
"He wouldn't carry it in his pockets, of course," said Bob. "It might be snooped in the dorm, or fellows might bag him and grab it. He's got it hidden somewhere, of course. That rather puts the lid on. He's not likely to let out where he's parked it."
"Bother that old ass, Sparkinson!" said Harry. "I wish he'd kept his jolly old scientific discoveries to himself. I suppose he meant to do that fathead, Alonzo, a good turn. But the result is—"
"Bunter, the Bully!" grinned Bob.
The Owl of the Remove rolled away cheerily to the House. He blinked round for Lord Mauleverer. and joined that noble youth on his way to the Form-room. He favoured Mauly with a fat and friendly grin.
"Don't be afraid, Mauly." he said reassuringly, as Mauleverer made a movement to sheer off.
"Don't be an ass!" answered Lord Mauleverer.
"Oh, really, Mauly—"
Bunter slipped an arm through Mauleverer's. Lord Mauleverer promptly jerked his arm away. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his sleeve.
Bunter blinked at him.
"Got something on your sleeve, Mauly?" he asked.
"A fat slug barged against it!" answered Mauleverer.
"Why, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "I—I mean, don't be so stuffy, old chap!

We're pals, you know, ain't we?"
"Not at all!"
"We'd better have this plain, Mauleverer!" said Bunter in a bullying tone. "Are we pals or not?"
"Not!" said Mauleverer.
"Well, if we're not pals, I'm not standing any cheek from a silly, stuck-up nincompoop of a tailor's dummy!" said Bunter. "Take that!"
Smack!
"Oh, great gad!" yelled Lord Mauleverer, as he took it.
He staggered from that hefty smack. The next moment he jumped at Billy Bunter. A second smack met him, with terrific beef behind it, and Lord Mauleverer measured his length in the quad.
Bunter rolled on. It was a full minute before the hapless Mauly picked himself up and limped after him.

Bamboozling Bunter!

"WE'VE got to bag it!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.
"The gotfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Rain Singh.
"But where does the fat brute park it?" asked Harry.
"The wherefulness," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur, "is also terrific."
"Not in the House, I think," said Nugent. "Toddy has been rooting after it all day. So have some other fellows! Out of the House somewhere."
"But where?"
"Goodness knows!"
The November dusk had fallen on Greyfriars School. Bunter had to be dealt with! That was clear! If he remained in possession of Alonzo's bottle of Professor Sparkinson's marvellous elixir, life was hardly worth living in the Greyfriars Remove.
"Perhapsfully," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a thoughtful wrinkle in his dusky brow, "the esteemed and idiotic Bunter may let it out."
"Not likely!" said Harry Wharton.
"The pull-fulness of his absurd leg is not a matter of terrific difficulty! I have thought of a wheezy good idea," said the nabob. "The absurd and execrable Bunter is coming here to tea—"
"We'll smash him if he does!" growled Johnny Bull. "The smashfulness may be a boot on the other leg, my esteemed Johnny! But listen for his esteemed and ridiculous footsteps—and when he comes I will begin to converse talkfully, and you fellows play up——"
"For Bunter to hear, do you mean?" asked Harry.
"Exactfully!"
"But what—''
"The proof of the pudding is in the cracked pitcher going longest to the well! " said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us try it onfully. I can hear a sound like a prize pig that has escaped from an esteemed sty, and that means that the estimable Bunter is coming."
There was a grunt in the passage, indicating that the Owl of the Remove had just come up the stairs. Footsteps approached the door of Study No. 1, which was ajar. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh winked at his friends, and went on speaking:
"Perhapsfully the bottle I saw was the one that the esteemed Bunter snaffled from the ridiculous Alonzo! A small bottle, half-full of a red fluid——"

The footsteps stopped outside the door.
The juniors grinned.
Evidently the approaching Owl had overheard the nabob's words, and had stopped to hear more.
"Why didn't you bag the bottle, inky?" asked Bob, playing up to the game. "It's the stuff all right, if you saw it—"
"We knew he'd hidden it somewhere!" said Harry Wharton.
"For goodness' sake don't let Bunter know you've spotted it!" said Nugent. "He would cut off and hide it somewhere else at once!"
"Better lose no time! You should have bagged it at once, fathead! But get off now and bag it—"
"I will proceed immediately after tea—"
There was a suppressed grunt in the passage, and a sound of retreating footsteps.
The Famous Five chuckled softly.
Bob Cherry stepped quietly to the door and glanced out. He was in time to see Billy Bunter's fat figure disappearing down the Remove staircase.
"He's gone!" breathed Bob.
"Gone to shift that jolly old bottle—because he fancies that Inky's spotted where he's hidden it!" breathed Nugent. "We've only got to follow him—"
"Come on!"
Harry Wharton & Co. left their tea unfinished. Tea did not matter now.
They went down the Remove passage and sighted Bunter in the lower passage.
From the corner of the Form-room passage the juniors watched him disappear into the Remove-room, now dark and deserted.
He closed the door after him.
Ten seconds later Harry Wharton opened the door silently, and the Famous Five peered in.
A fat figure was silhouetted against the window. A grunt was heard as Bunter raised the sash.
There was no doubt that the Owl of the Remove was going out of the House; and no doubt that he was going to get hold of that priceless bottle, which he supposed that Hurree Singh had spotted in its hiding-place.
A cold wind blew in as Bunter got the Form-room window open.
He stood blinking out into the cold and gloom through his big spectacles, apparently not keen on the task in hand.
"Beasts!" The juniors at the door heard a grunting mumble. "Rotters! Unscrupulous cads—bagging a fellow's bottle when he's not looking! Not the sort of thing I'd do!"
Bunter had apparently forgotten how he had come into possession of Alonzo Todd's priceless phial.
"Filthy cold!" went on the fat junior. "And colder still in the beastly Cloisters! Groooooogh!"
Evidently Bunter did not fancy a tramp through the darkness to the lonely, windy Cloisters.
That, undoubtedly, was a safe spot to hide his plunder. But it was not a pleasant spot to visit after dark.
According to Greyfriars tradition, the ancient ghost of Greyfriars sometimes haunted the dark old Cloisters.
The fat junior still hesitated. But he made up his fat mind at last. Slowly, and grunting angrily, the Owl of the Remove began to clamber out of the window.
"After him!" whispered Johnny Bull.

“Hold on!” breathed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.
“Fathead! Better get after him at once—”
“We can’t tackle him!” said Bob, in a whisper. “He’s too jolly hefty for us—just at present. I can see that Inky’s got a wheeze! Cough it up, old black bean!”
“I have a wheezy good idea, my esteemed and ridiculous friends,’’ murmured the nabob. ‘‘The estimable and execrable Bunter is too terrifically strong for us at the present moment. But—”
“But what?” growled Johnny Bull.
“But the esteemed ghost of Greyfriars would frighten him out of his execrable wits——”
“You silly ass! There isn’t any ghost!”
“Quitefully so, my esteemed and fatheaded Johnny: but there are sheets that can be wrapped over an esteemed head—and the idiotic Bunter is a terrific funk——”
There was a suppressed chuckle.
“Inky, old man, you’re a jolly old genius!” breathed Bob Cherry. “Wait while I cut up to the dorm.”
The juniors waited in the Form-room. Bunter had dropped from the window, and they could glimpse his dim form in the gloom, rolling away slowly in the direction of the Cloisters. Very quickly Bob Cherry rejoined his chums, with a bundle under his arm.
“Ooooogh! It’s c-c-cold!” shivered Bunter.
He blinked round him uneasily in the deep shadows, as he rolled under the ancient stone arches of the Cloisters.
It was the most secluded spot at Greyfriars; secluded by clay, and utterly deserted and lonely by night.
The wind from the sea wailed among the old stone pillars. Ancient ivy rustled and murmured. It was not only the cold that made Billy Bunter shiver. Loneliness and darkness, and the story of the ghost of the Cloisters, added their effect.
He plugged on, slowly but determinedly. He reached a spot where thick, old ivy hung in massy clusters by the old stone well. He fumbled for a matchbox and struck a match.
Then his fat hand groped at the ivy.
Groan!
As Bunter’s fat hand was groping through the ivy, that deep and horrible groan sounded just behind him.
“Ow!” gasped Bunter.
He jumped and turned. The shaded match in his left hand touched the skin, and he gave a howl.
He dropped the match, which went out at once. Bunter was left in darkness, save for the faint, pale glimmer of winter starlight that penetrated into the Cloisters.
Groan!
“Wha-a-at’s that?” gasped Bunter, through his chattering teeth.
Groan!
“Oh, crikey!”
Billy Bunter stood transfixed.
His little round eyes almost popped through his big round spectacles as he gazed at a white figure, hardly six paces from him.
“Oh, lor’!” gasped Bunter.
Draped in white, from head to foot, the figure halted. An arm, draped in white, was slowly raised, pointing to the fat Owl!
Bunter backed away a step and bumped against the ivy. “Mortal! Beware!” came a

deep, sepulchral voice from the spectre of Greyfriars. “Who art thou that darest intrude in these haunted shades?”
“Oh, crikey!” gasped Bunter.
“Beware!”
The figure advanced, the ghostly arm still outstretched! Bunter gave a squeak of utter terror.
in another moment or two the spectral fingers would have touched him! Squeaking with terror, the fat Owl jumped away.
“Ow! Keep off!” shrieked Bunter.
“Beware!”
“Ow! Help! Yaroooh! Oh, crikey! Urrrrggh!” spluttered Bunter, and he fairly flew.
Crash!
“Yooop!” roared Bunter as he collided with one of the old stone pillars in the dark and staggered back from the shock. “Ow! My nose! Urrrgh!”
Groan! came from behind him.
“Ow! Oh, crikey!” Bunter dabbed his fat little nose, from which came a spurt of red.
“Urrrgh! Ooooogh!”
He dodged round the pillar and bounded on. Groping blindly in the darkness, the fat Owl hardly knew how he escaped from the Cloisters.
But he was in the Quad at last, and running for the House. He had forgotten the hidden bottle now—forgotten everything but his terror for the ghost.
Without even thinking of closing the window, the fat owl scrambled up, barged across the Form-room, and fled into the corridor. The passage was dimly lit, and Bunter scudded along it, panting for breath. He came round the corner like a charging rhinoceros—and there was a sudden and terrific crash.
“What—what—what——” stuttered Mr. Quelch as he reeled from the shock.
“What—what——who———”
“Urrrggh!” spluttered Bunter. “Oh, lor’! Oooogh!
“Bunter! How dare you rush into your form-master? How—”
“Urrrgh! The gig-gig-gig-gig———”
“What?”
“The gig-gig-ghost!” gasped Bunter. “The gur-gur-gur-ghost! Oh. lor’! The gog-gog-ghost—”
Mr. Quelch gave him a glare.
“How dare you talk such nonsense, Bunter? I repeat, how dare you? Follow me to my study at once!”
‘‘Oh, lor’!”
In Mr. Quelch’s study Bunter lost his terror of the ghost! Six hefty whacks from Mr. Quelch’s cane sufficed to drive away the terrors of the supernatural. Indeed, Bunter, as he wriggled away from that study after that “six,” felt, for the moment, that Quelch was even worse than the ghost of Greyfriars.

“Ha, ha, ha!”
There was a sound of merry chuckling in the dark old Cloisters after the flight of Billy Bunter!
Four fellows surrounded the white, ghostly figure, and all of them were chortling—including the ghost of Greyfriars! The ghost in fact, was almost doubled with merriment.
“He’s gone!” grinned Frank Nugent. “I fancy he won’t stop—he’s on a non-stop run!”
Harry Wharton turned on the light of a torch. Bob Cherry unwound the sheet from his

head, disclosing a grinning face.
“Worked like a charm!” said the captain of the Remove, laughing. “Buck up, though! It’s jolly cold here. We know where to look now.”
“We do—we does!” grinned Bob.
With the electric torch in his left hand Wharton groped in the ivy with his right, at the spot where Bunter had stood striking the matches.
He dragged away a mass of ancient ivy and disclosed a cavity in the old stone wall underneath. The light glimmered on a little phial, half-full of a crimson fluid, exactly as it had been described by Alonzo. Evidently this was the bottle of Professor Sparkinson’s Elixir!
“Here it is!”
“Good!”
Johnny Bull reached into the cavity and grasped the little bottle.
Smash!
It landed on the old stone flags and broke into a hundred fragments. The contents ran out in a little pool.
“That’s that!” said Johnny Bull grimly. “Now we d better get back!”
Billy Bunter, the next morning, was the first man up in the Greyfriars Remove, wonderful to relate!
But Bunter had his reasons.
In the daylight even Bunter was not afraid of ghosts in haunted Cloisters. Indeed, once quite safe away from the ghost, Bunter doubted whether it was a ghost at all. Bunter was first out of the House that morning, and he rolled away in the wintry dawn to the old Cloisters. He hoped, but he doubted.
He rolled into the Cloisters, and reached the spot. He dragged aside the ivy and blinked at the little cavity in the wall. It was empty!
“Beasts!” hissed Bunter.
Then he observed at his feet fragments of smashed glass and a crimson stain on the old stone flags.
He blinked at it.
“Beasts!” repeated Bunter.
Those relics told him what had become of Alonzo’s phial of wonderful “stuff.” It was no longer in existence.
Slowly and sadly the fat junior trailed back to the House.
In the Form-room that morning Bunter’s face was clouded more than ever before.
When Billy Bunter rolled out in break, he did not barge fellows in the passage; he did not grab Fishy’s arm to lead him to the tuckshop; he did not address any fellow in a bullying tone. For the effect of the last dose of the Elixir had quite worn off now, and the fat Owl of the Remove was no longer the Schoolboy Samson.