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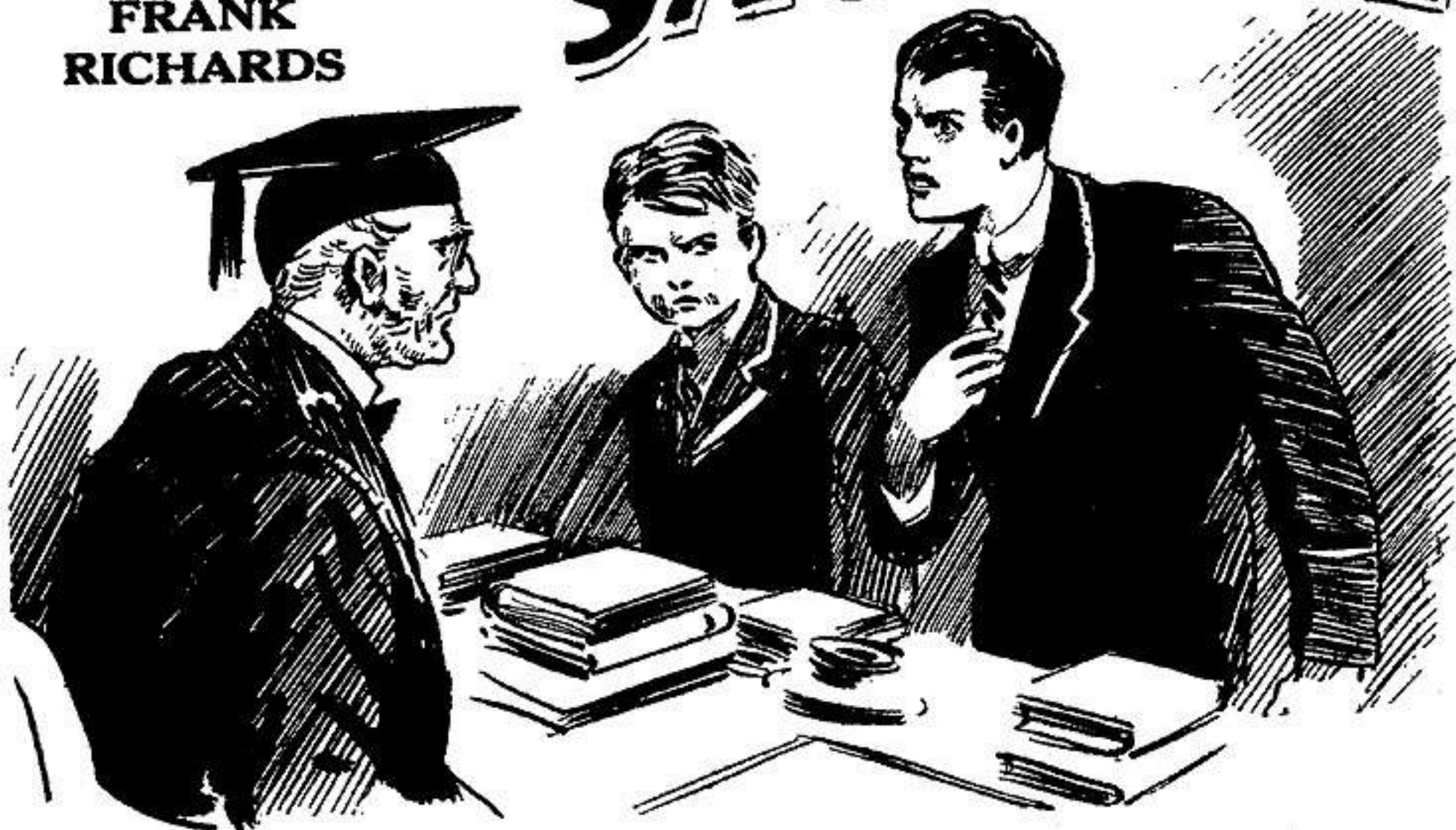
The **MAGNET** 2^D



*Bunter
the Boxer!*

A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!

By
FRANK RICHARDS



A Tip-top Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Rough on Richard!

O WI!
It was a sound of woe.
"Wow!"
Harry Wharton & Co. looked round.

The early winter dusk was falling on Greyfriars. The Famous Five were taking a trot round the quad before tea when those sounds of lamentation fell on their ears.

"Ow! Wow! Oooooh!"
"Sounds as if somebody's been licked!" remarked Bob Cherry.
"It's my minor!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Oh!"
Under the shadows of the old elms a diminutive figure could be seen. It was wriggling spasmodically, and seemed to be trying to fold itself up like a pocket-knife.

Nugent minor, of the Second Form, seemed to have been through it, which was a matter of deep concern to Nugent major, of the Remove, if not to his comrades.

The Co., of course, sympathised with any fellow who had bagged a licking. Lickings came their own way, not infrequently, so they knew what it was like. Still, as Dicky Nugent was the most troublesome young scamp in the Second Form, it was quite probable that he had asked for it, in the opinion of four members of the Famous Five.

Frank Nugent left his comrades and

ran towards the fag. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, exchanged glances. Then they followed Nugent, more slowly, looking as grave and solemn as they could.

"What's up, Dicky?" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Wow!" was Nugent minor's reply.

"Yow-ow!"

"Licked?" asked Frank.
His young brother gave him a glare.
"You silly ass! Do you think I'm doing this for fun? Wow!"

"But who—"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Loder of the Sixth?" asked Frank, with a frowning brow.

"Ow! No! Blow Loder! Ow!"

"Then who—"

"Twigg! Wow!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Nugent, rather taken aback. Mr. Twigg had the distinction of being Dicky Nugent's Form master, and he was not a severe Form master. The Removites would have been glad to "swap" Mr. Quelch for him, any day.

If Mr. Twigg had "whopped" Nugent minor, it was extremely probable that Nugent minor deserved it, as even his anxious and affectionate major had to admit.

"The beast!" groaned Dicky. "Ow! Wow! Laid it on as if he was beating a carpet! Wow! I'll make him sit up for it, somehow! Yow-ow!"

"And you didn't do anything?" asked Johnny Bull, in a tone of gentle sarcasm. "You never do."

"Oh, cheese it!" exclaimed Nugent sharply.

"The cheesefulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Johnny!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, pressing Johnny Bull's arm, and Johnny grunted and made no rejoinder. It was understood in the Co. that Frank had to be treated with tact where his hopeful minor was concerned.

Dicky Nugent continued his contortions. Like the young man of Hythe, who was shaved with a scythe, he did nothing but wriggle and writhe. Evidently Mr. Twigg for once had let himself go.

Dicky, as a rule, was a tough young scamp, and made light of a licking. This time, however, the hapless fag had had to sit up and take notice.

"Buck up, kid!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "It will wear off, you know."

"Fathead!" said Dicky.

"My esteemed idiotic Dicky——" murmured Hurree Singh.

"Br-r-r! Ow! Wow!"

"But why?" asked Frank. Obviously Frank was prepared to be indignant as well as sympathetic. He was much given to taking Dicky's part, not always to that lively young gentleman's satisfaction.

"It was your fault!" grunted Dicky. Nugent jumped.

"My fault!" he ejaculated.

"Ow! Yes! Ow!"

"You young ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton warmly. "How could it be

—IF YOU ARE NOT YOU WILL STILL ENJOY IT!

your major's fault? What the thump do you mean?"

"Well, it was! Owl!"

"How was it my fault, Dicky?" asked Frank Nugent, very quietly.

"You're such an ass!" groaned Dicky. "It's the way you've helped me with my exercises for Twigg. Owl! I know it was decent of you to do them for me. Owl! It's saved me a lot of trouble. Wow! But it made old Twigg expect too much—ow!—from me. Wow! You ought to have put in a few mistakes. Owl! Of course, I couldn't keep up to the mark!"

"Oh!"

"As if I can work like a Remove man, when I'm only in the Second!" said Dicky indignantly.

"Oh!" repeated Frank.

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull. "You shouldn't bring your work to your major to do."

"That needn't worry you, Bull!" said Nugent tartly.

Grunt from Johnny Bull.

"I told you the other day, when you were doing an exercise for your minor, that it would lead to trouble in the long run," he said. "If he pulls a beak's leg like that, he must expect it."

"Owl!" from Dicky. "Wow!"

"I told you so, and you can't say I didn't!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Well, as you told me, you needn't tell me again."

"Look here, Nugent—"

"Order, my infants!" said Bob Cherry. "Don't let's rag! What about taking the kid in to tea in the study? Think doughnuts would do you any good, Dicky?"

"Owl! Don't be an ass! Wow!"

Dicky's woes, it seemed, were too deep for doughnuts.

Bob Cherry coloured a little. He did not like being told not to be an ass by a Second Form fag.

But he restrained his feelings. This was not the first time that Richard Nugent owed his escape from a kicking to the fact that he was Frank Nugent's minor.

"Well, Dicky," said Frank, rather dismally, "I'm sorry, kid; but you know I wanted you to go through the exercises when I did them, only you wouldn't, you know. Next time—"

"You silly owl!" groaned Dicky. "There won't be any next time. Old Twigg's spotted me."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Frightful beast, you know," said Nugent minor dolorously. "Suspicious, you know. He actually sorted out that exercise you did for me the other day, and took me through it, and, of course, I couldn't touch it. So he jolly well guessed how the matter stood, and gave me a licking! Owl!"

"Well, I told you so!" said Johnny Bull.

Among Johnny Bull's many valuable qualities, tact was not conspicuous. Nugent breathed rather hard.

"So that was why Twigg licked you, kid?" asked Harry Wharton. He spoke as sympathetically as he could.

"Owl! Yes! Laid it on with a trowel!" groaned Dicky. "Made out that I was palming off another man's work on him! Owl!"

"Well, so you were, weren't you?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Oh, shut up!" said Dicky.

"What?" ejaculated Johnny.

"Shut up!" Nugent minor glared at the more or less sympathetic faces in the dusk. "Think I want jaw from a lot of

Remove ticks, after a whopping from Twigg! Go and eat coke!"

"Dicky, poor old kid!" muttered Frank.

Snort from Dicky.

"Not so much of your 'poor old kid'!" he snapped. "I'm not made of putty! I can stand a whopping! I'm jolly well going to make old Twigg sit up for it, too!"

"Don't be a young ass!" said Frank uneasily.

"You see!" said Nugent minor. "I'll jolly well put gum in his slippers! I'll jolly well put rats in his hat-box, too! I know where I can get some rats! I'll—"

"Look here, Dicky—"

"Oh, can it!" growled Dicky. "If you think I'm jolly well going to be a meek-and-mild milksop like you, Frank, you're jolly well mistaken—see? You can grease up to Quelch, if you like! I'm jolly well not going to grease up to Twigg! And I tell you—"

"Shut up!" breathed Bob Cherry hastily, as he sighted a figure coming along in the dusk under the elms.

"Rats!" retorted Dicky. His back was towards the beak who was coming up the path, and he did not see Mr. Twigg. "I can tell you, I jolly well mean it! I'm going to make Twigg fairly cringe for giving me this—"

"Nugent minor!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Dicky, spinning round like a humming-top.

He stared in horror at Mr. Twigg.

The master of the Second Form took

The Remove looked upon Dicky Nugent as just a cheeky fag who wanted "lickings," and plenty of 'em! But Dicky's brother, Frank, proved that he thought much more of his minor than that!

no notice of the Removites. He fixed his eyes on Richard Nugent, and his eyes fairly glinted through his glasses.

"Nugent minor, you venture—you dare to utter threats to your Form master! Upon my word! Follow me to the House, Nugent minor!"

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Dicky.

"My brother didn't mean—" began Frank, in dismay.

"Silence, Nugent major! I have reason to suspect, to believe, that you assisted this boy to deceive me!" boomed Mr. Twigg. "It is my intention to speak to your Form master on the subject! Nugent minor, follow me this instant!"

Mr. Twigg whisked away towards the House. Nugent minor, with a deeply woebegone countenance, trotted after him, in direful anticipation of what was to happen when he reached his Form master's study. Frank Nugent clenched his hands, breathing hard and deep.

"I told you—" began Johnny Bull, rather unfortunately.

Nugent gave him an angry stare, turned his back, and walked away. The rest of the Co. continued their trot round the quad, not in the happiest mood.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter Takes the Cake!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. It was not always that the universe was run to the satisfaction of William George Bunter of the Grayfriars Remove. But there were times when things went very well, and this was one of the times.

Billy Bunter had watched the Famous

Five leave the House, and knew that they were taking a trot before tea. He was also aware that the supplies for tea were already in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Harry Wharton & Co., he calculated, would not come in for a good quarter of an hour. Bunter needed less time than that.

Having watched the chums of the Remove disappear, the fat junior grinned, and turned his footsteps in the direction of the Remove passage.

A good many Remove men were coming in to tea. Peter Todd looked out of the doorway of Study No. 7 and waved a hand to Bunter as he appeared in the offing.

"Tea's ready, Fatty!" he called out.

Bunter paused—at the door of Study No. 1. He knew what was in Study No. 1—a cake, a bag of doughnuts, and several other things. Still, there was always the possibility—indeed, the probability—of a kicking to follow a grub raid, so Bunter paused.

"What have you got for tea, Toddy?" he inquired.

"There's some sardines."

Sniff from Bunter.

"Nothing else?" he asked.

"Lots of bread-and-butter," answered Toddy cheerfully.

Another sniff from Bunter.

"Is that the lot?" he asked.

Peter Todd gave him a look. As Billy Bunter seldom, or never, stood his "whack" in the study tea, Peter's view was that Bunter ought to take

what he could get, and be thankful for it. Bunter's view was quite different. Generally, it was true, he took what he could get, but he was seldom thankful.

"Well, what else would you like?" asked Peter. "If you'd care for poached eggs, Bunter—"

"Now you're talking!" said Bunter.

"And a plum cake—"

"Good!"

"And a bag of jam-tarts—"

"Rather, old fellow!" said Bunter, quite affectionately. And he came along towards Study No. 7. "I say, Peter, have you had a tip?"

"No such luck!"

"You're getting rather a spread, old chap?"

"Eh—I'm not getting any spread," answered Peter. "I asked you if you'd like poached eggs, and a plum cake, and a bag of jam-tarts—"

"I jolly well would!"

"Well, all you've got to do, then, is to walk down to the tuckshop and get them!"

"Eh?"

"The tuckshop's still open," said Toddy blandly.

Billy Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. It dawned on him that Peter was pulling his fat leg.

"Why, you—you—you—" he ejaculated. "Look here, you beast, what have you got in the study for tea?"

"Sardines—"

"You can keep your measly sardines!" hooted Bunter.

"Glad to!" answered Peter cheerfully.

And he turned back into Study No. 7, while Billy Bunter rolled back to Study No. 1.

Bunter wasted no more time. Peter's frivolous jesting on a serious subject had wasted minutes already.

He rolled into Study No. 1.

He did not turn on the light. The lighted window might have been

observed by the juniors who were trotting round the quad. It was dusky in the study, but there was light enough for Bunter.

Several parcels lay on the study table. Billy Bunter started on the doughnuts. Bunter liked doughnuts. There were a dozen in the bag, and they went down almost like oysters.

Then he turned his attention to the cake.

It was rather a large cake, and it was a very fragrant and appetising cake. This, undoubtedly, was ever so much better than a small share of the sardines in Study No. 7.

Champ, champ, champ!

Bunter's jaws worked fast.

There was plenty of time to dispose of the cake before the Famous Five came back from their trot. They were not likely to find a crumb or a plum left if Bunter was not interrupted.

But, as the poet has remarked, "The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley." Bunter, naturally, was quite unaware of the little incident in the quad—in blissful ignorance of the fact that Frank Nugent had left his comrades, in a mood of irritation, and walked back to the House. He had no doubt that the famous Co. were still on the trot—as, indeed, four of them were—and he had no suspicion that in those

very moments Frank Nugent was coming up the Remove staircase, with a knitted brow, and in a frame of mind that was quite unlike his usual sunny temper.

The study door opened suddenly.

Bunter was half through the cake.

He spun round towards the door, with his mouth full, with a startled gurgle.

"Oooooogh!"

Frank Nugent appeared in the doorway of the dusky study, with the lighted passage behind him.

He started as he heard Bunter's gurgle. He had expected to find his study untenanted.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Nugent.

Billy Bunter clutched up what was left of the cake. Why this beast had come in before the other beasts, Bunter did not know; but he knew that he had no time to lose. He made a jump for the door, butted into Nugent, and sent him spinning, and scudded up the passage.

"Oh!" gasped Nugent, as he staggered. "Ow! Oh, my hat! What—who—"

The next moment he was jumping after Bunter. A grasp on the back of his collar twirled the Owl of the Remove round.

"You fat rotter!" roared Nugent. "What were you doing in my study? What did you barge me over for, you fat chump?"

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"I'll jolly well—"

"Ow! Leggo! I haven't touched the cake! Whooop! I—I wasn't in the study! I mean— Yarooop!"

"Why, you fat villain!" exclaimed Nugent wrathfully.

As the remnant of the cake was clutched in Bunter's fat paw Nugent was not likely to believe that he had not touched it.

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"Ow! Beast! Leggo! Yaroooh!"

Rap! Rap! Rap!

Billy Bunter's bullet head smote the wall of the passage thrice, and each rap was followed by a fiendish yell from Bunter.

"There!" gasped Nugent. "You—"

"Ow! Beast! Wow! Rotter! I'll lick you— Yow-ow-ow!"

The remnant of the cake was jerked away from Bunter. Then it was crammed down the back of his neck.

Bunter wriggled spasmodically. He liked cake; he was very fond of cake! But he did not like it taken externally.

Shoved down his back, it felt horrid.

"Ow! You awful beast! Ow!

Leggo! Oh crikey!" gurgled Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, rescue! Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There were a dozen fellows in the passage, but they did not seem disposed to rescue Bunter. They roared.

Bump!

Billy Bunter sat down—hard!

Nugent walked back to Study No. 1, went in, and slammed the door. Billy Bunter was left sitting in the passage, gurgling wildly and making frantic efforts to extract crumbled cake from the back of his neck.

"Some in Bunter—some outside. I shoved what was left down his neck."

"The fat villain! Has he been grub-raiding again? It's time an example was made of that podgy pirate!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

Frank Nugent laughed.

"I think I banged his head rather hard. But there's some eggs—and I've made the toast."

"Right as rain!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"The rightfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh. "Better a stalled ox and contentment therewith than a bird in hand which goes longest to the well, as the English proverb remarks."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five sat down to tea. Four members of the Co., at least, were in cheerful spirits, and their talk ran on the approaching Christmas holidays. Frank was silent and thoughtful. His comrades easily guessed the subject of his reflections. His thoughts were with his minor, who had obviously been booked for another "whopping" when Mr. Twigg marched him into the House.

"I wouldn't worry, old bean," said Harry Wharton at last. "Young Dicky's a tough little scamp, and a licking won't hurt him a lot."

Nugent coloured a little.

"It's not only that," he said, "but Twigg's rather hard on him—"

"I don't see that," said Johnny Bull.

"You wouldn't," answered Frank dryly.

Johnny Bull grunted.

"I think Twigg's rather hard on him," said Frank, "and Dicky's got his back up. I'm afraid he meant

what he was saying about getting back on Twigg—and that means more trouble for him and—"

"Oh, that's all right," said Bob Cherry. "Fellows say those things, but they never mean them. Coker of the Fifth tells the world—sometimes—that he will punch Prout some day—but he never does punch Prout! I've heard the old Bounder say he will tell Quelch to shut up some time when he's jawing him; but I've never heard him tell Quelch to shut up—and don't expect to!"

"The expectfulness is not terrific!" agreed Hurree Singh.

"Dicky's got his back up!" said Nugent, unheeding. "I'm afraid he may do something fatheaded. He's a reckless young ass. And Twigg is hard on him. He expects more from him than from other kids in the Second—"

"That's because he showed up such jolly good exercises," grinned Bob Cherry. "You should have kicked him out of the study, instead of doing his work for him. Twigg feels sore, now he's found out that his leg has been pulled. He calls it deceiving him."

"Well, what else is it?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, dry up, old man!"

"It was partly my fault, as Dicky said," muttered Nugent.

His comrades made no rejoinder to that. They sympathised with Nugent, who was an affectionate brother, and deeply concerned about his minor. But

DON'T FORGET

NEXT SATURDAY

and the

GRAND XMAS NUMBER of the "MAGNET."

Like a Bumper Christmas Stocking—

IT'S WELL FILLED!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Vials of Wrath!

"HEM!"

Bob Cherry coughed.

The Co. had arrived at Study No. 1, having finished their trot. Harry Wharton threw open the door and Frank Nugent was disclosed to view—sitting in the armchair, with his hands driven deep into his pockets and a deep wrinkle in his brow.

"Hem!" repeated Bob.

Nugent looked up.

He stared at his comrades for a moment, and then his frowning face relaxed into a grin.

"Trot in, fatheads!" he said.

"Oh!" said Bob, relieved. "Good egg!"

"Not got your back up?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Don't be an ass, old chap—if that isn't asking too much of you," added Nugent considerably.

Johnny grinned amiably and came in. Nugent, evidently, had recovered from his irritation. He was not in a bright mood; but he was not "edge-wise."

Which was a relief to his friends. The Co. came cheerfully into the study.

"Rather short commons, I'm afraid," said Nugent.

"Eh? Where's the doughnuts?" asked Wharton.

"Somewhere in Bunter."

"Oh, my hat! And the cake—"

they were feeling strongly inclined to kick the ungrateful young rascal. It was useless to tell Frank so, however.

"I—I meant to help him out, and I've really made matters worse for him," said Frank miserably.

Johnny Bull, with great self-restraint, refrained from remarking: "I told you so!" He helped himself to toast instead.

"Twigg's rather a brute," went on Nugent. "He might go a bit easier with a kid who's rather spoiled at home."

Silence followed that remark. Twigg, the master of the Second, was not a brute, by any means, as all the juniors knew. But they understood Frank's feelings; and silence was golden.

There was a step in the Remove passage, and a tap at the study door.

"Come in, fat-head!" called out Harry Wharton.

The door opened, and Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, stepped into the study.

The juniors jumped up at once, Wharton crimsoning.

"Oh! You, sir!" he stammered.

"I—I—" Mr. Quelch waved him to silence.

"Nugent! I came here to speak to you," he said.

"Yes, sir," said Frank quietly. He guessed what was coming.

"I have received a very serious complaint from a colleague," said the Remove master. "I hope—I believe—that Mr. Twigg is in error; but it is a matter that must be cleared up immediately."

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"There is no objection," resumed Mr. Quelch, in a deep voice, "to any boy helping a younger boy with his work. Indeed, I should approve of it. But there are certain well defined limits. I am not unaware that Nugent minor sometimes comes to this study for assistance. To help your minor in difficulties, Nugent, is one matter. To do his work for him, and to assist him in deluding his Form master, is another. You must be perfectly well aware of that."

Nugent was silent.

He was quite well aware of it. He had nothing to say—unless he said that his yielding good nature was taken advantage of by a thoughtless young scamp. And he could not say that.

"It appears," said the Remove master, "that Mr. Twigg gave Nugent minor certain Latin exercises. He was extremely pleased by the way they were done, and commended Nugent minor in Form—indeed, holding him up as an example, to some extent, to other boys in the Second Form. He has since



Frank Nugent ran towards his minor, who seemed to be trying to fold himself up like a pocket-knife. "What's up, Dicky?" asked Frank anxiously. "Been licked?" "Wow-ow!" wailed Nugent minor. "Think I'm doing this for fun? Wow!"

discovered that these exercises were not done by Nugent minor at all—that he could not even construe sentences that were written down in his own hand as his own work."

Mr. Quelch paused, and there was a dead silence in the study.

To most Greyfriars juniors Latin was simply a form of torment that had to be got through somehow. But a Form master's point of view, of course, was quite different.

The Famous Five quite understood how seriously Mr. Quelch would regard such a matter.

"Nugent minor has admitted to his Form master that these exercises were not his own work—indeed, the fact was plain, as he did not understand them," said the Remove master. "Mr. Twigg is naturally very much annoyed. He regards this as a deception, and I fully agree with him. His opinion is that it was you, Nugent, who assisted Nugent minor to delude him in this reprehensible, this inexcusable manner."

Silence.

"I shall, of course, accept your word on the subject, Nugent. That you have assisted your brother in his studies I know, and I approve of it. But if you have done work for him without his collaboration, for him to pass off as his own, the matter is very serious. I require a direct answer."

"I—I never meant—" muttered Nugent.

"It is not a question of what you may have meant, but of what you may have done!" said Mr. Quelch dryly.

"Answer me directly! Have you, during the past few weeks, done exercises for your brother which he has not taken part in, but merely copied out without understanding them?"

Nugent breathed hard. "Yes!" he answered.

Mr. Quelch's jaw set like a vice. "I am sorry to hear this, Nugent! I am surprised, and I am shocked! I have no resource but to administer a severe punishment. You will follow me to my study."

"Very well, sir," said Frank quietly.

"Look here—" burst out Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch glanced at him.

"Have you anything to say about this matter, Cherry?" "Nugent's rather an ass, sir, and his blessed minor can twist him round his finger," said Bob. "It's not fair on Nugent—"

"Shut up, you ass!" hissed Nugent.

"Shan't!" retorted Bob. "If you won't speak up for yourself you've got a pal to speak up for you. You know jolly well that you wanted that young scamp to go through the work with you, and—"

"Mind your own business!" snapped Nugent. Poor Frank was not thinking of himself, but of details coming to light which might make matters worse for his minor.

Mr. Quelch's stern brow relaxed a little.

"You appear, Nugent, to have meant well, but to have erred on the side of a

week and foolish good-nature," he said. "I am sorry that it is my duty to punish you, but I have no choice in the matter. Follow me!"

Nugent followed his Form master from the study.

The Co. looked at one another dismally.

Evidently Frank was "for" it!

Mr. Quelch, severe master as he was, would probably have gone easy in the circumstances, but as he had said, he had no choice in the matter. Twigg was wrathful, and he was justified in his wrath. The delinquent was in Quelch's Form, and Quelch had to deal with him.

"Rotten!" growled Bob Cherry.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" groaned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It would be grateful and comfortful to look for Nugent minor and hand out a terrific kickfulness. But—"

"Oh, Nugent mi mustn't be kicked!" growled Johnny Bull sarcastically. "The dear little innocent angel mustn't be touched! By Jove! If he were my minor I'd give him jip."

"Poor old Frank!" said Wharton. "Bother that wretched fag; he's always landing Frank in something."

"Mustn't say so!" snorted Johnny Bull. "Dear little chap—he only wants to dodge work and take in his Form master! Nice little angel!"

"Blow him!" grunted Bob.

"I've a jolly good mind to kick him!" growled Johnny Bull. "Why the thump shouldn't Nugent mi be kicked, like any other inky little scoundrel in the Second? Yah!"

Tea was unfinished and neglected on the table. The four juniors waited in dismal mood for Frank to return.

He came back at last, rather pale, and very quiet.

"Had it bad, old chap?" asked Bob.

Nugent made a grimace.

"Hard cheese, old chap!" said Wharton. "Quelch might have—"

"Oh, it's not Quelch's fault," said Frank. "Twigg put it up to him, and he had to ladle it out. It's that old fool Twigg!" He paused, and his eyes glinted. "The old ass! Rotten tyrant!"

Nugent's chums tactfully made no rejoinder to that. They sat down to finish tea, Nugent remaining standing. After that visit to Mr. Quelch's study poor Frank was not inclined to sit down.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Means Business!

"TODDY, old man—"

"Prep!" said Peter Todd.

"Blow prep!" grunted Billy

Bunter.

Preparation was going on in the Remove studies, but William George Bunter was not thinking of prep.

Bunter was frowning.

Every now and then as he sat in the study armchair Bunter rubbed his bullet head.

Bunter's head was hard. But the wall of the Remove passage was harder. Bunter was hurt.

Bunter's bullet head had been rapped before, many a time and oft. He had been kicked more often than he could hope to remember, though not, perhaps, so often as he had deserved. But these things, natural enough when fellows found the fat Owl prowling after their tuck, had never pleased Bunter—he had never grown to like them.

Now he was not only hurt—he was indignant. It had happened rather unfortunately for Bunter that Nugent had been in a state of annoyance at the time,

and there was no doubt that he had handled the fat Owl rather severely. From Nugent, the best-tempered fellow in the Remove, Bunter had not expected it. For once Nugent had cut up as rough as the Bounder, or even Bolsover major might have done. Bunter's head had been rapped—hard! Crumbling cake had been stuffed down his back, and he had not succeeded in extracting all the remnants, which felt horribly uncomfortable. Bunter was angry, and, like the prophet of old, he felt that he did well to be angry.

Prep, in such circumstances, was a superfluous worry. Bunter dismissed it from his fat mind.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton worked, and Bunter sat in the armchair and frowned—and interrupted.

"The worm will turn, Toddy!" said Bunter, blinking at Peter morosely through his big spectacles.

"Dry up, old fat man! Prep!" said Peter.

"I've had my head banged—"

"Nothing in it to damage," said Peter.

"Beast!"

Peter grinned, and went on with prep.

"If that cad—" recommenced Bunter.

"Eh—who?"

"That cad—that rotter Nugent. If he thinks he can bang my head, he's jolly well mistaken, see? The worm will turn!" repeated Bunter.

"Well, you're a worm, old bean," agreed Peter. "Turn!"

"I want you to be my second, Toddy!"

"Wha-a-at?" Peter Todd quite forgot prep in his astonishment. "You want whatter?"

"I'm going to fight Nugent."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm going to lick him."

"Ye gods!"

"Wouldn't you jolly well lick a chap who banged your head in the passage?" demanded Bunter.

"I jolly well would if I could," agreed Peter. "But I wouldn't ask for it by bagging a man's cake."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Forget it, old man," said Peter kindly. "You couldn't lick a bunny rabbit. You see, you're such a jolly old funk! You couldn't face a clock if it put its hands up!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

Peter chuckled. Bunter in this warlike mood was rather entertaining. But prep was prep, and Peter's attention returned to Virgil.

Tom Dutton looked up. Dutton was deaf, which was not wholly a misfortune for a fellow who had Billy Bunter for a study-mate.

"Anything up?" asked Dutton. "Why don't you do your prep, Bunter? You'll get ragged in Form to-morrow."

"I've had my head banged—"

"Eh? Who's hanged?" asked Dutton in surprise. "Relation of yours?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Toddy.

"Oh, you deaf ass! Dry up!" yapped Bunter.

"High up—somebody hanged high up? Who?" asked Dutton, still more surprised. "Nobody at Greyfriars, I hope?"

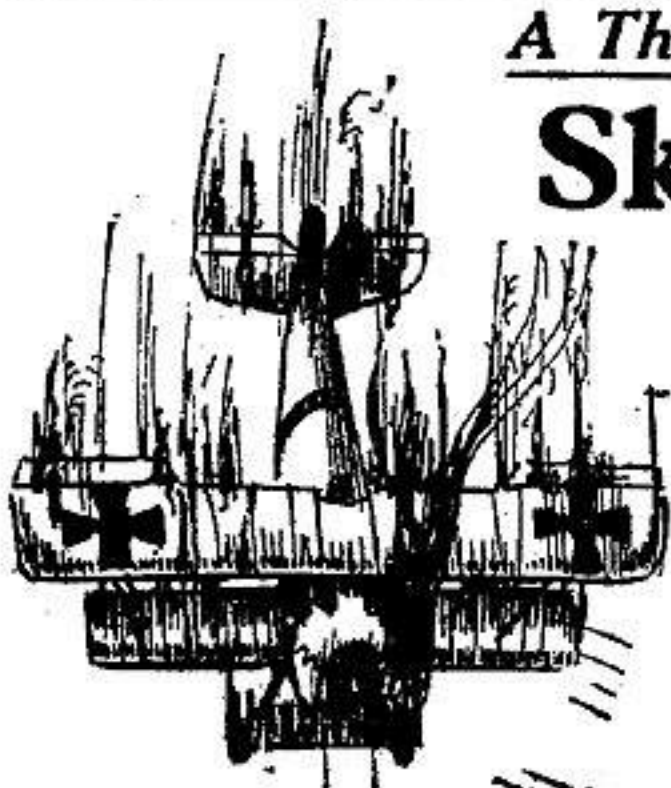
"You silly owl!"

"I don't see how he could howl, if he was hanged. It would stop his howling, I should think. But who was it?"

"Nobody, you silly chump!" shrieked Bunter. "I didn't say hanged! I said banged! Banged, you dummy!"

"Jolly rummy, if anybody's hanged at Greyfriars!" agreed Dutton. "But I

(Continued on page 8.)



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The Inseparables!

I FIRST met Alec James some seventeen years ago, when I entered the open door of his father's house in a village near Glasgow, and inadvertently witnessed the chastisement of a youngster of about eleven years of age. "What has he been up to?" I asked the parent. "Playin' fitba!" was the reply.

Like many other Scotsmen, Alec James' father did not appreciate the good qualities of football, nor the likelihood of such a game proving of physical value to his boy. But he had stern ideas of the duties of citizenship, and particularly of Alec's duty to attend school instead of playing truant in order to play football with another young "ruffian" who was not too fond of lessons.

About a year later I was looking on at a match in which Alec's school—Belshill Academy—was opposed to another seat of learning. I saw young James, who was very small for his age, do some wonderfully tricky work, and I recognised the goalkeeper as the "other young ruffian."

The Belshill Academy defence was not troubled to any extent, and, without any invitation, this individual rushed from his citadel and began to operate at centre-forward. He played splendidly for so diminutive a boy, scored six goals, and at the end of the game informed me that his name was—Hugh Gallacher, who now plays for Chelsea.

On the next occasion of my meeting the inseparables—for such were Alec James and Hugh Gallacher—they were kicking a ball about on a piece of land about a mile from their homes and at a time when they should have been at school.

"I'm afraid I'll have to tell your headmaster!" were the last words of my very insincere admonishment. Alec laughed, but Hugh's face wore a serious expression, and then I found out that the former was merely a truant on the last of his schooldays, while the latter had to return to his studies for at least another term!

Another football season came along, and I often went to witness the matches of Belshill Athletic, which had turned out some very fine players. Alec and Hugh Gallacher used to follow the fortunes of this club, and were ever begging for a chance to play, but it was the general opinion that they were too small to try conclusions with the hefty opponents; and so they became the recognised "baggage-men," carrying between them the large hamper which contained the knickers, jerseys, boots and stockings of the team.

"Sign, Please!"

ON leaving school James became a checking clerk at a steel works, and after playing for Orbiston Celtic, later joined Ashfield, one of the most powerful junior sides in Scotland, and so began his steady climb to fame. His season with Ashfield was a triumph, and I remember his being chosen for the Scottish Junior League Eleven to oppose Midlothian. His performance was watched by more than one famous manager, and at the end of this match Alec had promised to play a trial game for Motherwell against Ayr United Reserves.

I went to see this match, but James did not do himself justice. The crowd was unruly, and there was a free fight at the end of the game.

However, he was asked to play in another trial on the following Saturday, and on that day was packing his bag before setting off for the railway station when a telegram was thrust in his hand. It was from the secretary of the Ashfield team, and ran:

"Meet me at Central Station, Glasgow, noon."

When Alec arrived I, with two directors of Raith Rovers, met him, and the result of a short conference was his appearance in a Rovers' jersey and knickers at Ibrox Park that afternoon against the Glasgow Rangers team. The crowd roared with laughter when Alec appeared! He was

very small, and the big stock jersey made him look diminutive; but he played a great game. With the beginning of the season 1922-23 he may be said to have commenced his great career.

The name of Alec James began to quicken the heartbeats of many English directors, and among those who wanted his signature were Newcastle, Preston North End, and Leicester City, but Raith Rovers would not listen to the offers that were made. Then on a certain Saturday a representative from Preston came to see another player who could have been transferred, but the Preston man's eyes could not leave Alec James, who played marvellously. At the end of the game he took train back to consult his directors about a big and final bid, returning by motor-car on the Monday.

On that Monday Alec James was enjoying himself in Edinburgh, winding up with a theatre show. He caught the last train, arriving at midnight at Kirkcaldy Station, where the Raith Rovers' manager, Logan, collared him and rushed him to a neighbouring hotel to talk things over. The transfer was arranged at two-thirty in the morning, and immediately James had appended his signature he was asked to play for Preston that day.

Delightful to Watch!

FROM then until January of last year Alec played for the once famous North End team—the Invincibles—and I never saw any forward do such brilliant work. Much has been written about the beautiful tactics of a Scottish forward when at his best, and I can only say that Alec James' work is delightful to watch at all times.

Only financial difficulties of Preston brought about Alec's transfer to the Arsenal, for I do know that as early as the end of season 1927-28, Mr. Herbert Chapman wanted him, and that not until January, 1929, did the Preston secretary write:

"We are now prepared to consider an offer for Alec James."

I have seen James in Scottish junior football, and in every grade there is, right up to that of Scotland v. England, and, to me, he appears to be the same dapper, unassuming little chap as he was when he used to play truant from school. A clean-living, healthy young fellow, ever ready to play a joke, and ever eager to help a chum.

I went to Highbury on one occasion, and called at the Arsenal's headquarters where Alec awaited me. We walked to an Underground railway station in the neighbourhood in order to get up to the West End. An old lady was at the booking-office, and, while fumbling at her purse to find the necessary coppers for her fare, was preventing others from getting their tickets.

"How much d'ye want from the lady?" asked Alec. "Sixpence!" said the booking clerk. Alec paid her sixpence, got our tickets, and we ran for the train. When we had settled ourselves, I twitted him about wasting money. "That wasn't Scottish!" I remarked. "What wasn't?" he said. "The action!" I replied. He looked at me with a smile as he said: "But neither was the sixpence!"

I remember one occasion well of James' kindness, when two youngsters, wearing school caps, stood in the vicinity of the entrance to the Arsenal ground. Alec and I passed quite near to them, and Alec asked: "Aren't you two boys going to see the football match?" "No, we can't very well," replied one of them, blushing furiously; "we've come to see the players go in."

Alec remembered the strength, or weakness, of a school-boy's pocket when he and Gallacher were youngsters together, and, as he took them to the turnstile, he asked: "Did you ever hear the joke of a Scotsman, his purse, and a moth?" The boy looked at the two-shilling piece which Alec had planted in his hand, and then blushing stammered: "Yes, sir; but—but—but it's a lie!"

A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 6.)

don't believe a word of it! You're always spinning some silly yarn."

"Oh crikey! Banged—not hanged! Nugent banged my head!" roared Bunter.

"Rot!" said Dutton. "Nugent's certainly not dead—I saw him go into his study for prep—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Peter.

"You can't take me in with a yarn like that, Bunter," said Dutton. "I know jolly well that Nugent's not hanged—"

"Banged!" yelled Bunter.

"Oh, banged!" said Dutton. "If you meant banged, why did you say hanged? Why don't you learn to speak distinctly, instead of mumbling the way you do! Well, who banged Nugent, if he's been banged at all?"

"He banged my napper—"

"What rot!" said Dutton. "As if Capper would bang Nugent! The Fourth Form beak knows better than to whop Remove men. Rubbish!"

"I tell you—"

"No need to yell—I'm not deaf!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, and he gave it up.

Tom Dutton gave a snort, and returned to prep.

There was silence in No. 7 Study, while two fellows worked and one fellow brooded over his wrongs.

"Toddy!" said Bunter at last.

Peter Todd tapped the inkpot.

"See that?" he asked.

"Eh? Yes! What about it?"

"You'll get it in your neck, if you jaw again!"

"Beast!"

Once more there was silence—which lasted till prep was over. Peter Todd put away his books, and yawned.

"Now, look here, Toddy," said Bunter. "I want you to be my second! I'm going to whop Nugent!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I've had my head banged, and I'm jolly well going to show that rotter that he can't bang my head!" said Bunter hotly. "Think I'm a fellow to stand it? Making out that a fellow scoffed his cake—"

"Well, you did scoff it, didn't you?"

"Oh, really, Toddy! Now, look here," said Bunter, "as my second you've got to take my challenge to Nugent! Fix up any time and place you like."

Peter Todd stared at his fat study-mate. Bunter seemed to be in deadly earnest. As he had said, the worm would turn. For the present, at least, Billy Bunter was bursting with valour and determination.

"Well, if you mean it—" said Peter.

"I'll jolly well show him!" said Bunter. "I'll make him sit up! Nugent can't fight you know! Look at the way that now man, Carlow, licked him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter. "Are you going to send him a challenge because you think he can't fight?"

"Eh? Oh! No!" said Bunter hastily. "Still, I can lick him! You've seen me box, Peter! You know what I'm like."

"Yes, rather! Like a performing elephant!"

"Oh, really, Toddy!"

"Or a demented walrus!"

"Beast!"

"But if you mean business, I'll take your challenge along to Nugent," said Peter cheerfully. "Leave it to me! I'll go and see him now, and fix it up."

"Good!" said Bunter.

Peter Todd left the study and strolled along to Study No. 1. He was grinning as he went. Bunter was not grinning, however. Bunter was frowning. Bunter had made up his fat mind. The worm will turn; and Bunter, having turned, meant business—for the present, at least.

A few minutes later a roar of laughter was heard from Study No. 1. Billy Bunter's reckless challenge did not seem to have caused alarm in that celebrated apartment.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter on the Warpath!

THE following morning there were smiling faces in the Greyfriars Remove.

Mr. Quelch, when he took his Form that morning, observed that the juniors were in a rather hilarious state, though he did not guess the reason. The Remove knew, though the Remove master did not, that a very fat worm had turned, and that Billy Bunter was on the warpath.

Bunter on the warpath struck the Lower Fourth as funny. That afternoon was a half-holiday, and the juniors were looking forward to a rather unusual entertainment. Bunter, the fighting-man, was a new Bunter, and all the Remove intended to see the scrap, when it came off—if it came off! There was a considerable amount of "if" about it, in most opinions. To send a fellow a challenge in the evening was one thing, and to stand by it the following day was another. The first was easy to Bunter—the second he was likely to find rather more difficult. But mischievous fellows, unwilling to lose the fun, egged Bunter on, hoping to see him come up to the scratch.

Skinner assured him, with great solemnity, that he was bound to pull it off. The Bounder offered three to one in doughnuts on Bunter. It was worth three doughnuts, in Smithy's opinion, to see the fun. Bolsover major told him

that Nugent was funking it—Snoop informed him that Nugent was looking awfully worried—Stott told him that Nugent was planning to clear off for the afternoon and pretend to forget the appointment—Fisher T. Fish declared that when Bunter got going with the gloves on he guessed and calculated that it would be a sight for sore eyes.

Bunter, perhaps, was already suffer-

ing from doubts. But all this encouragement bucked him.

He could see for himself that Frank Nugent was not looking so bright as usual. He was not aware that Frank was worried about his minor—Billy Bunter had a minor in the Second Form, and certainly he never worried about Sammy. Blinking at Nugent, even the Owl of the Remove could see that Frank looked troubled and a little downcast. This was distinctly encouraging.

"It's cold feet, you know!" Skinner told him.

And Bunter was only too glad to believe that it was.

If Nugent was afraid of Bunter, certainly Bunter wasn't going to be afraid of Nugent! When there was no danger, Bunter was as brave as a lion.

In joyous anticipation of the terrific combat that was to come off that afternoon, the Remove fellows were all smiling. But Mr. Quelch soon reduced his Form to gravity—Quelch and irregular verbs would have reduced a High Court judge to seriousness.

Bunter especially suffered from Quelch that morning. Between the banging of his bullet head, and his plans for avenging that indignity, Bunter had had neither time nor inclination for prep; and it was just his luck to be called on to construe. His "con" was a little wilder than usual; and he was rewarded with the acid edge of Quelch's tongue and a hundred lines. But he cheered up in break, when an unaccustomed number of fellows gathered round him going into the quad.

Billy Bunter's society was not usually sought after to any great extent; now quite a number of fellows were palling on to Bunter. And every one of them was telling him that he had a walk-over to expect that afternoon, and that they were going to stand round and cheer his victory. The victory itself was a foregone conclusion.

"If Bunter gets in just one punch, with his weight behind it—" said Skinner.

"That means a hospital case!" said the Bounder.

"Poor old Nugent!" sighed Snoop. "He's not a bad chap really, and I'm sorry for him. Still, he's asked for this."

"He jolly well did!" said Bunter. "Banging a chap's head, you know, and making out that a chap scoffed his cake! As if I'd touch a fellow's cake, you know! And I never finished it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wouldn't accept an apology, if I were you!" said Bolsover major, shaking his head.

"I jolly well won't!" declared Bunter.

"The fact is, it's time that set of ticks were taken down a peg or two," said Skinner, closing the eye that was farthest from Bunter. "Whipping one of them will put them in their place a bit!"

"Yes, rather!"

"And Bunter's the man to do it!" said Vernon-Smith solemnly.

"Oh, no doubt about that—Bunter's the man to do it! After he's licked Nugent—"

"After—oh, my hat!" murmured Snoop.

"Shut up, Snoop! After he's licked Nugent, I think he ought to give the others a turn. Wharton wants taking down a peg!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And Cherry—Cherry fancies himself with the gloves on, but he's not in the same street with Bunter!"

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"Nowhere near it!" said the Bounder.

Billy Bunter smirked.

He rose to this like a fat gudgeon.

Evidently, it was impossible to lay it on too thick for the Owl of the Remove.

"Well, I fancy I can use my hands a bit," he remarked. "I fancy I know something about boxing!"

"What a fertile fancy!" murmured Snoop.

"And pluck will tell!" added Bunter. "That's where I come in—pluck's really the thing!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Shut up, Snoop! We all know how plucky Bunter is!" said Skinner. "Look here, you men, we'd better keep an eye on Nugent this afternoon, and see that he doesn't dodge it!"

"What-ho!"

"We'll jolly well bring him up to the scratch!" declared the Bounder. "He's asked for it, and he's going to get it!"

Billy Bunter, that morning, had been smitten by doubts. But his doubts were all gone again now. Under all this flattery and encouragement, he swelled visibly.

When the Remove came in after break, Bunter and his many friends came on the Famous Five in the Form-room passage. Bunter turned his spectacles on Frank Nugent with a contemptuous blink. Frank's face was very thoughtful and, indeed, worried. He had seen his minor in break, and gathered that Dick's plans for "getting back" on Twigg were taking shape. The prospect of more trouble for the reckless young rascal worried Nugent considerably. Certainly he was not worried about Bunter. But the fat and fatuous Owl drew his own conclusions.

"Cold feet, what!" jeered Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" boomed Bob Cherry. "Made up your mind to be burst this afternoon, Fatty?"

"The burstfulness will be terrific!"

Bunter's fat lip curled.

"I don't want any cheek from you fellows!" he said scornfully. "After I've licked Nugent—"

"After!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Yes, after, I'm going to give the rest of you a turn. It will put you in your place," said Bunter. "You want taking down a peg or two, Wharton?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And Bob Cherry fancies himself with the gloves on, but he's not in the same street with me!"

"Phew!"

"And I can jolly well tell you, Nugent, that I won't accept an apology, and you jolly well won't be allowed to dodge away this afternoon."

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter rolled on, happy and glorious. The Famous Five stared after him.



"I'm jolly well going to make old Twigg fairly cringe," said Dicky Nugent. "I'm going to put gum in his slippers and rats in his hat-box!" "Nugent minor!" It was the stern voice of Mr. Twigg, who was coming up the path.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob. "Bunter's coming out! He's really going to turn up for a scrap, Franky! Mind you don't burst him all over Greyfriars!"

"Bother the fat idiot!" grunted Nugent. He was in no mood for Bunter's antics.

At dinner that day, Billy Bunter bestowed a defiant blink on Nugent—who did not even see him. After dinner, Bunter rolled out with the fellows who found a little harmless and necessary entertainment in pulling his fat leg. If any doubts crept into Bunter's podgy mind, he dismissed them again. He received unbounded encouragement on all sides. But towards three o'clock, the time fixed for the scrap, in spite of boundless encouragement, Billy Bunter was conscious of a peculiar sort of sinking feeling in his fat inside. His courage, which had been screwed up to the sticking-point, seemed to be coming unstuck, as it were.

"I—I say, you fellows," he remarked to his encouraging friends, "I say, I—I rather think—"

"You think it's time we got along," said Skinner. "Quite! Come on!"

"Nunno! I—I rather think—"

"Jolly near time," said the Bounder. "I dare say Nugent's on the spot already. Come on, Bunter!"

"I—I was thinking, I—I might let him off—"

"This way!" said Skinner, unheeding. He linked his arm in Bunter's. Bolsover major linked on to the other fat arm. Six or seven fellows followed, all round Bunter. The fat Owl was conscious of an intensification of that sinking feeling. The meeting had been arranged behind the woodshed—a quiet and secluded spot. The nearer Billy

Bunter approached the woodshed, the less he seemed to like the vicinity.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he stammered.

But there was no escape for Bunter. Skinner & Co. had not wasted their time on him for nothing. Bunter was going to be led up to the scratch. Peter Todd joined the party, with a towel over his arm. Toddy was Bunter's second, though he really did not expect to have a lot of seconding to do.

Several fellows had already gathered in the space behind the woodshed. Bunter gasped with relief as he saw that Nugent and his friends were not among them.

"Hallo, Nugent's in no hurry!" grinned Skinner.

Bunter brightened up.

"Cold feet, of course!" said the Bounder.

Bunter grinned.

"If he doesn't turn up, I'll jolly well go to look for him!" he said. "He's not getting out of this, I can tell you!"

Three o'clock chimed out from the tower. Four juniors came sprinting round the woodshed, Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh. Bunter quaked again.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Nugent here?" called out Bob.

Again Bunter revived. Nugent had not come with his friends.

"No!" answered Skinner. "Where is he?"

"Blessed if I know—expected to find him here!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm not going to wait for a measly funk that daren't

turn up!" hooted Bunter. "I say, I'll jolly well go and root him out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bravo, Bunter!"

"You silly owl!" said Harry Wharton. "Nugent will be along in a minute—unless he's forgotten—"

"Jolly convenient to forget!" sneered Bunter.

"Where the dickens can he be?" exclaimed Bolsover major. Only Bunter supposed that it might be funk that was keeping Nugent away.

"Oh, he's coming!" said Bob.

But Frank Nugent did not come. Minute followed minute; the quarter sounded from the clock-tower. The fellows who had gathered to see the entertainment were getting impatient. As for Billy Bunter, he had forgotten all doubts and misgivings now. Nugent had not arrived for the scrap, and to Bunter's fat mind that meant only one thing—Nugent was afraid to turn up! Bunter was bursting with valour and ferocity. And as minute still followed minute and Nugent did not appear, Bunter's valour grew and grew.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Heavy Hand!

"HIDE it, quick!"

That startled whisper fell on Frank Nugent's ears as he pushed open the door of the Second Form room. And the voice that whispered was that of Nugent minor.

Since dinner, Frank had been looking for his minor, but he had not found him. Hence his visit to the Second Form room, where the fags sometimes gathered after classes. Nugent was anxious and disturbed about his young brother, and that whisper, as he entered the fag Form-room, showed that his anxiety was not without cause.

He stepped in quickly.

There were three fags in the room—Nugent minor, and his chums, Gatty and Myers. They all turned startled and flushed faces towards the door as it opened, and fairly gasped with relief at the sight of a junior. Obviously they had feared to see someone more formidable.

"Oh, you!" said Dicky Nugent. "You made me jump, you ass! I thought it was old Twigg! What the thump do you want?"

"We don't want Remove ticks butting into our Form-room, Nugent major!" said Gatty.

"Hook it!" suggested Myers.

Frank did not heed. He came towards the three fags. Something evidently had been hidden as the door opened; Dicky's whisper could have meant nothing else. And the three fags stood close by a desk, as if to screen something from view behind them.

"What are you up to?" asked Frank quietly.

"Find out!" suggested Dicky.

"Look here, kid—"

"Can't they mind their own business in the Remove?" asked Gatty, addressing space.

"Dicky! You're playing the fool!" said Frank earnestly. "If you're fixing up some silly trick on Twigg—"

"Mind your own bizney!"

"It's my business to keep you from getting a flogging, and perhaps the sack, you young ass! What have you got there?"

"Find out!"

Frank set his lips hard. He took Gatty and Myers by their collars, one in

either hand, and spun them away from the desk.

Then he saw what they had been hiding.

Under the desk was a large, thick paper bag. It was almost full of soot. There were sooty traces on the hands and clothes of the three fags, as Nugent had already noticed. Evidently the three young rascals had been scraping soot from the Form-room chimney and packing it in the bag. Frank hardly needed to ask what it was for. He could guess easily enough that it was part of a scheme for "getting back" on Twigg.

"You awful little idiot!" he ejaculated.

Dicky gave him a glare of defiance. Gatty and Myers breathed vengeance.

"You cheeky Remove cad!" gasped Gatty.

"Kick him out!" said Myers.

I'VE HAD TO SMILE, SO MUST YOU

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Farmer: "Oh, no; you'll keep the birds off better'n any scarecrow!"

Send in a ribtickler as good as the above and you'll be a prizewinner!

Frank looked round at the two fags. The glint in his eyes caused them to back away rather hastily. Nugent major was plainly not in his usual good temper.

"Shut up, you little ticks!" said Frank gruffly. "For two pins I'd bang your silly heads on this desk. What are you helping my brother to land himself in trouble for?"

"You get out of this Form-room, Frank!" hooted Nugent minor. "Can't you mind your own bizney? Who's asking you to butt in?"

"What are you going to do with that soot?"

"Find out!" said Dicky, for the third time.

"If you mean it for Twigg—"

"No bizney of yours!"

"You utter young ass! It would be a flogging or the sack. They would call it assaulting a Form master!" exclaimed Frank, aghast. "Haven't you any sense at all, you young idiot?"

He glared at Gatty and Myers.

"You young rotters! I suppose you've put my minor up to this."

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Gatty, with thrilling indignation. "He's fairly ragged us into helping him, hasn't he, Myers?"

"He jolly well has!" snorted Myers. "And I can jolly well tell him that if his major is going to butt in, I'm jolly well fed-up, and I'm jolly well going to chuck it, so there!"

"Same here!" said Gatty. "I told you it wasn't safe, Nugent ini, and now your major knows, you can see it for yourself. I'm off! Come on, Myers!"

"Look here, you men, hold on!" exclaimed Dicky.

But the "men" did not hold on. They marched out of the Form-room, probably not sorry to be clear of such a perilous enterprise, and rather glad of Nugent's arrival as an excuse for "chucking" it.

The Form-room door banged after them. Richard Nugent gave his elder brother a glare of concentrated wrath.

"Now you've done it, you dummy!" he snapped. "Now they won't help me! Well, I'm jolly well going ahead, all the same. See?"

"Dicky, don't be a fool! You can't mean—"

"I'll tell you just what I mean," said Dicky savagely, "and you jolly well stop me if you can. I'm going to mop that bag of soot over old Twigg, and make him jolly well sit up, see?"

"It means a flogging—"

Dicky laughed scornfully.

"Think I'm going to tell old Twigg I did it?" he sneered. "I'm going to get him in the quad after dark. It's dark early enough, and jolly misty, and the old ass won't know who did it. I've got it all cut and dried, and you're jolly well not going to stop me, you silly ass! Old Twigg's gone out this afternoon. I heard him tell Prout that he would be back to tea in Common-room. See? Well, he will come in by masters' gate, and the path will be as dark as anything by that time, and I shall be behind a tree—"

"Dicky!"

"And he won't know anything's going to happen till he gets that bag of soot over his napper," said Dicky vengefully. "Then p'r'aps he'll be sorry for whopping a man twice in one day. I'm only sorry I shan't be able to tell him who sooted him."

Frank stared blankly at his minor. Richard Nugent, as he had said, had it all cut and dried, with an absolutely reckless disregard of the possible consequences.

"You can't do it, Dicky!" gasped Frank.

"Can't I?" jeered Dicky. "You'll see!"

"Can't you see, you young ass, that there'll be a fearful row?" exclaimed Frank. "Twigg will raise Cain, the Head will take it up. They'll be rooting all over Greyfriars for a fellow who's assaulted a Form master. They'll never let it drop till they've got the man—"

"Rats!"

"Dicky! For goodness' sake—"

pleaded Frank.

"Mind your own bizney!"

Frank Nugent breathed hard. His minor was angry and defiant, and had no intention whatever of abandoning his reckless scheme of vengeance on Mr. Twigg. That was clear.

"You can't do it, Dicky, and you shan't!" said Frank. "They expect me, at home, to keep an eye on you, and keep you out of trouble. I've got to look after you—"

"Fat lot of good you do, don't you?" jeered Dicky. "It was you got me into the row with Twigg."

Nugent winced. The fag had taken

ruthless advantage of his yielding good nature, and Frank had had a severe licking for it. And this was Dicky's gratitude!

"Better mind your own bizney, and leave me alone," said Nugent minor. "Get out of this Form-room, and keep your distance, and don't bother a man. See?"

"You're not going to mop that soot over Twigg, Dicky!" said Nugent, in a low, determined voice.

"Who's going to stop me?" sneered Dicky. "I am, you young sweep! I'm going to take that bag of soot away and put it where it will be safe."

Nugent stooped and picked the bag out from under the desk.

His brother stared at him in angry amazement. He had never dreamed that Frank would go beyond argument and pleading. He was quite unaccustomed to the heavy hand. He seemed almost unable to believe his eyes, as Frank took possession of the bag of soot.

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Dicky, as Frank turned towards the door. "Put that bag down, you cheeky rotter! By gum, if you try to take that soot away, I'll—I'll jolly well hack your shins, you rotten bully!"

Nugent coloured at the epithet, but he walked across to the door without reply.

The fag rushed after him and caught him by the arm. His face was crimson with rage.

"Put that bag down, I tell you!"

"Hands off, you young ass!"

"Will you put that bag down?" yelled Dicky.

"No!" snapped Nugent.

"Then I'll jolly well make you!"

The fag grasped at the bag of soot. Nugent held it out of his reach and grasped his collar with the other hand. His temper was rising, which was rather natural in the circumstances.

Dicky, enraged at being held at arm's length, kicked. His major gave a sudden yelp.

The next moment Nugent jerked the struggling fag to a desk, and there was a loud rap as Dicky's head was knocked on it.

"Ow! Oh crumbs! Yow-ow! Oh!" roared Dicky, in anguish and rage.

"There, you young sweep!" panted Frank. "That's a tip!"

"Ow! You bully! Oh crumbs! Lot go!" shrieked Dicky.

Nugent spun him away, and he sat down on the floor with a bump. He sat there and stared blankly, gasping, enraged, but more amazed than enraged. Nugent in this mood was a surprise for his hopeful minor.

"Now, say another word, you young rascal, and I'll give you the licking of your life!" said Nugent in concentrated tones. "You've asked for it often enough! Now, say another word, and you get it!"

Dicky stared at him, dumb.

Frank Nugent walked out of the Form-room, the bag of soot in his hand. Still there was no word from his minor. Richard Nugent seemed too astounded to speak.

Frank hurried away.

He was anxious not to be seen with his peculiar burden. Fortunately, the House was almost deserted on a half-holiday. He arrived rather breathlessly in the Remove passage and hurried into Study No. 1. The soot had to be got rid of somehow, but for the present it was safe in his study. He dropped it into the fender.

"The young ass!" breathed Frank. "Thank goodness I found out what he was up to! But—"

His brow clouded. He had intervened effectually, so far as Dicky's preparations for the rag on Twigg were concerned. But it was quite probable that the wilful, reckless fag might still go ahead, if only to show his independence. Nugent wondered uneasily what Dicky might do, half-inclined to go back to the Form-room and give him the promised licking. In that worried and troubled frame of mind it was not surprising that he quite forgot his appointment with the warlike Owl of the Remove.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Some Scrap!

"I SAY, you fellows—"
 "Where on earth's Nugent?"
 "I say, he's funking!"
 "Fathead!"

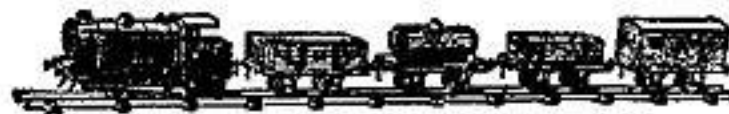
Billy Bunter sneered.
 "Well, if he's not funking it, why isn't he here?" he demanded. "I jolly well knew he was going to funk."
 "Blessed if it doesn't look like it!" grinned the Bounder.
 "Oh, don't be an ass, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton.
 "Well, why doesn't he come?"

(Continued on next page.)

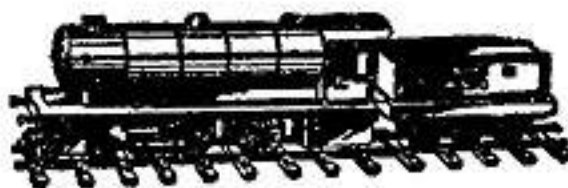
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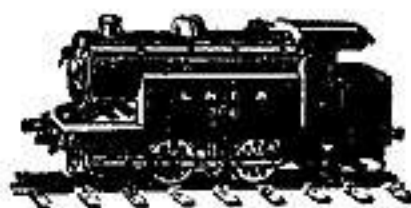
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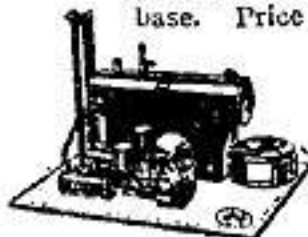


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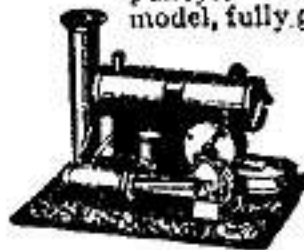


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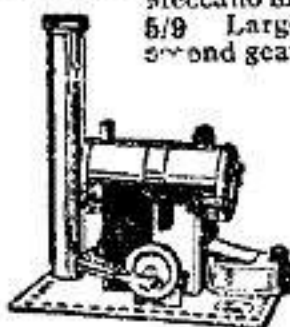


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"My hat!" said Peter Todd. "If it were possible for anybody to be afraid of Bunter, I should really think—"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"I dare say Nugent's forgotten all about the fat idiot!" said Bob Cherry. "It's only a jape, anyhow."

"Is it?" roared Bunter. "I'll jolly well show that funk whether it's a jape! Jolly convenient to forget! Skinner said all along that he would funk it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, I can jolly well tell you that Nugent isn't crawling out of it like this! I'm going to look for him! I'm going to root him out!"

Billy Bunter was not only as brave as a lion now, but as ferocious as a tiger. If his adversary was afraid to turn up, that was all Bunter needed to inspire him with a courage and ferocity that lions and tigers might have envied. All doubts were dismissed now. The sinking feeling had quite vanished from his fat inside. Bunter was burning for the fray.

"I'm going after him!" he declared. "I'm not waiting any longer! You fellows come and see him licked!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo, Bunter!"

A hilarious crowd followed Bunter as he rolled away towards the House. What would happen when he found Nugent was rather entertaining to anticipate, for it was scarcely possible that Nugent, or anybody else, could have funk'd a combat with the egregious Owl. It was probable that Bunter's fierce valour would ooze away at his fat finger-ends. But for the present, at least, Bunter was breathing wrath and destruction.

Quite an army of fellows arrived in the Remove passage. Skinner flung open the door of Study No. 1.

"You here, Nugent?" he shouted.

"Eh—what?" Nugent was there, and he stared at Skinner and the crowd behind him in surprise. "What the thump—"

"I say, you fellows, I knew he was hiding there! He, he, he! I've jolly well rooted you out, you funk!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the study. Five or six juniors followed him in; the rest packed the doorway in a grinning crowd.

Frank Nugent uttered an impatient exclamation.

"Get out, you fat fool!" he snapped.

"Likely!" jeered Bunter.

"Why the thump didn't you turn up at the woodshed, Franky?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"I forgot! I had something else to think of!" snapped Nugent.

"Funk!" roared Bunter.

"You fat chump!"

"Yah! Funk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter! Give him beans!"

"Watch the walrus on the warpath! Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton looked rather curiously at his chum. It was easy to see that Nugent was troubled and in no humour for fooling. But Billy Bunter was not to be denied.

So long as the other party was afraid, Bunter wasn't, and he was still convinced that the other party was afraid. Why had Nugent failed to keep the appointment behind the woodshed? And why was he looking so worried, if not because he was funky? It was all perfectly clear—to Bunter!

The Owl of the Remove brandished his fat fists and pranced up to Nugent.

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Nugent backed away from him, frowning.

"You fat idiot!" he snapped. "Don't play the goat!"

"Yah! Funk!"

Nugent burst into an angry laugh.

"Come on!" roared Bunter.

"Get on with it!" chuckled Peter Todd. "My man's ready, bursting with pluck! I won't guarantee it to last—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Toddy, you beast—"

"But he's raging for gore just at present!" said Peter. "Get on with it, Nugent! Here's the gloves!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Nugent.

"Run away, Bunter, you fat ass!"

"Yah! Funk!"

Bunter pranced after Nugent and plunged at him. His fat fists came whacking out—a terrific drive with Bunter's right, with all his weight behind it—and Bunter's weight was very considerable.

Had that terrific drive landed, there was no doubt that Frank Nugent would have been damaged.

But it did not land. Nugent side-stepped quickly, and the fat Owl went plunging past him.

Carried away by the force of the blow which met with no resistance, Bunter plunged on, stumbled, and landed on his fat knees with a bump.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"Man down!" roared the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows, I—I slipped! That funk dodged me! I say—"

Peter Todd grasped the fat Owl and helped him up. Bunter turned on Nugent, with an absolutely ferocious glare behind his spectacles.

"Now, you rotten funk!" he spluttered.

"Go it, Bunter!"

Bunter went it. He charged at Nugent like an excited hippopotamus. This time Nugent did not step aside. He was grinning now. Billy Bunter's remarkable exploits as a fighting man seemed to have had a cheering and enlivening effect on him.

He reached out, and took Billy Bunter's little fat nose between a finger and thumb.

Bunter hit out wildly.

But with a finger and thumb grasping his nose like a vice, Nugent held him at arm's length, the fat junior could not reach him.

"Groooogh!" spluttered Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ooooh! Led do by dose!" gurgled the fat junior. "Ow! Beast! Led do by dose! Wow!"

"Break away!" yelled Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oooogh! Will you led do by dose!" gurgled Bunter. "Dragimoff, you fellows! 'Tain't fair! Ow! By dose—by dose! Oooogh!"

The Removites shrieked. Bunter the fighting-man was undoubtedly entertaining.

"Had enough?" grinned Nugent.

"Ooogh! Groooogh! Funk!" gurgled Bunter. "Ooogh! Lemme gerrat you! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter jerked his nose away at last. Like Marian's in the ballad, it was red and raw.

"Oh crikey! Ow! Now, you rotter, you're for it!" roared Bunter; and he charged.

Bump!

It was only a gentle tap on a fat chest, but it was enough for Bunter. He sat down, with a bump that shook the study.

"Man down!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Ow! Wow! Wow! Keep off! I say, you fellows, keep him off! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Pile in, Bunter!"

Peter Todd dragged his principal up. But Billy Bunter was no longer burning for the fray.

All his courage, all his ferocity, had departed from him. It dawned on his fat brain that Nugent was not, after all, funking. He realised that there was going to be a licking, but that Nugent was not going to receive it. And a licking was undubitably one of those things which it is more blessed to give than to receive.

"I say, Peter—leggo! I say, I'm finished—I—I'm going to let him off—I say—"

"Go it, Bunter!"

Peter spun the fat Owl towards Nugent. Nugent, grinning, gave him another tap. Bunter sat down again. This time he rolled over.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter! Time!"

"I—I say, I—I'm knocked out!" gasped Bunter. "Count me out, you beast! I—I can't gerrup! C-c-count me out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Up you get!" chuckled Peter.

"Ow! Leggo! I can't get up! Leave me alone!" yelled Bunter. "I say, I give you best, Nugent! Oh dear!"

"Not really?" chuckled Nugent.

"Yes, old chap, really! Toddy, you beast, leggo my collar! I—I'm not going to scrap with an old pal like Franky, to please you, you beast! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows," said Peter Todd, "the fight's over. It was some fight—"

"The somefulness was terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites, howling with laughter, streamed away. Billy Bunter sat up and blinked after them. Frank Nugent had gone with his friends to join them at games practice. William George Bunter was left alone in his glory.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Oh dear! Beast! Oh crikey! I—I wish I hadn't challenged the beast now! I'd have called it off, only I thought he was funk-ing! Oh dear! Ow!"

Billy Bunter staggered to the arm-chair and collapsed in it. He needed a rest after his warlike exertions. Most of the fellows had gone down to games practice; but there were some in the passage, and Bunter could hear the sound of laughter. It was not a pleasing sound to his fat ears. His fat ears burned.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter. "Bang-ing a fellow's head—and pulling a fellow's nose! I'll jolly well make him sit up—somehow! I'm not going to lick him! I—I don't think I'll lick the rotter! But I'll jolly well make him sit up somehow!"

The fat Owl was feeling vengeful. But he was no longer feeling warlike. Billy Bunter had had enough of going on the warpath.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Done in the Dark!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came off the football ground in a ruddy and cheery crowd. Frank Nugent was looking as cheery as his comrades. Games practice had banished his worries from his mind, and for a time he had forgotten Dicky of the Second and all his works.

The early winter dusk was falling

When the chums of the Remove, after changing, came up to the studies.

"Tea in my study, you men!" called out Bob Cherry; and he went tramping up the Remove passage with a tramp that made the old oaken planks echo.

"Right-ho!" called back Wharton, and he followed Frank into Study No. 1.

Nugent had uttered a sharp exclamation.

"Anything up, old man?" asked Harry.

Frank was staring into the fender, where he had left Dicky's bag of soot. The bag was gone. A few traces of the soot remained on the fender, and that was all.

Nugent set his lips hard.

He had wondered, and doubted, whether Dicky had given up his scheme of "getting back" on Twigg. It seemed pretty clear now that he had not. The bag of soot had been taken away, and Nugent did not doubt that it was the fag who had taken it.

Without answering Wharton's question, he crossed to the window and stared out into the darkening quad.

According to what Dicky had told him, Mr. Twigg was to be back for tea at the usual time with the masters in Common-room. That was not yet—there was still time to intervene.

The only thought in Frank's mind was to chip in before it was too late, and save the reckless fag from his own folly.

Wharton looked at him in surprise.

"What's up, Frank?" he asked.

"Oh! N-nothing!" Nugent stammered.

"I mean—I—I'm"—he coloured—"I'm rather bothered about my minor."

"Oh!"

"I know you're fed-up with the subject—"

"Not at all, old chap!" said Wharton, as sincerely as he could. "But what's the trouble now?"

"I don't know that there's any trouble; I hope not. Anyhow, you get along to Bob's study, and don't wait for me."

"All serene!"

Wharton hesitated a moment; but it was clear that Nugent did not want him, and he left the study and went up the passage to Study No. 13. He could not help his chum in dealing with Dicky, unless kicking the troublesome fag would have helped, in which case the captain of the Remove would have been very pleased to lend his aid.

Nugent remained for a few minutes in the study in troubled thought. It seemed clear to his mind that Dicky Nugent was planning to carry out his hare-brained scheme; nobody else, so far as Frank could see, was likely to have taken away the bag of soot. He left the study at last, and went down the Remove staircase.

In the falling dusk fellows were coming into the House. Nugent, with as careless an air as he could assume,



"What game are you kids up to?" asked Nugent, taking Gatty and Myers by their collars, and spinning them away from the desk. Then his eyes fell on the bag of soot the fags had been screening.

strolled out into the quad. A mist was rolling in from the sea, dim and damp and chilly. Peter Todd loomed up through the dusky mist, and Nugent called to him.

"Toddy, seen my minor?"

"Haven't had that pleasure!" answered Peter, with rather a curious look at Frank's clouded face. "I fancy he'll be in the Second Form room, if you want him."

"Eh? Why?"

"I heard a row going on there," explained Peter.

"You silly ass!"

Nugent walked on, leaving Peter grinning. If Dicky was intending to carry out his scheme, he would be somewhere near the master's gate, and Frank went in that direction. Peter looked after him rather curiously as he disappeared in the mist.

"I say, Toddy—"

Billy Bunter loomed up.

"Hallo, Fatty!" said Peter.

"Was that Nugent speaking to you?" asked Bunter.

"Yes!"

"Where's he gone?"

Peter chuckled.

"Looking for another scrap?" he asked. "Better give Nugent a miss, Fatty! He doesn't look good-tempered."

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"What have you got there?" asked Peter, staring at the fat junior. Bunter had one hand behind him, and appeared to be holding something out of sight.

"Eh? Nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "Nothing at all, old chap! Don't you be so jolly inquisitive, Peter!"

Billy Bunter backed away into the mist, still keeping his hand behind him. Peter stared at him for a moment, and then went on to the House.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

And he rolled away in the direction taken by Frank Nugent.

The dusk was deepening and the mist was thickening. Dimly through the gloom, the lighted windows shone.

Billy Bunter blinked round him through his big spectacles in search of Nugent.

There was a grin on his fat face.

In his hand was a large, thick paper bag, and the bag was full of soot. It was not Richard Nugent of the Second Form who had taken that bag from Study No. 1. It was William George Bunter of the Remove.

Billy Bunter was no longer on the warpath, but he was still on the trail of vengeance.

Brooding over his many wrongs in Study No. 1, the fat Owl had observed the bag of soot in the fender, and it had put the idea into his podgy brain. Why it was there, how it had come there, Bunter did not know, and did not care. But he knew that he was going to "mop" it over Nugent, if he could do so without danger to his fat and fatuous self.

His first idea had been to fix up a booby-trap with the soot, but there were difficulties in the way of that scheme, and when Nugent left the House, in the falling darkness, it seemed to William George Bunter that Fate was playing into his fat hands.

Nugent, undoubtedly, would be sorry for his sins if he got that bag of soot on his napper! Bunter chuckled at the idea.

But "safety first" was an important consideration.

Bunter did not want to be licked, and he did not want to be kicked. Very much indeed he did not want that.

But Nugent was fairly asking for it

(Continued on page 16.)

A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!



(Continued from page 13.)

now. In the dusk and the mist, it was as easy as falling off a form. He would get the bag of soot, and he would not know who had buzzed it at him. Once Bunter spotted him, it was all plain sailing.

Still, there were difficulties. The dusk and mist which were to prevent Nugent from spotting Bunter, also prevented Bunter from spotting Nugent. He blinked round for him in vain.

"Beast!" breathed Bunter. From the shadows, in the direction of the school wall, a voice came from someone unseen, the voice of Frank Nugent. He was calling.

"Dicky!" Bunter started. It was Nugent's voice, and he was calling to his minor! Really, Nugent was not only asking for it, he was begging for it. His voice guided Bunter through the thickening gloom!

"Dicky!" Nugent called again, a little farther off. Bunter realised that he was near the wall, under the trees near the private gate that was used by the masters when the school gates were closed.

Why Nugent was looking for his minor there, was a mystery to Billy Bunter. It was unlikely that the fag was out of the House at all, so far as Bunter could see, neither could he imagine any reason why the fag, if he was out of the House, should be anywhere near the masters' gate.

But all that did not matter to Bunter. Nugent's voice was guiding him, and that was all he cared about. He trod on cautiously.

Tall trees shadowed the path by the masters' gate. The branches were leafless, but they deepened the gloom of the thickening dusk and mist.

Bunter could not see a yard from his fat little nose.

Still, that was all the better for his purpose. He did not want to be seen when he came within "buzzing" distance of Nugent.

Cautiously, he crept along the path. He listened for Nugent to call again, but there came no call. Frank Nugent, seeking his minor in the deep shadows, had heard a click at the masters' gate, and he did not need telling that it was made by the key in the hand of Mr. Twigg. He did not call again, but anxiously, almost desperately, he sought for the fag in the deep gloom.

Bunter stopped and listened. "Beast!" he breathed. He could see nothing and hear nothing.

Unless Nugent called again, Bunter had no chance. And he did not call again.

Bunter's eyes glinted with wrath behind his big spectacles.

He stood in the middle of the path, listening, watching, blinking. Then

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footsteps sounded, directly in front of him.

Bunter suppressed a gasp. The beast was coming up the path—coming directly towards Bunter. He would be upon him in another moment.

Bunter backed hastily to the side of the path, the paper bag of soot clutched in his fat hands, his eyes gleaming through his spectacles.

A figure loomed up in the mist. Whiz! With all the force of two fat arms Bunter hurled the bag of soot.

Crash! Smash! It landed in a face, and burst. "Ooooooooooooooh!" came a horrible, suffocated splutter. "Ooooooooooh! Woooooh!"

Bunter ran.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Startling News!

"TROT in, old bean!" Bob Cherry called out cheerily, as the door-handle of Study No. 13 turned.

Tea was going on in No. 13. Wharton and Johnny Bull and Hurrge Singh were there, with Mark Linley and Bob and Little Wan Lung. Frank Nugent had not yet arrived, and as the door opened, the tea-party supposed that he had come—hence Bob's cheery welcome.

But it was not Nugent who looked in. A fat face and a big pair of spectacles glimmered in the doorway.

Bunter was grinning. "Certainly, old chap!" he answered. "Oh, my hat! I thought it was Nugent, fathead! Roll off!"

"If that's what you call good manners, Cherry, after asking a fellow into your study—"

Bob Cherry laughed. "I don't suppose Nugent will be coming in to tea," remarked Bunter, "I say, you fellows, those sosses look good! I'll have some!"

Bunter sat down in the chair that had been placed for Nugent.

"Pass the sosses, old chaps," he said, "and the toast! That all the toast you've got? Some of you make some more while I get on with this, what?"

"There won't be much left for Frank, if he doesn't come in soon," remarked Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he!" "What's the matter with the fat duffer?" asked Harry Wharton, staring at the Owl of the Remove.

"He, he, he! I rather think Nugent won't be coming in—yet!" said Bunter, "I fancy he will want a wash! Ho, he, he!"

"What on earth—"

"Never mind Nugent," said Bunter. "He asked for it—"

"Asked for what?" "Oh, nothing! I don't know anything about it, of course," said Bunter hastily.

"About what?" bawled Bob Cherry. "Nothing, old fellow! Pass the toast! I say, you fellows, aren't you going to make some more toast?"

"Why hasn't Nugent come in to tea, Wharton?" asked Johnny Bull. "I fancy he's gone looking for his minor," answered Harry. "I believe the young sweep is up to something."

"He, he, he!" "Have you seen Nugent, Bunter?" All the juniors stared at the Owl of the Remove. It was obvious that he was in secret possession of some merry jest, and that it was connected somehow with Nugent.

"Eh? Oh, no! Not at all! I

haven't been out in the quad," said Bunter.

Bunter realised the necessity for keeping the secret, though he had his own weird ways of keeping a secret.

"Is Nugent out in the quad?" asked Bob.

"Not that I know of. I wasn't looking for him, and I never saw him anywhere near masters' gate."

"What the thump would he be doing there?" asked Bob, in astonishment. "It's time all fellows were in the House."

"Has he come in, Bunter?" demanded Wharton.

"How should I know?" answered Bunter. "I haven't seen him, and I never went out to look for him—never asked Toddy which way he went, or anything. I know nothing whatever about him, and don't want to. I dare say he's gone to get a wash."

"Something's up with Nugent, and Bunter knows what it is," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

Bob Cherry stepped to the door, throw it open and put his head out into the passage. Several Removites were coming along to their studies from the stairs, but Frank Nugent was not to be seen among them.

"Smithy!" called out Bob. "Hallo, hallo, hallo, Smithy! Seen Nugent?"

"Yes; he's just gone into his study," answered the Bounder.

"Gone into his study!" repeated Bob blankly. "Has he forgotten we're tea-ing in my study to-day, the ass?"

Bob Cherry trotted along the Remove passage to Study No. 1. The door was closed, and he hurled it open and stared in.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You here, Franky? Why, what—what—what—My hat! What's the matter?"

Frank Nugent was there. He was standing by the table, his face white and set. Bob stared at him blankly and made a stride towards him. Something, it was very clear, was wrong with Nugent.

"Frank, old chap! What's the matter?"

"Nothing," muttered Nugent, with trembling lips.

"You look as if something was. Frank! Look here—"

"It—it's all right! There—there's going to be a row!" muttered Nugent huskily. "Don't say anything! For goodness' sake, don't let it get out that anybody in the Remove knows anything about it."

"But what's happened?" asked Bob, in alarm.

"Oh, never mind. Wait till you hear."

Bob looked at him. It was plain that Nugent had had a shock, and that he was in a state of deep alarm. What could have happened to cause it was a mystery.

"Well, come along to tea, old chap," said Bob, after a pause.

Nugent shook his head.

"I don't want any tea. I—I don't want the fellows to see me. They'd guess something was up. It's got to be kept dark."

"What on earth have you done?"

"Nothing, you ass!"

"Oh!" A light broke in on Bob's mind as he remembered what Wharton had said. "Your minor—"

Nugent gave a sort of convulsive start. In his agitation he grasped Bob by the arm.

"Not a word!" he said huskily.

"Don't be a rotter, Bob. I know you don't like Dicky, and I dare say you've got reason, but—but it might be the

sack for him if they thought— For goodness' sake, Bob, don't—"

"Of course I shan't say a word, you ass! Better stay here, perhaps—your chivvy would give you away to all the fellows. That young scoundrel—" Bob checked himself. "Pull yourself together, old man! If a beak saw you like that he would jump to it that you had something on your mind. You're as white as a sheet!"

Nugent nodded, and Bob Cherry left the study, carefully closing the door after him.

He went back to his own study with a clouded brow. Something—he could not guess what—had happened, and Frank was terrified for the result for his minor! That much seemed clear. More than once Bob had felt a deep desire to kick Nugent minor, and he had never felt it so keenly as now.

"Frank come in?" asked Wharton, as Bob came back into Study No. 13.

"Yes; he's not coming along to tea," answered Bob briefly.

"Why not?" asked Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he!" Bob did not answer the question, but Bunter answered in his place. "I fancy Nugent's feeling a bit out of sorts now. He, he, he!"

Bob gave him a startled look.

"Do you know anything about it, you fat duffer?" he demanded.

"Oh! No! Nothing!" answered Bunter. "I wasn't there, you know."

"You weren't where, idiot?"

"Anywhere—I mean nowhere. I say, you fellows, pass the sosses! Aren't there any more sosses? If this is what you call a spread, when you ask a fellow to tea—"

The study door opened, and Peter Todd looked in. There was a rather startled expression on Peter's face.

"You fellows heard?" he asked.

"Hoard what?"

"About Twigg."

"Twigg?" repeated the juniors.

Bob Cherry felt his heart sink. He guessed dimly the cause of Frank's trouble now. Something had happened to Twigg—Dicky Nugent's Form master! Only too well he remembered the fag's reckless words of the day before, which Mr. Twigg had caught, and which had earned him his second "whopping."

"What's happened to Twigg?" asked Mark Linley.

"It's jolly serious," said Peter. "There's a terrific hullabaloo going on downstairs. Twigg's come in, in a shocking state! He can hardly speak, but his looks—My hat! Somebody's mopped soot over him!"

"Over Twigg?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes. From what I've heard, somebody was lying in wait for him when he let himself in at masters' gate. It's awfully dark there, you know, and Twigg didn't see anybody; but somebody saw Twigg all right, and mopped a bag of soot right into his face—"

"Great Scott!"

There was a startled squeak from Billy Bunter. He sat with toast half-way to his mouth, his mouth wide open. His eyes almost bulged through his spectacles.

"Twigg! Oh crikey!"

"You fellows coming down?" asked Peter. "Twigg's worth seeing. You don't often see a beak looking like a chimney sweep!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Twigg!"

The juniors were all on their feet now. There was a general move to the door. Only Billy Bunter did not move. Every other fellow hurried out of the study, to see Twigg in his startling, sooty state. But Bunter did not want to see Twigg in that sooty state! The bare thought of Twigg in that state almost curdled Bunter's blood.

"Twigg!" groaned Bunter. "Oh crikey! Who'd have thought it? I—I thought it was Nugent! Oh dear! Fancy Twigg coming in just at that minute—the silly old ass! Oh crumbs! If they find out—"

Bunter replaced the toast on his plate.

For the first time in his fat career William George Bunter had lost his appetite. He had mopped that soot over a shadowy form in the dusky mist and fled. And not for a moment had he doubted that it was Nugent who had received the soot. And now—

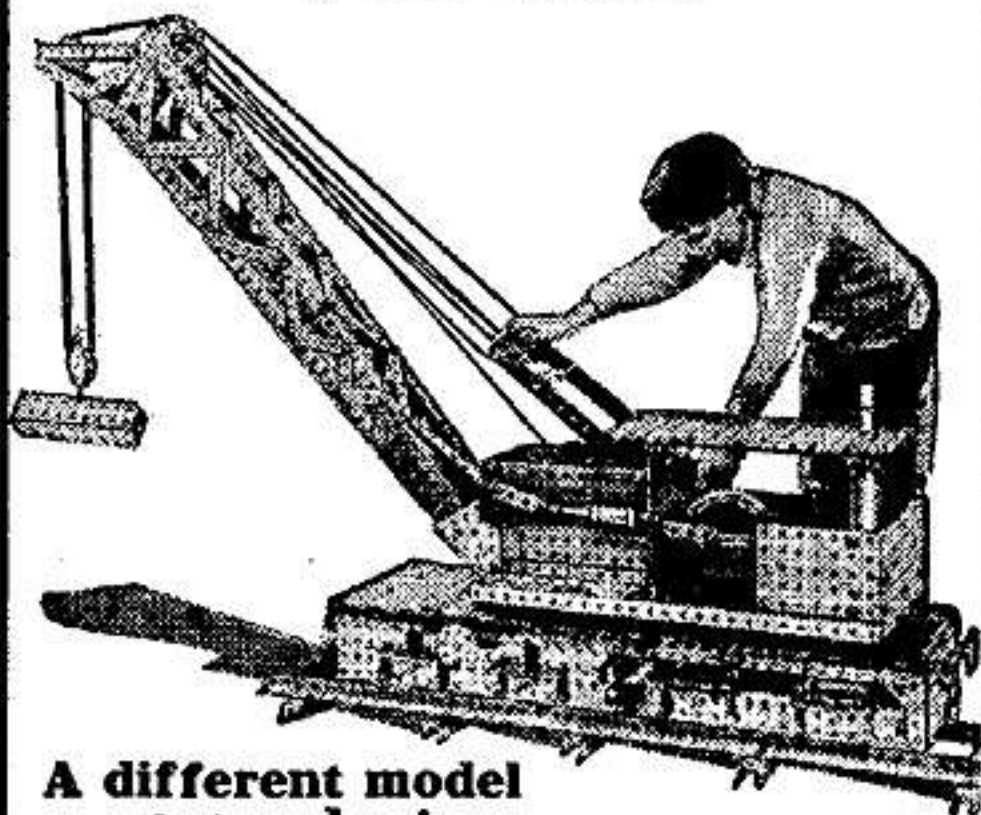
Twigg! A beak—a Form master! Billy Bunter cringed with terror.

"Oh crikey!" he groaned.

There was cake on the table. Bunter did not touch it—did not even look at it! Even cake had no attractions for Bunter now, as he sat thinking in terror of that awful blunder, and the consequences that might follow.

(Continued on next page.)

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THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Nugent Minor is Wanted!

UNPARALLELED!

It was the deep voice of Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth.

"Amazing!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Shocking!" said Mr. Capper.

"Une chose affreuse!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Zat poor Twigg! Zis is one zing of ze most fearful!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were too late to see that interesting sight, a sooty Form master, when they came hurrying down. But they found an excited crowd—masters, prefects, fellows of all Forms, buzzing with the amazing news. Trotter, the page, was cleaning up traces of Twigg's progress. The Second Form master had left a sooty trail behind him.

The juniors gathered that Twigg had been led away to a bath-room. No doubt he needed a wash, if the description they received from fellows who had seen him was anything like correct.

"Black as the ace of spades!" said Skinner. "Thick with it—recking! Like a jolly old chimney-sweep who'd fairly rolled in it."

"Sneezing and coughing!" said Bolsover major. "Blinking like a giddy owl! He had it in his eyes and his nose. Some jape!"

"Rotten shame!" said Temple of the Fourth. "Who the thump can have ragged poor old Twigg like that?"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Twigg is a harmless and necessary ass, and the ragfulness is not the proper caper."

"Somebody will be sacked for this!" the juniors heard Loder of the Sixth remark to Walker of that Form.

"But who the dickens—" said Walker.

"Most fellows were in the House," said Wingate of the Sixth. "We shall have to find out who was out at the time."

"Poor old Twigg!"

There was a good deal of sympathy for Twigg. Many of the fellows were grinning. There was no doubt that Twigg's aspect, under his coating of

soot, had struck them as comic. But they sympathised, and some were quite indignant. Hobson of the Shell remarked that if it had been an acid drop like Haacker—his own Form master—it would have been all very well; but a harmless ass like Twigg—that was too thick!

Excitement reigned, and evidently there was going to be a severe inquiry. There was little doubt that the culprit would be discovered and punished—no doubt that the punishment would be severe. But who the culprit was, was as yet a mystery.

Bob Cherry had a very strong suspicion, since he had seen Nugent in the study; but he was very careful not to utter it. He had no doubt, at least, that Nugent believed that his minor was the guilty party.

"I wonder if Nugent saw anything of it?" said Skinner.

Johnny Bull looked round at him.

"Nugent! How could he have seen anything of it, fathead?"

"He came in only a few minutes before Twigg," answered Skinner. "I remember how I noticed he looked a bit queer. I wonder—"

"Don't be a silly ass!" said Johnny gruffly.

Skinner laughed.

"Well, he did look rather queer," he said. "I noticed it! I'm not going to shout it out to the beaks, though."

"You'd better not shout, or whisper, either, that Nugent had anything to do with a dirty, rotten trick like chucking soot in a man's face!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Come away, you men," murmured Bob Cherry, and his comrades followed him. He stopped in the Form-room passage, out of hearing of the buzzing crowd discussing the amazing and unparalleled happening.

"What's up, Bob?" asked Harry.

Bob glanced round and spoke in a low voice.

"Nugent's in the study—rather upset. I fancy he thinks his precious minor did this."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You remember what the little ass

was saying yesterday, when Twigg dropped on him!" muttered Bob.

"But—but that was only gas—just fag gas!" said Harry, aghast. "He wouldn't be such an unmitigated little idiot—"

"I'm afraid Franky thinks so. I don't know whether they'd sack a fag—but they may—anyhow, it's a terrific flogging! You fellows be careful not to say anything. It would be sickening if Nugent's minor was turfed out of Greyfriars—for Frank, I mean."

"Serve the little sweep right, if he did it!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I'm thinking of Frank."

"Yes, that's all right, of course; not a word about it," assented Johnny. "But it's rather thick. I can't believe young Nugent is such an ass! Frank's been keeping an eye on him to-day, too. Look here, let's go and see the kid, and see if there's anything in it. If there isn't, we can tell Frank it's all right."

"Let's!" assented Wharton.

The four Removites went along to the Second Form room to look for Dicky Nugent. The door was open, and there was an excited buzz of voices within. Evidently the news of what had happened to their Form master, had reached the Second.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked in. It was not yet time for evening prep, which the Second took in their Form-room with Twigg; but a good many of the fags were there. Among them was Dicky Nugent, and the Removites were relieved to see that he looked the same cheery, cheeky, careless young scamp as usual. Certainly he did not look like a fellow over whose head the sword of Damocles impended, in the shape of the "sack."

"Horrid, ain't it?" said Sammy Bunter, with a fat chuckle that was very like his major's. "Poor old Twigg! All sooty! He, he, he!"

"Serve him right!" said Nugent minor.

"Oh, I don't know," said Gatty. "Twigg's not bad! I thought it was rather thick when you—"

"Shut up, you ass!"

"Yes, shut up!" said Myers. "You get jawing about that, and they'll think it was Nugent mi!"

"Jolly glad I never had a hand in it!" said Dicky, with a deep breath. "Jolly glad! I can tell you men, this is the sack for somebody!"

Harry Wharton & Co., standing in the doorway, heard all these remarks, and they saw Gatty and Myers give Nugent minor rather curious looks, and then exchange a glance.

"But who did it?" went on Gatty.

"Ask me another," said Dicky.

"Jolly glad I didn't!"

"Where were you half an hour ago, Dicky?"

"Blessed if I remember! Yes, I remember, I was coming back from the tuckshop about that time."

"You didn't go round by the masters' gate?"

"No, I didn't, George Gatty!"

"All right; only asking, old chap!"

"Well, don't ask fool questions like that!" grunted Dicky. "I don't know any more about it than you do."

"Jolly glad!" said Gatty, though with a lingering air of doubt.

Dicky Nugent gave his two comrades a rather dark look. He left them, and, catching sight of the Removites in the doorway, came towards them.

"Franky with you?" he asked. "Oh, he isn't. Well, you can tell him, if he asks you, that he needn't fancy I know anything about old Twigg. I wasn't there, and never knew anything about it (til a man in the Second told me he had



**"I Say,
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come in all sooty. You can tell Frank so. Of course, he will think—"

The fag broke off abruptly.

Wharton gave him a searching look.

"It wasn't you, Dicky?" he asked.

"No, it wasn't!" said Dicky irritably. "And if Frank thinks it was, you can tell him he's a fool, from me. More likely a Remove man."

"You young ass! Why should a Remove man rag your beak?" snapped Johnny Bull.

"Well, somebody got hold of the soot," said Dicky. "Frank took it away with him. I suppose it was the same lot. There wouldn't be two bags of soot hanging about at the same time, I suppose."

"What the thump are—"

"Hasn't Frank told you?" grunted Dicky. "Keep it dark, anyhow. He came in this afternoon, and found Gatty and Myers and me fixing up the bag. He took it away, and I never saw it afterwards."

"Oh, my hat! Then you had meant to—"

"Never mind what I meant!" muttered Nugent minor. "I never did it, and that's the point! Frank took the bag of soot away with him. I don't know what he did with it. Somebody else got hold of it, I suppose. I know I didn't."

"Oh!" said Harry dubiously.

The Removites looked at one another. It was news to them that Nugent minor had planned that rag on his Form master, and that Frank had discovered it.

"That's why he didn't come to the woodshed, I suppose," said Bob, after a pause. "He was looking after this young ass, and keeping him out of mischief."

"Like his cheek to butt in, and you can tell him I said so!" rejoined Dicky.

"Lucky for you he did, as it turns out, you young fathead! If you'd done this—"

"Well, I didn't! You can tell Frank so, and relieve his mind!" said Dicky sarcastically. "I dare say he thinks I got hold of the soot again while he was at games practice and got into ambush for old Twigg. Well, I didn't."

"Well, if you didn't do it, perhaps you know who did?"

Nugent minor's eyes gleamed.

"Why should I know anything about it?" he asked.

"Because you threatened to do something of the sort after Twigg had punished you yesterday," answered Wharton.

"Well, I'm not the culprit," said Dicky, "and that's flat!"

"I—I hope you didn't."

"If you can't take a man's word, you can go and eat coke, you Remove ticks!" snapped Dicky.

"Nugent minor!"



Bunter hit out wildly. But with a finger and thumb grasping his nose like a vlee Nugent held him at arm's-length, and the fat junior could not reach him. "Led do by dose!" gurgled Bunter. "'Tain't fair! Groogh!"

Mr. Twigg came along the Form-room passage. He was looking rather red, evidently from rubbing and scrubbing, and his face, which was generally placid enough, was grim with anger. He rapped out the fag's name like a bullet. Dicky faced him, however, without any great uneasiness, though he was deeply thankful at that moment that his brother had prevented him from carrying out his hare-brained project.

"Yes, sir?" said Dicky.

"You will follow me to Dr. Locke's study!" said Mr. Twigg icily.

Dicky caught his breath.

"I—I say, sir—what—what have I done, sir?"

The Second Form master gave him a look.

"I hardly think I need give you information on that point, Nugent minor. In view of the threat I heard you utter yesterday, I have no doubt as to the perpetrator of the outrage of which I have been a victim! Follow me!"

"Oh crumbs!" Nugent minor quaked. "Oh, sir, I didn't—I never—I—I— It wasn't me, sir!"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Twigg bitterly. "Certainly I did not see the person who assaulted me by throwing a bag of soot in my face. If it was not you, Nugent minor, you have nothing to fear; your headmaster will see justice done. I shall take you to him immediately! Follow me! Not a word more!"

Mr. Twigg rustled away.

Dicky stood for a moment, as if rooted to the floor. All the cheery, cheeky carelessness was gone from his brow.

Mr. Twigg glanced back.

"Nugent minor!" he said in an ominous tone.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" groaned Dicky. And he followed his Form master.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances. Obviously, Mr. Twigg had no doubt

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Blow Falls!

FRANK NUGENT moved restlessly about Study No. 1. He had had no tea, but he had forgotten that he was hungry. His face was pale and worn, and he could not keep still.

If they found Dicky out! That was the tormenting thought in his mind. His young brother, whom his people at home entrusted to his care at school—a trust he had tried to fulfil. He had tried hard, well aware that Dicky needed a sterner hand than his, but never, or hardly ever, able to resolve to give him anything but kindness and good nature.

It was his weakness, really, that had started this trouble; if he had been firmer, if he had only helped the indolent young rascal with his work instead of doing his work for him, it would not have happened. He had argued with the fag, done his best with him, but the lazy young scamp had had his way, and Frank was well aware that he ought not to have let Dicky have his way. He blamed himself more than he blamed Dicky.

And now—

That afternoon he had gone down to games practice with his friends, forgetful of Dicky. He had hoped that his intervention had been effectual, but he had had a doubt. Evidently—so it seemed to Nugent—the fag had only waited till the coast was clear, and then he had recaptured the bag of soot from the study and carried out his purpose. He had feared it when he found the bag missing; he had hunted for Dicky in the shadows by masters' gote without finding him. And then— Like a haunting vision that would not leave his mind, he remembered a glimpse of a

sooty face, gasping and gurgling, and spluttering—Twig, smothered, choked, and blinded, staggering in a cloud of soot! There was not the faintest doubt in his mind that Dicky had done it. In the circumstances, he could scarcely have had a doubt.

His first impulse, when he had that glimpse of the hapless Twig, had been to rush to his aid. But he had recollected instantly that his presence on the spot would require explanation, and he had darted away instead, thinking only of his brother and his brother's danger. And he had been able to think of nothing else since.

If they suspected Dicky!

He groaned aloud as he remembered that Mr. Twig had overheard the fag's wild words the day before and punished him for them. They were certain to suspect Dicky.

The fag, with all his faults, was not the fellow to find refuge in a tangle of lies. He would have to own up. Even if he did not, it would make no difference. The inquiry would be searching, unsparing. And Gatty and Myers know, and would blurt out something! There was no hope!

If they flogged him, that would be bad enough. But if they sacked him—if Dicky was sent home in disgrace—

Nugent clenched his hands. This was how he had looked after his brother at school!

Yet what could he have done? What could he do now? He would have done anything to save the wretched fag; but he could not save him.

There was a buzz of voices in the Remove passage. Fellows there were discussing the "unparalleled outrage," as Prout called it. Nugent wondered a little that his friends did not come to the study. He wondered whether they

had had news they did not care to bring to him.

He had to know the worst. He threw open the door of the study, and the excited voices came clearly to his ears.

"They've got him!"

"Well, of course, it was pretty plain that it was one of Twig's fags. Nobody else would want to rag Twig."

"But what a nerve!"

"What a neck!"

"Oh, young Nugent's got neck enough for anything! Not much like his major!"

"I say, this will rather knock old Nugent over! He's awfully fond of that young rotter of a brother of his."

"Somebody ought to tell him."

"Not I!"

"He'll hear it soon enough. Where is he?"

Frank Nugent clenched his hands till the nails dug into the palms. They had found out already, then! It was already common knowledge in the House that Dicky had done it.

He looked out of the study.

His chums were at a little distance in a troubled group, not taking part in the talk. Nugent had guessed rightly why they had not come to the study; they did not want to bear the bad news.

There was a crowd of fellows nearer at hand, and they all looked at Nugent, struck by the white misery in his face. Even Skinner checked the mockery on his lips.

"Sorry, Nugent, old man!" he said.

"I suppose you've heard—"

Nugent's face showed that he had heard now.

"Rough on you, old man!" said Squiff. "Sorry!"

Nugent found his voice.

"Do they say that Dicky—that my brother—"

He choked.

"He's been taken to the Head!" said Peter Todd. "Twig took him as soon as he'd got the soot off. He knew it was Dicky, from what I hear."

"He—he saw him?" stammered Nugent.

"No. I don't think he saw anybody, but he knew somehow. I hear that he told the other beaks he knew. Wingate was going to round up all the men who were out of the House at the time. But Twig told him it wasn't necessary; he knew who it was. Somebody says that Twig heard young Nugent threatening to do something of the sort. I'm afraid there's no doubt, old chap."

"Where's my brother now?"

"I think he's still with the Head!"

"Here comes Wingate!" said Skinner. The Greyfriars captain came up the Remove staircase. His face was very grave.

"Nugent here?" he called out.

"Here!" answered Frank, in a choking voice. He stepped out of the study. "Wingate, have they—I mean—what's happened to my brother?"

"Nothing, so far, I believe," answered Wingate, with a compassionate glance at the junior's tormented face. "You're wanted in the Head's study, Nugent—your minor's there. Come with me."

Nugent nodded, and followed the captain of Greyfriars. He passed his dismayed chums, and Wharton spoke in a low voice.

"Buck up, Frank—buck up, old man!"

Nugent did not seem to hear. He followed Wingate down the stairs, leaving the Remove fellows in a buzz behind him.

(Continued on next page.)

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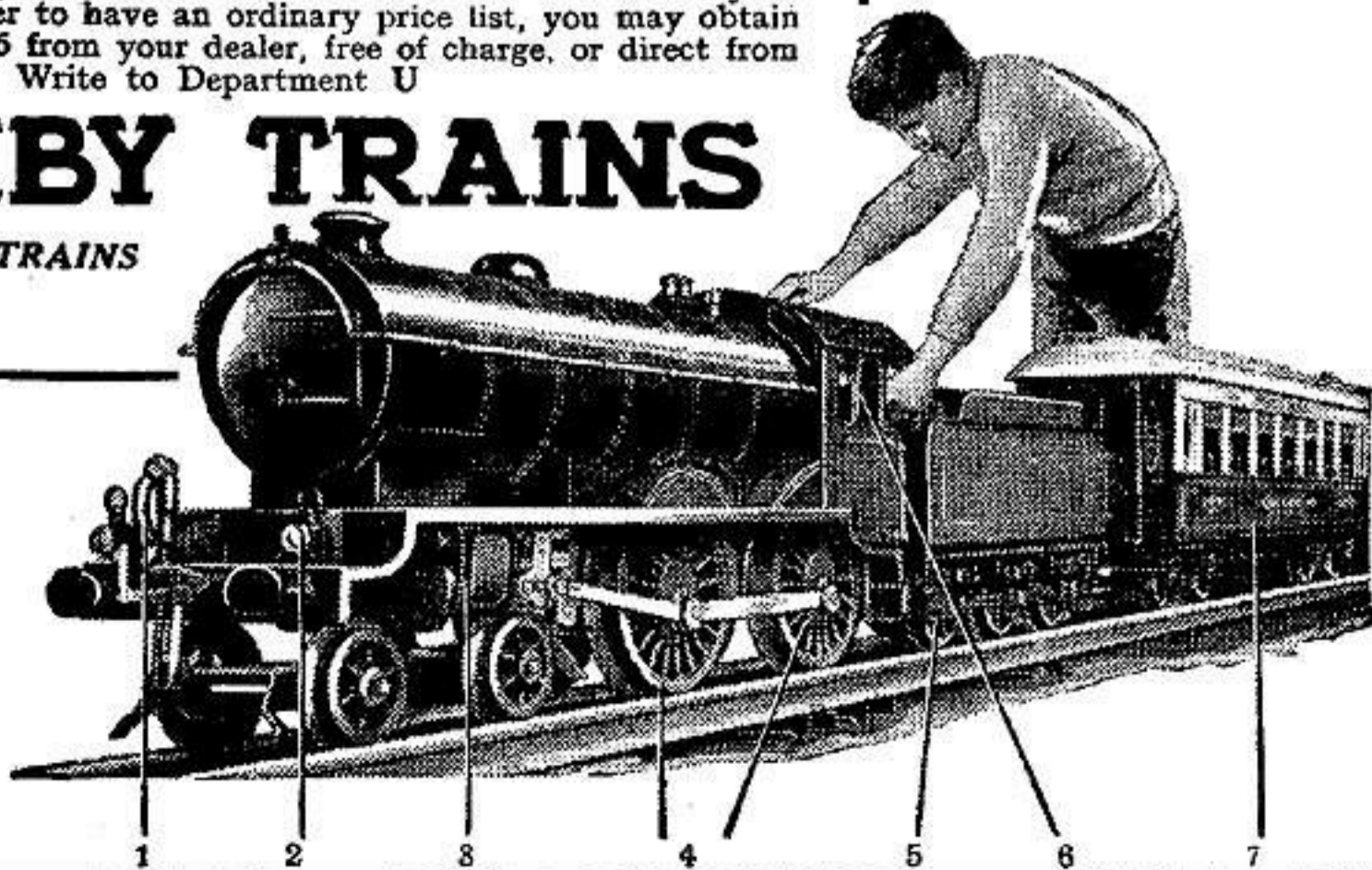
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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

His Brother's Keeper!

DR. LOCKE glanced curiously at Nugent as he entered the headmaster's study. The distress in Frank's face would have touched a harder heart than the kind old Head's. Dicky Nugent was there, standing before the Head, his face pale and scared. Mr. Twigg was there, cold and grim. It was not surprising that the Second Form master was deeply incensed, and that he had resolved upon drastic punishment for the offender. But, grim as he was, even Mr. Twigg softened a little at the sight of Frank Nugent. He coughed, with evident discomfort.

"Yes, sir," almost whispered Nugent. He hardly dared look at his brother. All Dicky's cool cheek and airy impudence had vanished. He seemed on the verge of breaking down. His lips quivered, and it was only by an effort that he held back tears. It gave Nugent a bitter pang to see him thus. The fag's scared eyes turned on him, hopefully as it seemed to Frank. Surely he was not hoping that his brother could help him now! Nugent could do nothing.

"You are aware of the outrageous assault that was made upon Mr. Twigg a short time ago, Nugent?"

"Yes, sir, I've heard about it." "Mr. Twigg has no doubt that Nugent minor was the guilty party. It seems that in the darkness and the mist he did not see who assailed him. But only yesterday he heard Nugent minor uttering threats concerning him. Nugent minor has admitted that he prepared a bag of soot, with the intention of carrying out this 'rag,' as he terms it. But he denies that he actually did carry it out."

Nugent started. "I never did!" panted Dicky. The Head made him a gesture to be silent.

"On the face of it there appears to be no doubt," resumed the Head. "But your brother states that you discovered his intention, that you made him abandon it, and that you removed the bag of soot he had intended to use for this reckless and foolish purpose. That is why I have sent for you."

Nugent breathed hard. It came as a surprise to him that his minor denied the accusation. With all his faults, he had never expected Dicky to lie.

"If this boy, in a moment of foolish resentment, planned such an action, but afterwards thought better of it, and abandoned his intention, the matter would not be very serious, so far as Nugent minor is concerned," went on the Head. "It would remain to discover the real culprit, who will certainly be expelled from Greyfriars. I require to know, Nugent, to what extent you can corroborate your brother's statement."

"You know, Frank—" panted Dicky. "Silence! You will speak, Nugent." Nugent cleared his throat.

"It's true that I found out what he was up to, sir—I mean, I—I dropped on him in the Form-room—that is, I knew," he stammered. "I took away the bag of soot, and I thought—at least, I hoped—that he had given up the idea."

"So I had!" gasped Dicky. "I knew it wouldn't do—after I'd thought about it. I knew I'd been a silly ass—I—I knew—"

He broke off, under the Head's stern eyes.

"I hope that is true, Nugent minor,"

said the Head. "Nugent, you state that you took away the bag of soot."

"Yes, sir." "What did you do with it?" "I took it to my study, sir. I was going to get rid of it afterwards, and then I went down to games practice with the fellows—"

"You left it in your study?" "Yes, sir."

"Then there was nothing to prevent your brother from recovering possession of it?"

"I—I thought he had given up the silly idea, sir—"

"Answer my question." "No, sir!"

"Was it gone when you returned to the study?"

"Yes, sir." "Anybody might have got hold of it, sir—" stammered Dicky.

"That's true, sir!" exclaimed Frank eagerly. "Anybody might have got it from my study—I was out over an hour—"

Dr. Locke raised his hand. "Have you any reason to suppose that anyone did so, excepting your brother?"

Nugent was silent.

"Somebody saw it there, and bagged it," muttered Dicky.

"A—a lot of fellows came into my study while it was there, sir," faltered

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Frank. "Anyone might have seen it in the fender."

"Remove boys, do you mean?" "Yes, sir."

Dr. Locke glanced at the Second Form master.

"Is there any reason to suppose that a Remove boy, Mr. Twigg—"

"None whatever, sir," answered Mr. Twigg. "I have no dealings with the Remove, and it would be absurd to suppose that a boy in the Lower Fourth Form would be guilty of this outrage. I have no doubt whatever that Nugent minor did this, in revenge for a just and necessary punishment—as, indeed, I heard him threaten to do, and as he has admitted intending doing."

Dr. Locke nodded.

"There certainly appears to be no doubt," he said, "Nugent major's intervention was well-intentioned, and is to his credit as showing that he had a sense of duty towards his younger brother. But it appears to have had no effect. It can scarcely be doubted that after he had left the study Nugent minor regained possession of the—the material with which this outrage was perpetrated."

"I never went near the study, sir," groaned Dicky. "I chucked up the whole thing—Gatty and Myers told me it was rot—"

Nugent looked at him.

No more than the Head and Mr.

Twigg, had he doubted that Dicky had "ragged" the Form master. But a strange doubt was creeping into his mind now. Dicky was cheeky, wilful, selfish, unthinking, but he was no liar. It seemed incredible that he could be lying now, with such almost tearful earnestness. Was it possible, after all, that he was telling the truth? But if Dicky was not guilty, who was?

Who could even have wanted to rag Twigg? Nobody but the fag whom he had punished, and who, as Nugent well knew, had harboured thoughts of reckless vengeance. Not Catty or Myers, who had been helping Dicky with obvious unwillingness, and had been glad to get clear of the affair. It was Dicky or nobody; and yet—

"Nugent minor," said the Head, in a deep voice, "I have called your brother here in the hope that he might be able to say something in your favour. He has been able to say nothing—only that he attempted to prevent you from carrying out your purpose, and failed."

"I—I never—"

"You were heard to threaten your Form master—you are known to have planned this outrage, and there is no reason to suppose that anyone else had even a motive for such an action. Nugent minor, you are guilty of this assault upon a member of my staff, and you will be sent away from the school immediately."

There was a cry from Dicky.

"I didn't—I never did! I didn't do it, sir! I never went near the study. I never—"

"Do not add untruth to untruth, Nugent minor!" said the Head sternly.

"I'm telling the truth." The fag turned a tear-stained face to his brother. "Frank, you know I'm telling the truth—you know I ain't a liar, old chap! You tell the Head—"

Nugent groaned.

"Your brother can say nothing!" rapped the Head. "I regret now that I heeded you so far as to send for him, and cause him unnecessary distress. Say no more!"

"I didn't do it!" Dicky, in his terror, caught hold of his brother's arm. "Frank, you know I didn't—you jolly well know! You took the bag away, and I never saw it afterwards. Somebody got it out of your study—some Remove man it must have been—"

"Dicky!" groaned Nugent.

"This passes all bounds!" said Mr. Twigg, setting his lips. "Dr. Locke, it is impossible that any Remove boy can have had any imaginable motive—unless—"

He broke off suddenly, as if struck by a startling thought, and fixed his eyes on Nugent's face.

Dr. Locke glanced at him.

"What were you about to say, Mr. Twigg? If there is even the remotest doubt in so serious a matter as this—"

"I was about to say, sir, that the only boy in the Remove who can imaginably have had any cause of resentment against me, is Nugent major himself. I had to complain of him to his Form master yesterday, and Mr. Queleh administered a somewhat severe punishment."

Nugent started, and Dicky gave almost a convulsive jump. It seemed as if light flashed into the fag's mind at his Form master's words.

"You!" he gasped. "Frank! You!" "I!" stammered Nugent.

"Yes, you!" yelled Dicky. "You all the time! You're trying to put it on me, and you did it—you did it, and you know you did!"

Nugent started back as if a serpent had stung him. He stared almost wildly at the accusing fag.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head, quite taken aback. "Nugent, is there—is there, by any possibility, a fraction of truth in what this boy says? I cannot take his word—I hope I can take yours. Speak!"

Frank made an unintelligible sound. His throat was dry and husky; he could not speak.

Strangely, at that moment, a phrase of long ago flashed through his mind: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

His brother's keeper! Dicky had been entrusted to his care at school—and this was how he had fulfilled the trust. He was to remain, while his brother was sent home in disgrace. He would have made any sacrifice for his brother; for him, it was clear, Dicky was prepared to make none. There was belief—fixed belief—in the fag's accusing stare—he believed that Frank was guilty, and that he was trying to throw his guilt upon a younger brother!

Frank's brain seemed to be turning round and round. His brother's keeper—the words hummed in his confused mind. His brother's keeper—he could save his brother if he liked! There was one way! He had fancied that he had turned over every way in his mind; but he had not thought of that. But there was a way!

"Speak!" The Head's voice was deep and stern.

"Tell the truth!" Dicky's voice was almost a scream. "You want to get me sacked for what you've done—you know you do! Tell the Head the truth, you rotter!"

"Silence!"

Frank Nugent found his voice. He began to speak, hardly knowing what he was saying.

"I—I—I did it! I own up! I—I—"

"I knew you did! I knew you did! And you were going to see me sacked—"

"Silence, Nugent minor!" Dr. Locke fixed a grim look on the hapless Removite. "Nugent, speak out! You confess—"

"I—I'm sorry!" Nugent's voice came in husky, broken tones. "I—I'm sorry! I—I was wild because—because Quelch canded me—Mr. Twigg complained, and Mr. Quelch gave me six—I—I thought of it when I got the bag of soot in my study, and—and I went down and waited for him at masters' gate, and—and—"

Nugent's tortured voice trailed away.

"And you were going to let me be sacked for it, you rotter!" breathed Dicky. "You wouldn't have come here of your own accord—"

"Silence! Your brother has confessed in time to save you, Nugent minor, at all events," said Dr. Locke; "and this detestable outrage would never have occurred, but for your conduct in the first place. Mr. Twigg, it appears now that it was not Nugent minor who was guilty of this assault. He has only himself to blame for the danger he has incurred; and I leave him in your hands, sir, with a recommendation that you should deal with him severely for ever having entertained such a project—though it appears that he never carried it out."

"I shall not fail, sir!" said Mr. Twigg, with a grim look at the fag. "You will follow me, Nugent minor."

The Second Form master left the study, with Nugent minor at his heels. There was a "whopping" in store for Dicky, and it was plainly going to be

a severe one; but he had escaped the sack, and he rejoiced. And in his satisfaction on his own account, the fag had, for the present, at least, little consideration to waste on his brother.

Dr. Locke gave Nugent a stern look.

"I am glad, Nugent, that you have confessed the truth in time to prevent injustice from being done," he said. "I fear, however, that you would never have made this confession, even to save your brother from unjust punishment, had not Mr. Twigg brought the matter to light. You will leave Greyfriars by an early train in the morning, Nugent. In the meantime, you will be confined to the punishment-room, and I shall request your Form master to take you there immediately."

Dr. Locke rang, and sent for Mr. Quelch. Ten minutes later the door of the punishment-room was closed and locked on Frank Nugent.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Blow for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter's voice—generally well to the fore—had not been heard in the excited discussion that was going on in the Remove passage.

Bunter had gone to his study—for once not desirous of notice or attention.

The terrified Owl had only one comfort—nobody knew, or could possibly guess, that he had had anything to do with the occurrence at masters' gate. Nevertheless, he was scared almost out of his fat wits, and every footstep seemed to his fat ears the step of a master or prefect coming to march him away to the Head.

He blinked out of the study at last. It was nearly time for prep, but few of the juniors had gone to their studies. The "assault" on a Form master had provided Greyfriars with a sensation, and the whole House was buzzing with it. Billy Bunter felt sure—almost sure—that he would not be suspected; and it had not occurred to his fat brain that anyone else might be. He knew nothing of Nugent minor's feud against his Form master, and never thought of the fag at all. But the strident voice of the Bounder reached his ears and startled him into blinking out into the passage.

"They've let him off—Nugent minor, you know! Goodness knows why—but he's let off! I thought he did it."

"He jolly well did!" said Peter Todd. "How do you know he's let off, Smithy?" asked Skinner.

"I've seen him," answered the Bounder. "I fancy he's had a licking—he looked like it. But he's gone in to prep, as usual, with the Second. He's at prep now, with Twigg."

"They can't have let him off with a licking, for a thing like that!" said Skinner.

"Well, he may not have done it—"

said Squiff.

"Who did, then?"

"Ask me another."

"I say, that's jolly good news for Frank!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in great relief. "Frank may have been able to put in a word for the little idiot—he's with the Head now."

"He can't be with the Head all this time!" said Harry Wharton. "Why the dickens doesn't he come up?"

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter's eyes were almost bulging through his spectacles. This was the first he had heard of Nugent minor being under suspicion, and it was

a relief to hear, in the same breath, that the fag was, apparently, let off. Billy Bunter was not much given to thinking of others, but certainly he would have been dismayed at the prospect of another fellow getting the "chopper" for what he had done.

"I say, you fellows, did—did they think it was Nugent minor?" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"They jolly well did!" answered Peter Todd. "Blessed if I can make it out! They knew that the young ass had threatened something of the sort."

"Fellows blow off steam!" said Johnny Bull, with a grin. "But they never really do the things they say they'll do."

"But somebody sooted Twigg!" said the Bounder. "It must have been a fellow in his own Form! Nobody else has anything up against old Twigg."

Billy Bunter grinned a little. Evidently it had occurred to nobody that Twigg had been sooted by mistake, by a short-sighted Owl who had made a blunder in the dark.

"But where the dickens is Frank all this time?" asked Harry Wharton. He was feeling vaguely uneasy.

Billy Bunter rolled back into Study No. 7. It was all right! Nobody dreamed of his connection with the catastrophe; and a fellow who had been suspected was let off. So there was nothing for Billy Bunter to worry about; and he was able to turn his fat attention to prep at last.

He was sorry for Twigg, of course. He had nothing against Twigg; and, besides, it was a sheer waste of the soot and of all the trouble he had taken. Certainly, he was sorry for his blunder; he had wanted Nugent to get the soot. His many wrongs were still unavenged; but the fat Owl was not thinking of vengeance now. He was only too glad to let the matter end where it was—if only it would end there!

Harry Wharton waited anxiously for his chum to return to the study. Nugent could scarcely be with the Head all this time; and he wondered where he was, and why he did not come.

Wingate of the Sixth came up at last, and at sight of the prefect the Removites dispersed to their studies for prep.

"Isn't Nugent coming up to prep, Wingate?" asked Harry.

Wingate glanced at him.

"No," he answered. "It turns out—"

He paused a moment. "Did you know anything about it, Wharton?"

"About what?"

"About what Nugent did to Twigg."

Wharton jumped. "Nugent! Twigg! What on earth do you mean, Wingate? Nugent did nothing to Twigg!"

"Well, I expect you'd have had sense enough to stop him, if you'd known," said Wingate, with a nod. "But there's no doubt about it, kid. Nugent leaves the school in the morning."

"Nugent—leaves?" Wharton gasped.

"What the thump!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "They're not making out that Nugent sooted Twigg, I suppose?"

"What utter rot!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Rot or not, Nugent is expelled for it," said Wingate sharply. "He's locked in the punishment-room now, and he leaves the school in the morning!"

The chums of the Remove stared at him, blankly, in sheer horror.

As the figure loomed up in the mist, Bunter hurled the bag of soot with all his might. Whiz! Crash! Smash! It landed in a face and burst. "Ooooooocooogh!" There came a horrible, suffocated splutter, and Bunter darted up the path.



"What terrific rot!" exclaimed Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh indignantly. "The esteemed Nugent is as innocent as my absurd self!"

Bob Cherry burst into a roar. "The silly asses! What makes them think such utter rot—" His voice woke every echo of the Remove passage. "That's enough, Cherry!" said Wingate. "Nugent has confessed—" "Confessed!" said Bob, stupefied.

"Yes. It came out that Nugent minor had the bag of soot, and Nugent took it away from him and used it himself on Twigg. It looks as if he meant the kid to suffer for it, but it came out, and he owned up. Now go to your studies."

Wingate turned and went down the stairs.

Harry Wharton clenched his hands. "It's his minor's fault, of course—the young sweep! But—but—it's all up with Frank! Frank's got to go—" He broke off, with a catch in his voice.

The juniors went to their studies at last, leaving the Co. in the passage. In Study No. 7 Billy Bunter blinked at Peter Todd through his big spectacles as Toddy came in with a grave and dismal face.

"I—I say, Toddy—" "Oh, don't jaw!" said Toddy irritably.

"Oh, really, Toddy—" "Shut up!" growled Peter.

"I—I say, old chap, have—have they found anything out?" exclaimed Bunter apprehensively.

"Yes, ass!" "Oh lor'!"

Peter stared at him.

"What do you care?" he snapped. "Fat lot you care about Nugent!"

"Nugent!" repeated Bunter blankly. "Oh, you ass! I—I thought you meant they'd found out about Twigg—"

"So they have, fathead! It was Nugent, and he's going to be bunked in the morning. Now shut up!"

"Nugent—bunked!" said Bunter faintly.

"Yes; now shut up!"

Peter sat down dismally to work. Billy Bunter, rather unexpectedly, did shut up. He seemed to have lost his fat voice. He sat staring blankly at Peter, his eyes fairly goggling through his big spectacles.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

"MY ridiculous chums!" Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh spoke in a low voice, his dusky brow wrinkled with deep thought.

His comrades did not answer. They stood in a dismal, dismayed group, utterly overwhelmed. It was hard to realise that they were going to lose their chum, that on the morrow morning the gate of Greyfriars would close behind Frank Nugent—for ever!

"My ridiculous chums!" repeated the Nabob of Bhanipur. "I have been thoughtfully reflecting, and it appears to my absurd brain that the game is not up. It is a boot on the other leg."

"What do you mean, Inky?" muttered Wharton. "Frank's for it! What on earth made him do such a fool thing—"

"Did he?" asked the nabob quietly.

"He says he did."

"The esteemed Nugent is generally a model of terrific veracity," said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "But on this esteemed occasion I think he has departed from the strait-laced, narrow path."

Johnny Bull gave a grunt.

"Fathead! Think he wants to be sacked?"

"I thoughtfully opine that he does not want his esteemed and execrable minor to be sacked!" answered the nabob quietly.

Harry Wharton gave a start.

"Inky! You don't think—you don't imagine Frank would be fool enough—idiot enough—"

"I fear that he is idiot enough to do anything for his absurd brother," answered the nabob, "and I am certainly assured that he never sooted the ludicrous Twigg. The absurd Franky has owned up—because the chopper was coming down on the idiotic Dicky! It is preposterously certain."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"If that's it—" he said.

"That is it!" said the nabob, with quiet conviction. "The esteemed Franky never did it—but he knows that his minor did, and he has taken the sword of Damocles on his own ridiculous head."

Bob made a hopeless gesture.

"If you're right, Inky, it doesn't help! If Frank's told a whopper to save his minor he won't admit it! He's the man to stick to that little brute through thick and thin."

"True or not, he will stick to it, to save that little scoundrel from being bunked!" said Harry.

"There are more esteemed ways of suffocating a harmless and necessary cat than the chokefulness with cream," said Hurree Singh. "Other persons may know something about the matter, my worthy chums."

"Whom are you thinking of, Inky?" asked Harry quietly. "I can see you've got something in your head."

"The ridiculous Bunter."

"Bunter!" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Undoubtedly," said Hurree Singh, "I thinkfully believe that the absurd Bunter knows something about it. His absurd remarks at tea-time prove that he does. The esteemed Toddy has mentioned that he was in the quad—he asked Toddy where Nugent was. You will remember that we supposed that something must have happened to Nugent, from the supposed remarks of the asinine Bunter."

"I remember!" said Wharton slowly.

"But if Bunter knew anything he would yell it out!" said Johnny Bull. "Why should he keep his silly mouth shut, for the first time in his life?"

"That is an esteemed riddle, my worthy Johnny. But I am preposterously assured that Bunter knows something about it; and if the esteemed Franky has told a ridiculous whopper, then—"

"Easy enough to ask Bunter, anyhow," said Harry Wharton—and he strode towards Study No. 7, followed by his comrades.

He threw open the door of Study No. 7.

Billy Bunter turned a startled blink on the doorway. Peter Todd glanced up from prep.

"We want to ask Bunter something," said Harry. "Bunter—"

"I—I say, it—it's no good asking me anything," stammered Bunter. "I'm awfully sorry for Nugent, though he was a beast, but I've got my prep to do—"

"Do you know anything about Twigg being sooted?"

"Nothing at all—absolutely nothing!" answered Bunter promptly. "How could I know anything about it? If you think I had anything to do with it—"

"You silly ass, I don't think so!" snapped Wharton impatiently.

"Oh, that's all right, then!" said Bunter, relieved. "Of course, I'm sorry for Nugent! But you can't deny that he was a beast! He banged my head and—"

"Look here—"

"Making out that a fellow scoffed his cako, you know. I—"

"Did you see what happened at masters' gate?"

"Certainly not! It was jolly dark, and you know I'm short-sighted. I wasn't there, either. I was in the House at the time."

"Gammon!" said Peter Todd, with a sharp look at Bunter. "You were out of the House—you asked me where Nugent was, and went to look for him."

"I—I mean, I—I was taking a stroll in the Cloisters—I was nowhere near masters' gate!" stammered Bunter. "I'm awfully sorry for Nugent—"

"Never mind that!" said Harry. "We've got an idea that Nugent's owned up simply to save his minor. We've got to find out what really happened. If you know anything about it, cough it up."

"I don't—absolutely nothing!" gasped Bunter. "I never went near the spot! I never knew old Twigg was coming in then! Silly old ass, to butt in like that—in the dark, too! Of course, I thought that—"

"You thought what?"

"Nothing!"

"Look here, Bunter—" said Bob.

"I think it's rather rotten to make out that I know anything about it. I

was nowhere near the spot—I was going along the elm walk when it happened, and that's a good distance away."

"You said the Cloisters a minute ago."

"I—I mean the Cloisters! I never went near masters' gate, and I never heard Nugent calling his minor—"

"Nugent called his minor, near masters' gate?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Not that I know of! I never heard him, as I said. I wasn't looking for him," explained Bunter. "Besides, it was too dark to see anybody."

"What were you looking for Nugent for?"

"I wasn't! I've told you I wasn't! I wasn't going to make him sit up. You know I'm a forgiving chap! I wouldn't have sooted him for anything! Never even thought of such a thing."

"What?" yelled Wharton.

"I say, don't yell at a fellow and make him jump!" gasped Bunter.

"You were going to soot Nugent?" stuttered Wharton, staring blankly at the Owl of the Remove.

"No!" howled Bunter. "I've told you I wasn't! Nothing of the sort! I

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never even saw the bag of soot in his study—never knew it was there! As for taking it away, why should I? Besides, it was all Nugent's fault."

"All Nugent's fault?" repeated Wharton, while his comrades stared at Bunter as if they could have eaten him. They were getting a glimmering of the truth now—and it was utterly unexpected. Inky was evidently right in supposing that Bunter knew something about the matter—but he had been far from guessing what Bunter knew.

"Of course it was his fault!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Banging a fellow's napper—and pulling his nose when a fellow was going to lick him. You can't deny that Nugent asked for it! Besides, I wasn't going to soot him. I've told you so."

"He had something hidden behind him when he spoke to me in the quad!" yelled Peter. "I know now what it was."

"It wasn't the soot!" gasped Bunter. "I wasn't looking for Nugent to buzz the soot over him! You can take my word for that. I never saw it in his study, and never took it away to buzz over him! Honest Injun, you know! I—I say, you fellows, don't you get saying that I had the soot, you know. They—they might fancy that I buzzed it at Twigg by mistake in the dark, and—and—"

"I think they might!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You benighted idiot! So it was you all the time!"

"It wasn't!" yelled Bunter. "I'm sorry for Nugent, but it wasn't me! I never had the soot, and never went to masters' gate to look for Nugent, and never buzzed it at anybody! Besides, how was a fellow to see in the dark? I never knew Twigg was coming in then, did I? How was I to know it wasn't Nugent, in the dark? Not that I did it, you know! I wasn't there! I—I was in this study at the time—all the time!"

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton, with a deep breath. "Inky, old man, you're worth your weight in doughnuts! Who'd have thought this?"

"The thoughtfulness was not terrific—I never dreamfully imagined that the idiotic Bunter had done it," said the nabob, with a dusky grin. "But he has given himself away with terrific completeness."

"I haven't!" yelled Bunter. "I never—I didn't—I wasn't—"

"You fat chump!" said Harry Wharton. "Come with me to the Head, at once!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"You silly owl, you can't keep quiet and let a man be sacked! Can't you understand—"

"I'm not going to be sacked to please you! I never saw it was Twigg, in the dark! I thought it was Nugent! Besides, I never did it! I was in this study when I did it—I mean, when I didn't do it—"

"You won't be sacked, you fat burbler; the Head will believe it was a silly blunder—he may pat you on the back for owning up—anyhow, you've got to own up! They won't call it an assault on a Form master when they know it was meant for a Remove chap! You'll get off with six!"

"Ow! I—I don't want six!" howled Bunter.

"You silly owl—"

"I—I'm sorry for Nugent! I've said so! Still, he was a beast! Banging a fellow's napper—"

"Are you coming?"

"No!" howled Bunter. "I'm not! I never did it, and it was a sheer accident, and Nugent banged my head, and—and—I say, you fellows—yoop!"

Bunter was jerked out of his chair.

"Ow! Leggo! Look here, I'm not going to the Head! I'm sorry for Nugent, but it's better for him to be sacked, than for me to get a whopping! You fellows can see that?" gasped Bunter.

"Kick him!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Will you walk to the Head's study, Bunter—"

"Ow! No!"

"Or be kicked all the way—"

"Wow! I'll walk—ow! Leave off kicking me, you beast! I'll walk—I—I—I want to walk! Ow! Keen on it! Leave off! Wow!"

And Bunter walked.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

All's Well that Ends Well!

FRANK NUGENT, sitting on the edge of the bed in the punishment-room, rose to his feet as the key turned in the lock and the door opened. Mr. Quelch entered the room with a very grave face.

"Nugent!"

"Yes, sir!" faltered Frank.

"It transpires," said the Remove
(Continued on page 28.)

LIKE QUICK-ACTION THRILLS? This fine serial is full of them!

OOM, The Terrible!



"Hands Up!"

AS Rick and Alf Higgs moved stealthily through the forest, carrying the Lewis gun, Oom made off in the other direction. He arrived at the little Tiger bomber just about the same moment as Rick and the Cockney sighted the disabled wireless plane.

Rick knew, of course, that something had gone radically wrong with the machine, but he had no conception of the extent of the disaster, or that the failure of the wireless power had also affected the weapons of the crew.

"Go mighty slow!" he whispered to Alf. "I think she's copped a real bad sprain, but she may regain her power any moment and be off. She carries some mighty heavy shootin' metal, and we don't want to be cut off after this bit o' luck. Duck down behind these fallen trees, and we can draw a bead on her without exposing ourselves too much."

They were almost opposite the spot where the big plane had gently settled, and two or three trees which had fallen in a recent storm formed a criss-cross stockade which afforded perfect cover for them whilst giving space for the muzzle of their quick-firer.

Alf dumped down the heavy gun, with a sigh of relief, and wiped the perspiration from his face.

"If hever there's anuvver war, no footsloggin' for me!" he muttered. "Me for the sky, hever so 'igh, hup in an airyplane!"

"Now we'll give these ducks a chance

of showing what they are made of, Alf," Rick whispered. "I'll give 'em a hail, and then you can swish off a round or two over their heads just to show 'em we mean business. If they show any signs of retaliating, let 'em have it hot and strong, but until then go slow. See?"

"If I sees that 'ere Oom my finger'll git out o' control, I'm dead sure!" muttered Alf, as he squatted down behind the gun and slewed the muzzle round. "D'irectly I sets eyes on the blighter I'll let drive, horders or no horders!"

Rick had cut a strip of birchbark a yard square, which he had rolled in the form of a megaphone, and through this he hailed the plane in an earsplitting bellow.

"Oom—ahoy!" he yelled, so that the forest echoed. "Show up mighty quick, or we'll open fire in two minutes!"

"Stuff to gi' 'em, sir!" Alf approved, squinting along the sights. "I on'y 'opes they hopenus fire on us—I'll gi' 'em such a blinkin' tousin'! My finger's fair itchin' to work this 'ere gun!"

"Show up there, time's nearly up!" bellowed Rick. "Don't try any monkey tricks, for we've got the drop on you!"

"We 'ave; we bloomin' well 'ave!" chortled Alf. "We've got one drop, an' th' 'angman'll 'ave another!"

A head appeared cautiously above the edge of the fuselage and Fritz's voice sounded clear and sharp:

"Hallo! Who's thar, an' what's th' game?"

"Th' game's skittles, an' you're it, no lad!" chuckled Alf. "Jest keep yer head there a minnit longer, an' I'll give

How the Story Started.

OOM, THE TERRIBLE, IS A FLYING-BANDIT, WHO AIMS TO BE MASTER OF THE WORLD. HE FINDS TWO FORMIDABLE FOES IN THE TWO BROTHERS DARE, WHO HAVE SWORN TO BRING HIM TO BOOK. AT THE FLYING-BANDIT'S SECRET HEADQUARTERS TOM DARE SUCCEEDS IN WRECKING THE SPECIAL WIRELESS APPARATUS WHICH CONTROLS OOM'S AEROPLANES, BUT AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE FLYING-BANDIT'S CAPTURE SEEMS CERTAIN, HE SNEAKS OFF WITH THE INTENTION OF ESCAPING IN THE DARES' PLANE.

yer a close 'aircut an' sham-push free grattis and for nothing!"

"It's your two late prisoners whom you dumped overboard!" Rick shouted. "We've got a Lewis gun here, and if you don't surrender right away we'll make you look like a job lot of sieves!"

"Who did yer say yer was?" queried Fritz, in astonished tones.

"Rick Dare and Mister Alf Higgs, engineer!" howled Rick, winking at Alf, who grinned feebly in return.

"Forgit it," responded Fritz. "Them two pore fellers fell out'n this plane at five thousand feet, an' I'll gamble they never bounced—"

"We're not bouncing, either!" thundered Rick. "Let 'em have a sample to show 'em we mean business, Alf!"

"Pr-h-h-h-pr-h-h-h-pr-h-h-h-h!"

The machine-gun coughed, and Fritz dodged under cover. But Alf had not fired much above the man's head, and several bullets ricocheted off the plane and peppered the crew quite enough to make them nervous of more. They came piling out with their hands held high, standing ranged in a line and gazing nervously at the log gun emplacement.

As Rick emerged with his automatic in hand, their faces were a study. They had all seen the young inventor brought aboard their chief's plane, they had all heard of the fate of him and the Cockney engineer, yet here he stood as large as life—

"Good gad, it's a ghost!" chattered Fritz. "Don't come nigh me, m-m-mister. I will be g-g-good!"

"Pretty substantial ghosts, you'll find!" grinned Rick, as he gave the man a lunge in the ribs that sent him staggering back. "If any of you guys have any weapons, drop 'em on the ground, and do it quick, or my pal will perforate you! Drop 'em now!"

"Bawss, whoever yer air, ghost or blinkin' meracle, believe muh when I tell yer thar ain't a gun o' any sort amongst th' bunch!" stammered Fritz earnestly. "Search us, if yuh don't believe muh!"

"I will," said Rick; "but first—where's Oom?"

"Gorn, like th' tarnation skunk he is!" snarled the man; and Rick felt, from the heartfelt manner in which he cursed the "boss" criminal, that he was speaking the truth. "Soon arter we landed hyar he went into his cabin,

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,243.

lockin' th' door o' th' wireless-room arter him. I went to look for him a while since, an' he had beat it—arter clearin' out his safe an' leavin' us to face th' noose!"

"H'm! Sounds a bit thin," Rick surmised. "Think I can believe 'em, Alf?"

"You might, but thahsands wouldn't!" responded the Cockney. "Better lemme gi' 'em a rahnd or two jest to make sure. They're bound to cop it sooner or later, an' it'll save hexpense to th' Guv'ment!"

"Silly ass, you can't shoot unarmed men down in cold blood like that!" snapped Rick.

"Ho, I cawn't, cawn't I? You watch me!" snorted Alf. "Didn't they dangle us thro' an 'ole in th' bottom o' their blinkin' bus? If that wasn't cold blood I'd like to know wot was. I'm shiverin' yet!"

"I'm going to have a look over the plane to make sure," said Rick. "Keep an eye on these fellers, and at the first sight of a move—shoot!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" responded the Cockney cheerfully. "Keep still as mice, you lot a' cheese-mites! If yer moves a little finger I'll wipe yer up, an' no blinkin' horror! Carry hon, sir, I'm in charge!"

Turning the Tables!

RICK climbed through the small door into the machine, automatic in hand. As he dodged into the darkness of the cabin he ducked, fully expecting to hear the report of a gun and the thud of a bullet, for he could hardly believe the yarn of Oom's get-away. He walked right through the huge machine fully alert and prepared to fire at the first sign of a movement, but none came.

The young inventor stood in the cabin looking down at the rolled back trapdoor and plate-glass floor, and his heart sank. It was true that Oom, the Terrible had once more escaped at the very moment that he had been counting on capturing him. Rick had certainly got hold of his crew, but he would willingly swap the lot for their chief—

What was that?

Rick sprang through the opening and under the hull as a yell came from Alf Higgs, followed by the sharp staccato coughing of a bomber plane, at sound of which his heart stood still, for he knew what had happened without being told.

As he emerged from under the plane and glanced upwards Rick could see the small De Hay Tiger swooping round and round like a circling hawk. She was so low that the young inventor could even see the form of her pilot and the half-masked, goggled face with its sneering smile.

While he and Alf had been stealing through the forest to take the crew of the wireless plane unawares, the wily Oom had turned the tables by going the other way and commandeering their own machine.

Alf Higgs kept his head, and signed to Rick to take cover, whilst he barked out to the lined-up men:

"Keep still, you Oom rats, an' if one of yer moves 'and or foot, I'll blow it orf, pronto imejit! Heyes front, yer blinkin' lot o' missin' lynxs, and if this is a plant, 'Eaven 'elp yer, for don't forgit as yer'll be th' first to go. Heyes front!"

The men stood rigid, not even daring to cast their glances up at the

circling plane, lest their ferocious captor should take summary vengeance on them.

"He's done us, Alf!" whispered Rick, as he gained the Cockney's side and crouched beside him. "We were simply asking for trouble, leaving that plane where we did. But still, we weren't to know, were we?"

"Course not! We ain't got second sight, nor yet cawn't see into th' future. E's as artful as a waggin load o' blue-faced monkeys, but we'll 'ave 'im sooner or later. Keep still, guv'nor, it's better not to let 'im know we're 'ere—that is if 'e don't know!"

Time and again the tiny bomber circled that clearing, as if the pilot was making a survey of the place. Rick thought that Oom might be trying to spot them, and if he did would take a potshot, endeavouring to lay them out so as to give his men a chance.

"Nothing we left on the plane that he could use against us, is there, Alf?" Rick asked in a whisper. "What about those bombs?"

"Duds! I got th' pins 'ere, and they won't fire without 'em, at least, I don't think so," replied Alf thoughtfully. "They were new ones on me, and 'im bein' a scientific sort of chap may be able to make something of 'em. But that ain't wot I'm thinkin' of."

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

LOOKING forward to Christmas, chums? Why, of course you are! And you're not the only ones, believe me. Your old pals,

Harry Wharton & Co., are absolutely bubbling over with excitement at the approach of the great festive season, for they have been invited to Mauleverer Towers, the ancestral home of Lord Mauleverer.

You can bet your life, too, they're booked for the most exciting holiday they've ever had—and that's saying something!

You'll be so thrilled over this fine Christmas yarn, chums, that you will feel as though you are actually one of the guests present when you read:

"THE GHOST OF MAULEVERER TOWERS!"

By Frank Richards,

which is the star feature in next week's bumper Christmas number.

You know what to expect from F. R. when he gets going, and I can tell you that he "gets going" some next week.

In addition to other topping Christmas features there will be an extra-special Yuletide supplement, brimful of fun and jollity, which is calculated to bring a smile to the face of a brazen image.

Best thing you can do, therefore, chums, is to beat it round to your news-agent at once and threaten him with all sorts of dire penalties if he fails to reserve you a copy of next week's

BUMPER CHRISTMAS NUMBER

of the MAGNET. Step on it, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

of. I didn't tell yer afore, 'cos it's no use puttin' th' wind up yer, but Oom's got us by th' short 'air if 'e likes to chanot it an' come dahn low. This 'ere Lewis gun jammed at the very fust discharge, and is abaht as much use as a rabbit wiv th' toothache. I've on'y been bluffin' th' gang so far!"

As it happened, Rick and Alf were doing the very best possible thing by keeping rigidly quiet under cover, for though Oom could see his own men, and knew that they were being held up by someone, he had no idea from whence the menace came, or what shape it took. He had seen the pair carrying the Lewis gun between them, and he was not going to chance running into a hail from that weapon, so he kept high out of danger, and at last zoomed up and circled round a mile or two away. They could still hear the sound of the prop, but even though the Flying-Bandit was out of sight they still kept their hiding-place, though Alf worked like a nigger at the jammed Lewis gun, taking all the working parts to pieces. Now he was readjusting them, with a broad grin on his oil-streaked countenance.

"Orright, I fahnd it! Li'l pin worked loose an' was chokin' th' gadgets in th' rec-coil chamber. She'll work right 'nuff nah. If Oom on'y comes back—"

"Sst, he's here now! Keep low, Alf!" Rick whispered.

Down and down came the plane, Oom greatly daring as he found that no weapon was discharged at him. He managed the flexible little flier with a master hand, and ringed the trees not fifty feet from the ground. Suddenly he leant right over and shouted to his men as he wheeled above their heads.

"Boys, I've got to leave you for a while, but I'll be right back!" he yelled. "Wireless power's off, but I'll go and see to it. Stand by plane until I return, and the power will come on again pretty soon!"

"It's comin' on right now!" yelled Alf, and the Lewis gun barked like an agitated terrier as the little Cockney sprayed the air with bullets.

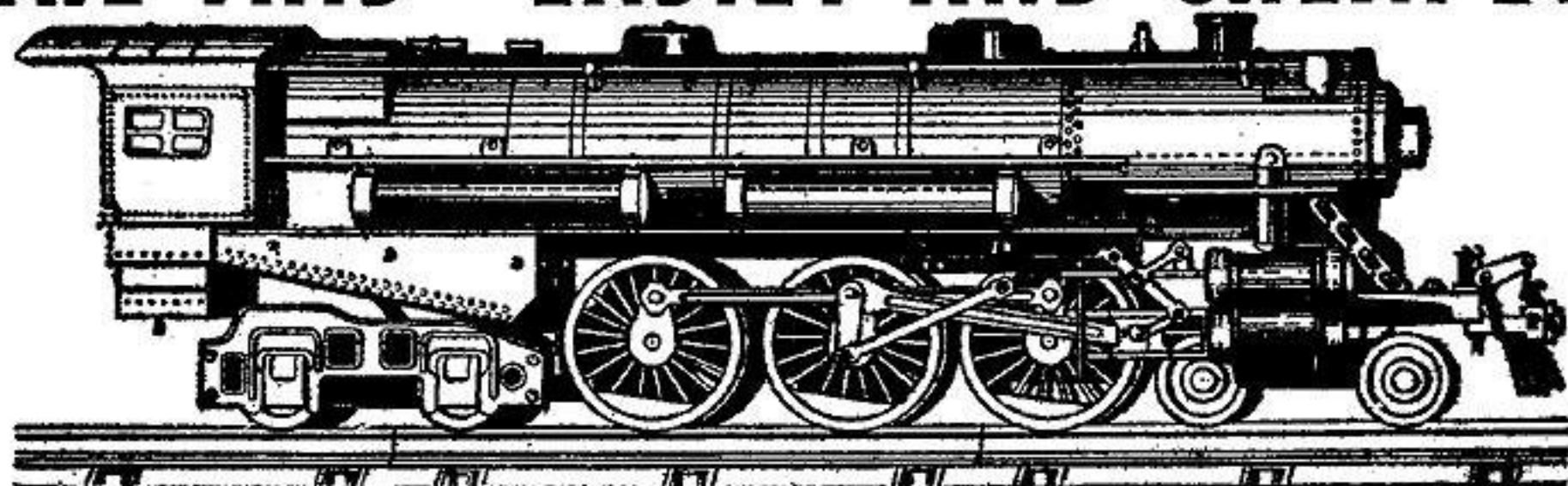
The Cockney had caught sight of the sneering face of the Flying-Bandit in the cockpit, and let drive without more ado.

Oom started up in the pilot's seat for a second, and the nose of the Tiger dipped until it looked as if it must crash, but, with a magnificent effort, the Flying-Bandit righted her, jammed on full power again, and, with the wheels of the undercarriage skimming the top of the pampas grass, swooped up once more and zoomed away over the trees. The last Rick saw was a deadly pale face with a streak of blood running down it as the man gripped the joystick and took the tiny bomber out of range over the tree tops.

"By hokey, you hit him, Alf!" shouted Rick, gripping the little Cockney by the hand. "But he's got pluck enough for ten, and the luck of a thousand. He'll carry on and make for his stronghold in the mountains, then he'll take it out of dear old Tom and the other poor fellers—unless we can find some means of getting after him and settlin' his hash!"

(Look out for another gripping instalment of this fine serial story in next week's Bumper Christmas Number, chums!)

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ERECTOR

A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 24.)

master severely, "that in making your confession to the headmaster, Nugent, you were speaking untruthfully!"

Nugent winced.

That aspect of the matter had hardly occurred to him, under the stress of emotion when he stood between his brother and overwhelming punishment.

"It is known beyond question," went on Mr. Quelch, "that you were not guilty of the assault on Mr. Twigg!"

Nugent's lips set obstinately.

He had stood by his brother, and he was standing by him still.

"I've owned up, sir!" he said in a low voice.

"The culprit has now confessed to the Head, Nugent!"

"Oh!" gasped Nugent. "Dicky—"

Mr. Quelch smiled faintly.

"It was not your brother, Nugent!"

"Not Dicky!" exclaimed Nugent blankly.

"No!"

Nugent almost tottered.

"It was a Remove boy," said Mr. Quelch. "It was Bunter, of your own Form. It appears, from his statement to the headmaster, that he had intended to throw the soot over you, and made a blunder in the dark, quite accidentally throwing it over Mr. Twigg. He was too frightened to admit the truth at first, but finally decided to do so. Mr. Twigg and the Head are satisfied that the whole affair was accidental!"

"Oh!" gasped Nugent. "Oh! That fat idiot—oh! Then—then it wasn't Dicky—I—I mean—" His voice trailed away.

"I hardly know how to deal with you, Nugent," said Mr. Quelch. "It appears that you were making a foolish and quixotic sacrifice for your brother, believing him to be the guilty party. Untruthfulness—"

"I—I never meant—" stammered Nugent, crimsoning. "I—I was only thinking of—of—"

"I can make allowances, in the circumstances," said Mr. Quelch. "The Head has left this matter in my hands, and I shall consider how to deal with you. In the meantime, you may rejoin your Form, your sentence is, of course, rescinded now that the truth is known!"

Frank Nugent felt as if he was walking on air when he left the punishment-room.

In the lower passage, his brother was waiting for him. There was quite a queer expression on Dicky's face.

"Frank, old man—" Dicky's voice faltered. "They've told me—it wasn't you, after all—"

"No!" said Nugent.

"I—I thought it was—I knew it wasn't me—I say, Frank, it was awfully decent of you—"

"It's all right!" said Frank.

He went on to the Remove passage. His chums were waiting for him there. They gathered round him, and marched him into Study No. 1.

"You ass!" said Bob Cherry.

"You silly ass!" said Harry Wharton.

"You fathead!" said Johnny Bull.

"You terrific chump!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Nugent grinned.

"Chuck it!" he said. "What about a study supper? I missed my tea—"

"You ought to be jolly well ragged

for worrying your old pals like this!" growled Bob Cherry. "But—"

"The ragfulness is the proper caper," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "But we will celebrate this joyful and absurd occasion with a terrific and ridiculous spread—"

"Hear, hear!"

It was a happy party in Study No. 1. Supper was under way, when the door opened, and a fat face looked in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Kill him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull! I say, you fellows. the Head jawed me nearly deaf!" said Billy Bunter lugubriously, "I wouldn't have minded that so much, you know, but he gave me six as well! I don't call that fair, to jaw a chap, and then give him six! I—I thought I was going to get off with the jaw, and then he said, in an awful voice, 'Bend over—'"

"Good!"

"I think you might be a bit grateful after I owned up in a manly way to save Nugent from getting sacked! The least you can do, I think, is to ask a fellow to supper!" said Bunter warmly.

Frank Nugent laughed.

"Roll in, you fat chump!" he said.

"Certainly, old chap, as you're so pressing!" said Bunter cheerfully.

And he rolled in.

THE END.

(Christmas comes but once a year, but the MAGNET makes a Merry Christmas a certainty. In "THE GHOST OF MAULEVERER TOWERS!" the most critical reader will find a real jolly feast of fun and adventure. ORDER NEXT WEEK'S SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER NOW!)

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Greyfriars Herald

Edited by HARRY WHARTON, F.G.R.
December 12th, 1931.
LET JOHNNY BULL TEACH YOU YOUR FOOTBALL!
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Mr. Alfonso Todd's First Annual Party for Ex-Grooms
In the Remove Form-room, last night, was the occasion for a touching reunion between many one-time gay dogs, merry blades and bold, bled lads.
Mr. H. Vernon-Smith, who was the social lion of the evening, arrived in a velvet suit with knee-breeches and silk stockings, carrying a lily in his hand.
Mr. H. Skinner who, at one time in his career, devoted all his spare time to smoking cheap cigarettes and picking out "sures" denoted in with a skipping-rope and was greeted with quite a cheer in consequence.

Many observers commented on his changed appearance. At one time his face was white and pasty, and a sneering smile hung round his lips; but now his complexion has turned purple, and he has washed the sneer off his face. Many fellows remarked also that his eyes, which used to be green, have turned blue.
Mr. P. Bolsover created quite a stir by bringing his hoop with him. He wore an angelic smile and crowed happily now and again, when nobody was looking.
Messrs. Snoot and Stolt came through the doorway playing "touch," while Messrs. Angel and Kenney of the Upper Fourth, who wore neat sailor suits, were shyly reading a copy of "Eric, or Little by Little," between them.
The arrival of Mr. Loder of the Sixth, eating liqueur almonds, was the signal for a spontaneous outbreak of hand-clapping, which was renewed when Mr. Alfonso Todd, the founder and president of the movement, shot through into the room on a banana skin which one of the guests had left outside.
After drinking cold water from a loving cup, the guests flung themselves with wild abandon into the pleasures of the evening.

Orange-and-lemons, puss-in-the-corner, and ring-o'-roses were played to the accompaniment of strifes of mirth and merriment.
By way of more serious and solid enjoyment, Mr. Todd announced a recitation competition for a prize of one orange. The test piece was the first verse of "The Village Blacksmith," and the expression which many of the competitors put into their rendering of this charming and poetical work held the guests spellbound and brought tears to many eyes.
So that there should be no jealousy, Mr. Todd had arranged for Mr. Dutton, who suffers from deafness, to act as judge. The judge's decision was that the competitors had all recited equally well, and the orange was therefore divided into equal parts and distributed to the lucky recipients, amidst loud whoops of joy.
The evening concluded with a short address from Mr. Todd, after which the guests frolicked away to bed with shouts of laughter and in great good spirits.
We congratulate Mr. Todd and trust that the party will be the forerunner of many similar evenings of innocent enjoyment on the part of these reformed young blades.
(We haven't time to check the accuracy of our correspondent's report, so we can only hope it's the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But we must say we have our doubts!—Ed.)

Mr. G. Bunter: As soon as I heard about the Economy Movement I made up my mind to throw myself into it heart and soul. I have started by cutting out eggs-venaise Havana cigars and disposing of my Rolls-Royce motor-car. There's economy for you!
H. Wharton: I had intended buying a hundred-guinea diamond topin out of next week's pocket-money; but I've decided to buy a packet of safety-pins instead!

R. Cherry: In the cause of economy I have sold my pair of fur-lined, diamond-eyelocket, gold-studded, football boots and started playing in a pair of carpet slippers instead!
H. Skinner: Be economical! That's my motto! By way of a start I have cancelled my annual subscription of £500 to Alfonso Todd's Fund for Supplying Shoes-les Savages with Corpuads!
P. Bolsover: I had quite intended challenging Coker of the Fifth to a bare fist fight of 20 rounds behind the chapel. Now that I've heard we must economise, however, I shall content myself with writing him an offensive anonymous letter!

R. Cherry: I have decided to buy a packet of safety-pins instead! And that's that! What more could you want?



Removics who wish to keep fit during the winter months will do well to observe these few hints—
Don't have breakfast in bed. When your voblet throws up the dormitory blinds and wakes you up with a respectful cough, don't merely sling a boot at him. Get up!
On arriving at your good breakfast table ignore the elaborate menus which the bowing waiter hands you and don't send your voblet to the Form-room with apologies and go out for a stroll.
As you walk across the quad, the Head may notice you and ask you whether you would like to borrow his car and have a run down to the coast. Decline his offer with thanks. You will find the w/v's more beneficial.
On your return your Form master will probably ask you whether you would like to see the pictures in preference to my. Since a little recreation is good for any man, choose the pictures.

SENSATIONAL BAN ON NOISE
Remarkable Results Prophasied
The order that Greyfriars must henceforth maintain a cathedral silence has fallen like a bombshell among us.
Our readers will be by this time be aware that the now order arose as a result of the noise that was going on when the Governors held their last meeting at the School.
On that unfortunate occasion Coker happened to be arguing with Blindell about walking, Bolsover was walking, 8. Hook's photo to be submerged in a bath of water; Hook's himself to School House, and Bunter was drinking ginger-beer in his study. The noise created by these three affairs happening simultaneously naturally sounded monum to the uninited Governors. Result: The sensational ban on noise!

STOP PRESS!
Special CHRISTMAS Edition of the "HERALD" next week!
1. All scrally pens to be fitted with automatic silencers.
2. The soles of Bolsor's boots to be covered with cotton-wool.
3. All cheering at footcr matches to be done in the deaf-and-dumb language.

APPROXIMATELY
The desks in the Fifth Form room are fearfully old. Every one of them is covered with initials carved by generations of schoolboys. But I must confess that I didn't dream how old they really were till I started looking them over and heard from Blindell what famous names many of them represent.
For instance, one of the most prominent initials on my desk is "J. S." Often in the past I have wondered what those letters stood for. Not once did it occur to me that they stood for "JULIUS SEZAR." Yet I have Blindell's solemn word for it that that's what they actually mean!
Almost incredible, isn't it, dear Editor? But that's not all. Greene's desk bears the letters "S. F. D." Blindell asked me if I could guess who had put them there? When I answered "no," he assured me they belonged to the famous eggsporer, Sir Francis Drake! Grately eggsted, I presented them Blindell called my attention to "W. T.," and said they stood for Wat Tyler. I asked him which Tyler and he answered What Tyler. I said that was what I wanted to know—what Tyler? Excuse me, Blindell eggspained that Wat Tyler was the name of the chap. I thought it was a pretty silly sort of name, but Blindell tells me Wat Tyler was very well known in olden times, anyway.

ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE
History in Desk Initials
"H. S." was another that Blath of Delaclaya! Your space is limited and I must draw a close. Till mention one more eggspore, however. This is "N. H.," which you'll find on Fitzpatrick's desk. Blindell fairly fumed me by saying that this was the initial of Horatio Nelson! How I demanded, could "N. H." stand for "Horatio Nelson," when the letters were the wrong way round? Blindell's answer was illuminating. "Nelson, poor chap, he informed me, only had one eye and, because of this, saw everything backwards."
Yours historically,
HORACE J. COKER.

LET JOHNNY BULL TEACH YOU YOUR FOOTBALL!
Step FORWARD, chaps, and learn the grand old game from an expert! Money HALF-BACK if not satisfied! To make my pupils first-class players is my GOAL!
ADOPT THE BULL METHOD IN FOOTBALL!

STRANGE INCIDENT IN FORM-ROOM
QUELCHY'S TERRIBLE BLOOMER
Quelchy was interrogating Skinner in class about a bound-breaking expedition in which he carried those letters, that the day would come when he would defeat Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo! Skinner in class about a bound-breaking expedition in which he carried those letters, that the day would come when he would defeat Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo!
"Well, sir, I went first," replied Skinner, "and Bullstrode after me."
Quelchy reached for his cane.
"Bull! Stand out!"
"What for, sir?" asked Johnny Bull, in surprise.
Quelchy's answer was to drag him out by the scruff of the neck and give him a dozen of the best.
Only after the operation had ended did it transpire that Quelchy imagined Skinner to have said: "I went first, and Bull strode after me!"
NOW YOU TELL ONE!

COCKER'S SURPRISING DISCOVERIES
History in Desk Initials
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JOYS OF THE CHASE
Mr. W. G. Bunter, the well-known Society man, turned out with the Priardale Hounds last week with a view to getting himself in trim for the Christmas vacation.
The prospect of seeing this pampered pet of the aristocracy in the hunting field drew a large crowd of Greyfriars spectators to the meet. There was much favourable comment on the manly figure Mr. Bunter presented in his scarlet tunic, mounted on a milk-white charger.
Owing, apparently, to some question as to his exact identity, there was an unfortunate scene at the start, Sir Hilton Popper, the Master of the Hunt, even raising his hunting-crop at Mr. Bunter in a threatening manner. Luckily, Sir Hilton was thrown by his back at the crucial moment and, before he could remount, the pack was off.
In the thrilling chase that ensued, followers wishes to make it known that this account is nothing to do with him. He further informs us that anyone who suggests he turned up at the Priardale meet for the sake of the hunt at the finish is a beast. We hope our readers will take due note.

BUNTER, THE HUNTER
Porpoise Joins "Tally-Ho" Fans
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ECONOMY FOR ALL
Economy is in the air. Everybody is talking about it. Naturally Greyfriars is taking a prominent part in the movement. Just how prominent that part is you may judge from the following messages we have received from Remove celebrants!
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H. Wharton: I had intended buying a hundred-guinea diamond topin out of next week's pocket-money; but I've decided to buy a packet of safety-pins instead!

KEEPING FIT IN WINTER
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