

A Powerful and Dramatic
Story of St. Jim's

"LEVISON'S SACRIFICE!" By Martin
Clifford.

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PUTTING A STOP TO RACKE'S LITTLE GAME!

Aubrey Racke, of the Shell, gave a horrified gasp as a grip closed on one of his ankles. "Not so fast!" remarked Jack Blake, cheerily.

(A startling incident from the grand school story of St. Jim's, inside.)



LEVISON'S SACRIFICE!

A Powerful and Dramatic Long
Complete School Story of Tom
Merry & Co. at St. Jim's.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD

CHAPTER 1.

Pulling Racke's Leg!

"**Q**UIET!" whispered Monty Lowther, of the Shell Form at St. Jim's.

"What—" began Manners.

"Quiet, you ass!"

"But what?" said Tom Merry, subduing his voice, though, for the moment, he saw no occasion whatever for caution.

"Dry up, old man, and keep in cover."

Monty Lowther pushed his two comrades into the deep shadow of the elms. Tom Merry and Manners gave him his head, as it were, though they were mystified.

The Terrible Three of the Shell had walked across to the New House after prep, to speak to Figgins on the subject of the coming House match. Now they were walking back to the School House, across the dusky quadrangle, and all of a sudden Monty Lowther pushed his comrades into deep shadow, and whispered to them to be quiet.

Lowther peered out from the shadow of the big elm in the direction of the School House. Tom Merry was aware of a faint sound of footfalls approaching.

"He's coming!" breathed Lowther.

"Who's coming?" muttered Manners impatiently.

"Racke."

"Bother Racke!"

"Bother him as much as you like, only keep quiet," answered Lowther. "It's a jape, dear men; don't spoil it by wagging your chins. Jolly old Aubrey is going out of bounds, and we're going to make him jump—see? It's naughty to break bounds after dark, and when we bag old Aubrey, he will think a prefect has got hold of him, and it will give him no end of a treat! Catch on!"

Tom Merry smiled.

"Oh, all right!"

"Shush!" breathed Lowther.

The Terrible Three "shushed."

The faint footfalls were coming closer along the path that ran under the elms. A dim figure loomed up in the gloom. Dim as it was, the Shell fellows knew Aubrey Racke.

From the darkness under the elms they watched him anxiously. That Racke of the Shell was not merely taking a walk in the quad before dorm, was quite clear from his manner. He was walking very lightly, almost catlike in his tread, and he glanced to right and left, and every now and then looked over his shoulder. That he was afraid of being observed, even in the deep dusk of the quadrangle, was plain.

Watchful as he was, he passed the elm under which the three Shell fellows stood, without seeing them. His faint footfalls passed on towards the school wall that bounded the Rylcombe road.

Monty Lowther chuckled softly when he was gone.

"You know what he's heading for—the slanting oak," he murmured. "Aubrey's going out of bounds—at this giddy time of night."

Manners sniffed.

"Shady rotter!" he murmured.

"After all, it's no bizney of ours, you know," said Tom Merry. "We're not prefects, Monty. Let him rip, and be bothered to him!"

"Fathead!"

"Look here, Monty—"

"Come on! Don't I keep on telling you it's a jape?"

"Oh, all serene," said the captain of the Shell resignedly. From of old he knew that when Monty Lowther was on the trail of a jest, he was beyond argument. So Tom did not argue, but followed Monty Lowther, as the humorist of the Shell trod softly on the track of the breaker of bounds.

Aubrey Racke reached the school wall, in a dusky secluded spot, where an ancient oak slanted against the old stones. It was a spot well known to the St. Jim's fellows—in fact, Tom Merry & Co. had climbed the wall in that spot more than once. Obviously Racke was going out, and that was rather perplexing. Tom Merry would have been surprised at nothing that Racke of the Shell might do, in the blackguardly line. It was no secret in the Shell that Racke was a breaker of bounds and a "pub haunter." But it was now past nine o'clock, and bed-time for the Shell was at half-past nine. Racke could scarcely intend to remain out at bed-time. He would be missed instantly if he did not turn up in the Shell dormitory. His excursion outside the school, therefore, could only be a very brief one. Certainly he had no time to reach that delectable resort, the Green Man, much less to enjoy the society of his racing friend, Mr. Lodgey, there.

Racke stopped at the slanting oak, and began to climb. The three juniors heard him breathing hard as he climbed, grunting with the exertion. They drew closer in the dark, with grinning faces. Treading on tiptoe, they reached the oak, the clambering Shell fellow looming darkly above them against the sky.

Racke's hands were on top of the wall, and he was drawing himself up, when all of a sudden he gave a horrified gasp.

A grip had closed on one of his ankles, and he was held from below.

"Oh!"

Monty Lowther grinned as he gripped.

The next moment he ceased to grin.

Racke, startled and terrified, lost his grasp on the wall, and came slithering down. He crashed fairly on Lowther's grinning face.

"Whoooooop!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

Manners chuckled breathlessly.

There was a heavy bump as Monty went down, with Racke of the Shell sprawling over him.

"Groogh! Ow! Oh! Gug!" spluttered Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Draggimoff! Huh!"

Monty Lowther hurled Racke aside, and scrambled up, dusty and breathless and dizzy. He glared at his chums.

"You silly owls—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" yelled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Tom Merry and Manners. The jest had rather turned against the humorist of St. Jim's, and the humour of it was now lost on him.

Racke sat up, spluttering.

"Who—what?" he gasped. "Is that Kildare? I—I wasn't going out! Oh, it's you fellows! You fools! I thought it was a prefect who had got hold of me! You silly japing chumps."

Racke picked himself up. He glared at the Terrible Three with a white face.

"You fools!" he repeated.

"Oh, draw it mild," said Manners. "You were going out of bounds, and it's jolly lucky for you that we caught you instead of a prefect."

"Ow, ow, ow!" mumbled Lowther, rubbing his head, which had knocked on the hard, unsympathetic ground with a terrific knock.

"Are you hurt?" snapped Racke.

"Ow! Yes."

"Serve you jolly well right!"

"By Jove! I'll jolly well—"

"Here, hold on!" Tom Merry caught Monty by the arm. "Hold on, Monty! You asked for it, you know! Racke didn't want to fall on your napper, did you, Racke?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Manners.

"I wasn't breaking bounds, either!" snapped Racke. "I was going out for a few minutes, if you want to know—not that it's any bizney of yours. I'm not quite ass enough to clear just before bed-time. Now stand back, and mind your own dashed bizney."

Racke turned to the slanting oak again, and then he slipped his hand into his pocket, as if to make sure that something was there. Apparently the "something" was not there, for Racke stopped, with a startled, husky exclamation.

"I've dropped a letter!"

Tom Merry stooped and picked up an envelope that glimmered white on the ground at the foot of the oak.

"Is that it?"

Racke tore the letter from his hand.

"Dash it all!" began Tom hotly.

"Sorry!" panted Racke. "It's—it's an important letter!" He peered at it closely in the gloom. "Yes, that's it. Thanks!"

"You're going out to post that letter?" asked Tom, in wonder.

"Yes," muttered Racke.

"Why the thump can't you drop it into the school letter-box and save yourself the trouble? If you're spotted out of bounds, do you think the Housemaster will believe that you got out to post a letter?"

Racke made no reply.

He shoved the letter deep into his pocket and climbed the oak again. This time he climbed without any humorous intervention from Monty Lowther. Monty was still busy rubbing his hapless head.

The juniors heard Racke drop outside the wall, and they turned to walk back to the School House.

"Well, Racke must be a silly ass!" said Tom. "Seems to me to be taking a lot of risk for nothing!"

Manners chuckled.

"You're an innocent old bird, Thomas!" he said. "Can't you guess that that letter's addressed to somebody Racke knows, and whom he's not supposed to know? One of the sporting johnnies at the Green Man, most likely!"

"Oh!" said Tom.

"Fancy old Blagg, the giddy postman, collecting a letter from the school box addressed to Bill Lodgey at the Green Man?" chortled Manners. "I fancy he would be more likely to show it to the Head than to put it in his bag."

"Oh!" said Tom again.

"That's it," said Lowther. "Racke's cut down to the post-box at the corner. If it's that kind of letter he wouldn't dare to post it in the St. Jim's box! Shady blackguard!"

"Shady ass!" said Tom. "It's a mug's game as well as a rotten one! He will come an awful mucker one of these days!"

"The sooner, the better!" growled Lowther, rubbing his head.

The Terrible Three went into the School House. Levison of the Fourth was going towards the staircase, and the expression on Levison's face caught Tom Merry's eye at once. The Fourth-Former's lips were set hard, and his brow was black. Several fellows glanced at him as he passed them, but Levison was too deeply preoccupied to notice it.

"Hallo, Levison!" called out Tom Merry. "Anything the matter?"

Levison glanced at him.

"Yes," he answered.

And without any further explanation than that, Ernest Levison tramped up the staircase, leaving the Shell fellows staring after him in surprise.

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CHAPTER 2.

Cardew Wants to Know!

RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW, of the Fourth Form, yawned.

It was getting near bedtime; but that was not why Cardew yawned. He was not sleepy. He was bored, or he chose to fancy that he was bored. He leaned back in the armchair in Study No. 9 in the Fourth and gazed at vacancy, idly listening to a buzz of voices in the distance from the passages.

Prep had long been over in the Fourth, and Cardew had lounged down to the Common-room for a time with his study-mates, Clive and Levison. But Clive and Levison had been busy since then. A crowd of the School House fellows had gathered to join in the search for a banknote belonging to Mr. Selby, the master of the Third, which, apparently, was lost. As Ernest Levison seemed deeply concerned in the search—for what reasons Cardew did not trouble to inquire—the slacker of Study No. 9 had joined up, too; but he had soon drifted away from the search-party and taken refuge in the study.

Cardew did not love exertion in any shape or form, and he saw no reason whatever why any fellow should exert himself on account of Mr. Selby of the Third.

Why Ernest Levison was doing so was a mystery to him—a mystery he was far too lazy to attempt to fathom.

Mr. Selby might have lost whole wads of banknotes up and down the School House without causing Cardew to rise from the comfortable armchair in Study No. 9.

Still, as Ernest Levison, for unknown reasons, seemed extremely keen on finding that lost banknote, Cardew had made a show of joining in the search—only escaping as soon as he could.

But he was bored by himself in the study. Still, he reflected that he had been bored by the talk in the junior Common-room, chiefly on the subject of the cricket matches. Likewise he had been bored by the trailing along staircases and passages looking for Mr. Selby's missing banknote. He was bored by the book he had picked up in the study, and had thrown it down on the hearthrug. He began to consider whether there was time, before dorm, to drift along to Aubrey Racke's study in the Shell and have a hand at nap with Racke and Crooke, the two black sheep of the School House. But if he left the study he might run into Levison and the search-party, and Racke and Crooke might be gone from their study, anyhow. And there was not much time before dorm, and, on the whole, he was too lazy to move.

So he lounged in the deep, comfortable armchair, stared at vacancy, and yawned.

A footstep came along the passage.

Cardew reached out to the table and picked up a volume of Latin grammar to assume an appearance of study when Levison came in. That would be an excuse for having deserted the search-party on which Ernest Levison was so keen.

But it was not Levison who came in. It was Sidney Clive. Clive glanced at the lazy figure in the chair.

"Hard at it?" he asked rather sarcastically.

"Grindin', old bean," answered Cardew.

"Do you always hold a Latin grammar upside-down when you're grinding at it?"

"Oh gad!"

Cardew had not even noticed that his volume was upside-down. He tossed it on the table and laughed.

"Only spoof!" he said cheerily. "I thought it was Levison comin' in. Where's jolly old Ernest?"

"I thought I should find him here," said Clive. "I've been helping him hunt for that dashed banknote!"

"Found it?"

"No."

"What does it matter, anyhow?" yawned Cardew. "I suppose Mr. Selby isn't offerin' a munificent reward for it, is he?"

"There's something up, I think," answered Clive. "The whole bizney seems rather queer! It's a French banknote that's lost!"

"Is it?" said Cardew, with a stare.

"So Levison said."

"French banknotes aren't jolly valuable these days!" said Cardew. "The giddy exchange is about ninety francs to the quid! If Selby had a few French notes left over from his holiday last vac he needn't worry about them; they're not worth much."

"It seems to be a big note," said Clive. "I don't quite catch on to it. I don't see why a St. Jim's Form-master should have a French banknote for a large amount knocking about. It's odd!"

Cardew grinned.

"Dear old man," he said, "I think I could guess it in once. My Uncle Lilburn has been bitten in the same way!"

"I don't quite follow."

"Simple enough, all the same," said Cardew. "When the French exchange was at sixty, my Uncle Lilburn made his



"I want to tell you, sir," said Frank Levison, "that I never touched your banknote. And that I never heard anything about a banknote until you——" "Do not repeat useless falsehoods to me, Levison minor!" ground out Mr. Selby, between his teeth. "On my word, sir——" Smack! The Third Former staggered aside, as Mr. Selby boxed his ears with savage force. (See page 8).

bankers buy him a draft—I think they call it a draft—a credit on a bank in Paris for a heap of francs. He thought the exchange was going back to fifty or forty or even lower. Some happy folks think it will go back to pre-war rate some day. Then nunky was going to sell his draft and bag some enormous profits. See?"

"I see."

"Only, the jolly old exchange dropped and dropped and keeps on droppin'!" grinned Cardew. "Uncle Lilburn has lost about a third of his money so far, and if the exchange keeps on the same way he will probably lose the lot. I believe he wishes now that he'd kept to backin' horses and left the exchange alone. Looks to me as if old Selby has been playin' the same game; only, instead of a banker's draft he's bought a French banknote. It comes to the same thing. If he's got a note for a large amount in francs he can't have got it for any other reason."

Clive's lip curled.

"Speculation!" he said. "That's a good deal like gambling!"

"Own brother to it," said Cardew lazily. "My Uncle Lilburn is beginnin' to think that the French franc is goin' to follow the German mark into jolly old bankruptcy. I don't believe it myself. The French aren't a nation of swindlers like the Germans! But, of course, with a few hundred pounds tied up in francs a Johnny might get nervy. Last year, I used to hear Uncle Lilburn cursin' the exchange

regularly every mornin' when he opened his paper. It was entertainin' in a way!"

"If that's it, I think Mr. Selby ought to be jolly well ashamed of himself," said Clive. "Anyhow, he ought to have taken proper care of his silly banknote. If it doesn't turn up it will be rotten all round."

"Well, it must turn up, if he's dropped it about the House somewhere," said Cardew. "A fellow who picked it up wouldn't keep it, I suppose? But what does it matter to Levison?"

"Here he comes!" said Clive.

Ernest Levison entered Study No. 9.

His two chums regarded him curiously. Why Ernest Levison was so deeply concerned in the loss of the Third Form master's banknote was rather a mystery; but evidently his concern was very deep. His face now was dark and troubled; it had almost a haggard look.

"Found it, old bean?" yawned Cardew.

Levison shook his head.

"What does it matter, anyhow?"

"It matters a lot," said Levison. "I can't make it out. The rotten banknote must be somewhere, but we've hunted over every inch from Mr. Selby's study, and as far as Tom Merry's study, in the Shell, and we can't find it. It beats me! The thing must have been picked up, I suppose; but in that case, it ought to have been taken to the Housemaster—and it hasn't been."

He clenched his hands.

"Why Tom Merry's study?" asked Cardew, raising his eyebrows. "Our high-minded and esteemed friend Thomas hasn't been pinchin' it, has he?"

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

Cardew bestowed a wink on Clive.

"Our dear old pal Ernest is losin' his temper," he remarked. "He is gettin' ratty! Mind your eye!"

Levison of the Fourth gave Cardew almost a fierce look. Obviously, he was in no mood for badinage.

"Oh, cheese it!" he snapped. "This may be a jest to you, Cardew, but it's jolly serious for me, and for my brother."

"Young Franky? What has your giddy minor to do with it?"

"You'd know if you'd been helping me instead of loafing about in the study."

"Mea culpa!" said Cardew meekly. "But as the matter stands, old bean, I don't know, and I'm waitin' to be enlightened. I'm no end fond of young Franky, as you must have noticed."

Levison made an impatient gesture.

"You remember the young ass telling us that Mr. Selby had taken away his 'Holiday Annual' because he had it in the Form-room?" he said. "The young duffer raided it from Mr. Selby's study, and took it to Tom Merry's room to read it there, with D'Arcy's minor and Manners' minor. And it turns out that Mr. Selby had slipped the banknote into the book, and it was there when Frank took the dashed thing off his table."

Cardew whistled.

"Didn't Frank find it there?"

"No; and Wally D'Arcy and Reggie Manners saw nothing of it, either. It must have dropped from the book while Frank was scudding away with it. He ran into Racke, of the Shell, in the passage, and dropped the 'Annual.' The banknote very likely fell from it then; but it can't be found."

"Have you asked Racke if he saw it?"

"Yes; and he knows nothing about it."

"Is it quite certain that Mr. Selby put it in the book?"

"He says so; and I suppose he knows."

Cardew's face became very grave.

"Good gad! You don't mean to say that Mr. Selby suspects your minor of baggin' it, Levison?"

Levison set his teeth.

"That's just what he does suspect, and he's gone to the Head about it. If the banknote doesn't turn up my brother will be accused of taking it."

"Oh!"

"The man's a fool!" growled Clive. "As if young Frank would do anything of the kind."

Levison gave the South African junior a grateful glance. Clive's immediate and unquestioning faith in Frank Levison was a comfort to him—perhaps it helped to banish a tormenting doubt from his own mind.

Cardew was silent.

"What do you think, Cardew?" asked Levison abruptly.

"I think it will look jolly queer for your minor, old man, if they don't find the banknote."

Levison's eyes flashed.

"Cardew, if you think—"

"I don't," said Cardew coolly. "I'd trust young Frank with unnumbered Bank of England notes, which are a jolly good deal more valuable than foreign ones. All the same, it will look awfully queer if the thing doesn't turn up. The plain fact is that if it isn't returned to Mr. Selby it will be because somebody has stolen it, and it's known to have been in Levison minor's hands, and nobody else's. This study puts its money on Frank, but the rest of the school don't know him so well as we do. Levison, old man, that Froggy banknote has got to be found."

Levison shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

CHAPTER 3.

The Head Does Not Agree!

MR. SELBY, master of the Third, coughed.

He coughed again.

He was feeling extremely uncomfortable as he sat in the Head's study, and met the inquiring glance of Dr. Holmes.

It was an uncomfortable position in which the sour, irritable master of the Third Form found himself.

That Levison minor had taken his banknote he had not the slightest doubt. That immediate measures should be taken to compel the young rascal to give up his plunder followed as a matter of course. The headmaster's authority had to be invoked.

But that necessitated explaining the whole affair to Dr. Holmes. It was necessary to tell the whole story of that wretched speculation in foreign exchanges which Mr. Selby, hitherto, had kept a secret locked up in his own breast.

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Mr. Selby was quite aware of what the Head's opinion would be on that subject. Dr. Holmes was not likely to think that a speculation which amounted to a gamble was a proper occupation for a St. Jim's Form master.

But it could not be helped. Even at the cost of facing the headmaster's cold and surprised disapproval, Mr. Selby had to recover that hapless banknote for ten thousand francs, which was still worth more than a hundred pounds, in spite of the fall in the exchange.

He coughed, and coughed, and surprise grew in the face of the headmaster of St. Jim's.

"You had something to tell me, Mr. Selby?" he asked at last, as a hint that his time was of value.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Mr. Selby. He took the plunge at last. "A theft has been committed."

"A theft!" repeated the Head.

"A banknote has been stolen from my study."

"Bless my soul!"

Dr. Holmes had Sophocles on the table before him. One eye, at least, was straying to that entrancing volume. But he forgot all about Sophocles as Mr. Selby made his startling announcement. He almost spun round in his chair.

"That is a very serious statement, Mr. Selby. I presume you are absolutely certain—"

"Absolutely!"

"Have you any idea of the culprit?"

"Levison minor, of my Form, sir."

"He has admitted—"

"No, sir; he denies the obvious facts, and persists in his denial with utter effrontery," gasped Mr. Selby. "A more hardened young reprobate—"

Dr. Holmes raised his hand.

"Let us proceed a little more slowly, Mr. Selby," he said.

"Levison minor is, I believe, a boy of very good conduct. It is possible, at least, that there is some mistake in the matter. Was the boy actually seen to take the banknote?"

"No. But—"

"You had better tell me just what occurred," said the Head. "Until the strictest investigation has been made, the boy must be held innocent."

Mr. Selby controlled his feelings with difficulty. He had no doubt himself, and he was feeling a bitterness towards Frank Levison that almost amounted to hatred. It was not only the loss of his money, but the necessity of explaining the matter to the Head that galled him, and upon Levison minor's shoulders he laid the whole blame. Some at least should have been laid on his own.

"Very well, sir. At preparation this evening, in the Third Form room, I found that Levison minor had a book in his desk. I took this book away, as I suspected him of reading it in class. Levison minor was told that the volume would be returned to him at the end of the term. I did not dream that he would have the audacity to take it away from my study."

"And he did so?"

"Yes. I went to see Mr. Lathom for a few minutes, and during my absence Levison minor entered my study and took possession of the volume—a volume called the 'Holiday Annual.'"

"That was an act of disrespect," said Dr. Holmes. "But what connection has this with the theft of a banknote?"

Mr. Selby breathed hard. The unpleasant part of his explanation was coming now.

"As it happened, sir, I had the banknote on my table. I was interrupted by a junior coming to my study—Levison's brother, of the Fourth Form. I slipped the banknote into the book."

Dr. Holmes raised his eyebrows.

"Surely that was a very peculiar proceeding, Mr. Selby. May I ask why you placed the banknote in so very unsafe a place?"

Mr. Selby coloured.

"I did not desire the junior to see a banknote for a large amount in my study and to chatter about it among his friends," he said. "The fact is it was a foreign banknote—a French banknote for ten thousand francs."

"Bless my soul!"

There was a short silence.

"This matter will have to be gone into, and the whole school will hear of it, Mr. Selby," said the Head at last. "Undoubtedly a great deal of comment will be excited. Everyone will wonder how you came to have a foreign banknote for so considerable an amount in your study. Equally certainly all the school will remark upon it now."

Mr. Selby winced. He was only too well aware of that.

"It is so very unusual," went on the Head, "that the case cannot be made too clear. Levison's parents will have to be satisfied. His father may demand proof that the banknote ever existed. Your reason for possessing it at all must be explained."

Mr. Selby's sour face was crimson. This was what he had dreaded, and what could not possibly be avoided now.

"I will explain frankly, sir," he gasped. "I bought that



"What utter rot!" exclaimed Racke sharply. "No decent man would suspect young Levison of thieving!" "Thank you, Racke," said a quiet voice behind the black sheep of the Shell, and he started and turned his head, to see Levison of the Fourth, with Cardew and Olive. "I never expected that from you, Racke, and it's jolly decent of you to say so!" Racke coloured. (See page 9.)

banknote some time ago, when the Exchange was lower. It was my intention to dispose of it when the Exchange improved. The French Exchange, as you know, has gone from bad to worse, and so I have kept the banknote. This evening I had taken it from my desk and was considering whether to dispose of it and cut my loss, when—when I was interrupted—"

"Let us be clear, Mr. Selby. You purchased this French banknote as a speculation in the rise and fall of the Exchanges?"

"Yes," muttered Mr. Selby.

There was a pause. Mr. Selby expected the Head to pursue the subject, but the old gentleman did not. But the Third Form master dared not meet his glance.

"Very good," said the Head at length. "The fact that the banknote was there is now explained. May I take it that you remember with absolute exactness placing it in Levison minor's book?"

"Beyond doubt."

"It was in the book when the boy took it away, then?"

"Undoubtedly."

"What is Levison minor's explanation?"

"He professes ignorance even of the existence of the banknote. It is clear, of course, that he found it in the book and has made away with it."

"That does not seem so clear to me," said the headmaster coldly. "In the first place, the fact that the banknote is a foreign one is against it. No Third Form boy could possibly hope to exchange a foreign banknote, for a large amount, into English money without detection. No Exchange bureau would accept it from a junior schoolboy without inquiry. If Levison minor has taken your banknote, Mr. Selby, he has taken what is of great value to you but absolutely valueless to himself."

Mr. Selby started.

In his hurry and alarm and anger he had certainly not thought of that aspect of the matter.

He stared rather blankly at the Head.

"Levison minor is, I believe, a sensible lad," said the Head. "Even if he were dishonest enough to take the note, he would know that it was useless to him. If he stole it, he would steal it for its value, I presume, and to him it has no value unless it can be changed into English money. That is impossible for a Third Form boy."

"I—I admit," Mr. Selby stammered, "the—the boy may not have thought of that; or he may have some older friend outside the school who he may hope would dispose of the note for him."

"That is highly improbable," said the Head. "Have you ever had reason to suspect this boy of having undesirable acquaintances outside the school?"

"So far, no."

"His general character is good?"

"Quite good," admitted Mr. Selby, with some reluctance. "He has often been impertinent, and sometimes careless; that is all."

Dr. Holmes was silent, thoughtful.

"But the note is gone!" broke out Mr. Selby. "It has been searched for. I allowed Levison's brother in the Fourth to make a search, and I understand that a large number of boys assisted him. No sign has been discovered of the banknote."

"It must be found," said the Head. "But, for the reasons I have given I do not credit for one moment that it was stolen by Levison minor. I have observed the boy, and, while convinced that he is not a rascal, I am still more convinced that he is not an absolute fool; and he could be nothing short of that if he made the attempt to change a banknote for ten thousand francs into English money. A much less heinous explanation occurs to my mind, Mr. Selby. From what you state it appears very probable that Levison minor took the note from the volume, but he may have done so without any intention of stealing it."

"I told him that I was willing to forgive the prank—if it was a prank—on condition that the banknote was returned," said Mr. Selby. "He denied all knowledge of it."

"It may be something more than a prank and yet not a theft," said the Head. "It appears that you punished him by confiscating his book. He may have acted from a foolish and thoughtless feeling of revenge. The banknote may be concealed simply in order to cause you worry and stress of mind."

Mr. Selby started again.

Again he realised that he had been in rather a hurry to jump to conclusions.

"That—that is quite probable, sir," he stammered. "I did not think of it, but very probably it is an act of revenge. But if the boy has destroyed the note—"

"We must not leap to conclusions, Mr. Selby. Send Levison minor to me, and I will question him if the banknote is not found. But if a more complete search is made for it, it may be found that it actually fell from the book without Levison minor's knowledge. Until this point is definitely established I think no official note should be taken of the matter. Place a notice on the board, and if the banknote is not handed in by noon to-morrow we must take further measures."

Mr. Selby bowed his head in assent reluctantly.

"In point of fact, Mr. Selby," said the Head quietly, "you will surely see that the less that is said upon this matter the better. It will not increase the respect felt by the boys for my staff to learn that a Form master has been dabbling in speculation. You are entirely the master of your own actions, sir, and I do not criticise you; but you will see this, I am sure. There will be sufficient discussion without the whole school being excited by a charge of theft against a St. Jim's boy."

"I—I agree, sir!" gasped Mr. Selby.

And he quitted the Head's study, glad to escape the calm, searching gaze of Dr. Holmes.

His brow was black as he went down the corridor.

The headmaster's decision was wise, he knew that; but it irritated him. Every instant of delay added to his fear that he would never see the missing banknote again.

At the corner of the corridor a diminutive fag was waiting; he started forward as Mr. Selby came along.

It was Levison minor of the Third.

The fag's face was white, and there was a suspicion of tears about his eyelashes.

"Mr. Selby!" he panted.

The Form master stopped, with a bitter look.

"Levison minor! Are you here to confess—to make restitution?"

"No, sir!" groaned Frank. "I—I want to tell you, sir, that I never touched the banknote. I never saw it. I never knew it was in the book at all. I'm sorry I took my 'Holiday Annual' from your study, sir. I know it was a silly trick. I'm sorry for it. But that's all I did, sir—that's all. I never heard anything about a banknote until you—"

"Do not repeat useless falsehoods to me, Levison minor!" ground out Mr. Selby between his teeth.

"On my word, sir—"

Smack!

Levison minor staggered aside as Mr. Selby boxed his ears with savage force.

"Oh!" he gasped.

The Third Form master strode on.

CHAPTER 4.

Quite a Jest!

"SOME jest!" remarked Monty Lowther.

It was indeed, as Lowther slangily declared, "some" jest!

After morning class the following day the Terrible Three came along when the Shell were dismissed, and found quite a crowd round the notice-boards.

Notices were up in the usual number, but only one of them was attracting attention from the St. Jim's fellows.

That was a notice from Mr. Selby on the subject of the missing ten thousand franc note.

All St. Jim's had read that notice, and wondered and commented and laughed. It was undoubtedly "some jest" from the point of view of the whole school.

There had been sheer wonder at first at such an article as a French banknote of large denomination being in existence at St. Jim's at all. That circumstance alone excited great comment.

Small French billets-de-banque were to be found, of course—every fellow who had spent a vacation across the Channel had one or two left—those dingy little notes for a franc, or half a franc, worth a few pence. But ten thousand francs—a sum worth more than a hundred pounds even in the depreciated state of the exchange—that was quite another matter. Every fellow wondered how the banknote happened to be in the school at all, and explained

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tions were not long in forthcoming. Ralph Reckness Cardew was not the only fellow who knew something about the foreign exchanges and speculations therein.

Before third lesson that morning all St. Jim's knew how the matter stood—knew that the Third Form master had speculated in exchange, and knew how he had been left "holding the baby," as they say on the Stock Exchange.

The fellows chuckled over it right and left.

Serious fellows like Kildare and Darrell, Sixth Form prefects, shook their heads. They were shocked and surprised. Cuts of the Fifth set the Fifth Form in a roar by his remarks on the topic of Mr. Selby backing the wrong horse. The Lower School took it as a huge joke. Mr. Selby's effort to "get rich quick" by means of speculation—a very undignified proceeding on the part of a St. Jim's Form master and a Master of Arts—was chortled over in every Form-room. It was a standing joke in the passages and the studies. His lamentable failure to "pull it off" was considered funny, and the fact that he had finally lost the hapless banknote itself was regarded as the cream of the joke.

Mr. Selby's face was sourer than ever when he was seen in public. He knew that he was the cynosure of all eyes; he knew that his wretched speculation was the talk of the school, and he knew that his loss had evoked much more merriment than sympathy. That morning the Third Form found him more Tartaric than usual; indeed, the Third Form room was a den of Cimmerian gloom, and the cane and the pointer had incessant exercise, as well as Mr. Selby's acid tongue.

The Terrible Three sauntered along from the Shell-room, and joined the group of fellows who were staring at Mr. Selby's notice and grinning over it.

"So the jolly old banknote hasn't turned up yet," remarked Tom Merry. "I should have thought it would have been found by this time."

"Must have been," said Manners.

"Eh?" said Tom. "If it had been found it would have been handed over to Mr. Selby, I suppose."

"Perhaps."

"Oh, draw it mild, old man!" said Tom. "I suppose there's no fellow at St. Jim's who would keep it."

"Looks as if there might be," answered Manners, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Banknotes are flimsy things, but they don't vanish into thin air like giddy spooks. Somebody knows where it is and isn't letting on."

"Looks like it," agreed Lowther.

Tom Merry whistled. The unpleasant side of the affair dawned upon his mind now. Mr. Selby's misadventure might be a great jest, but accusations of theft bandied about the school would be by no means a jesting matter.

"Oh, that's all rot!" broke in Racke of the Shell, who had come along to stare at Mr. Selby's paper. "I call that suspicious, Manners. How do we know that the banknote was lost in the school at all?"

"Mr. Selby says so."

"I suppose he might have made a mistake. If he's careless as enough to lose a banknote he might lose it anywhere."

"Of course," said Tom Merry, relieved by the suggestion. "He may have dropped it anywhere, Manners."

"Out of doors, most likely," remarked Kangaroo of the Shell, "and it's blown away somewhere."

"Yaas, wathah," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth. "I was helpin' Levison hunt for it last evenin', you know, and I'm quite saah that it was not in the House."

"Levison!" said Talbot. "What has Levison to do with it?"

"He was huntin' for it, you know, to oblige Mr. Selby, I suppose."

"A gent we all want to oblige as much as we can!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Hold on, though," said Blake. "Wasn't there some yarn about the banknote being in a book that young Levison took from Mr. Selby's study?"

"Bai Jove! Yaas, I wemembah—"

"Bosh!" said Talbot. "Why should it be in a book?"

"Rubbish!" said Racke. "I remember now that Levison asked me about it. His minor bagged a 'Holiday Annual' from Mr. Selby's study, and Selby seems to have dreamed that he put his French banknote into it."

"What wot!" said Arthur Augustus.

"The kid biffed into me, running away from Mr. Selby's study, and dropped the giddy volume," said Aubrey Racke. "I jolly well kicked him for it. I thought Levison had come to kick up a row about that, when he came to my study. You know, his minor is extra special good, and musn't be kicked!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But he had only come to inquire whether I had seen the jolly old banknote floatin' around," said Racke. "My belief is that Selby only fancied that he shoved it into the book. We all know what an ass he is."

"Hear, hear!"

"Dash it all, though, it will look pretty rotten for Levison minor if the beastly thing doesn't turn up!" said Croke.

"How's that?"

"He may be suspected of pinching it."

Racke started.

"What utter rot!" he exclaimed sharply. "No decent man would suspect young Levison of anything of the kind."

Some rather curious glances were turned on Aubrey Racke as he spoke. Really, it was not in Racke's line to stand up like this for another fellow, and it was well known that he did not like either of the Levisons personally.

"Good man, Aubrey!" said Monty Lowther quite cordially. "You're right on the wicket. Young Levison is as straight as a string."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Oh, I agree!" said Crooke. "Still, it will look as—"

"Rubbish!" interrupted Racke. "If Mr. Selby should dare accuse young Levison the whole school would be down on him."

"Thank you, Racke!" said a quiet voice behind the black sheep of the Shell. And he started and turned his head, to see Levison of the Fourth, with Cardew and Clive. "I never expected that from you, Racke, and it's jolly decent of you to say so."

Racke coloured.

"Well, I say what I think," he answered. "I don't like your minor, Levison, and that's no secret; but I know he's not a thief. I think it will be pretty sickenin' if Mr. Selby talks about thefts, and so on, because he's been such a careless ass to lose his rotten banknote."

"Well, he hasn't talked about it yet," said Blake.

"He has," said Levison quietly, and with a pale face. "What?"

"You don't mean—" exclaimed Racke.

"I do! My minor has just been taken to the Head, and Mr. Selby has accused him of stealing the banknote!" said Levison bitterly. "It will be all over the school in a few minutes now."

"Levison!"

"Bai Jove!"

"It's too thick!" exclaimed Tom Merry angrily. "There isn't a fellow at St. Jim's who will believe it of young Frank!"

"Wathah not!"

"It's a rotten shame!"

"The old ass!"

"The brute!"

There was a chorus of indignant surprise. It was comforting to Levison of the Fourth, perhaps. But his face was dark and troubled. The decision, after all, did not rest with the juniors; it rested with the Head. And what would the Head believe?

CHAPTER 5. Guilty!

LEVISON MINOR shrank a little as his Form master's hand was dropped on his shoulder.

"Come!" said Mr. Selby curtly.

Frank was no coward, as the Third Form of St. Jim's well knew. But his face was white, his steps lagged, as he went with Mr. Selby to the Head's study for the fateful interview.

The unhappy fag felt like some creature caught in the toils. He was bewildered, almost dazed, by the position in which he found himself. That thoughtless raid on Mr. Selby's study to recover the book that had been confiscated had had an outcome that was so unexpected, so bewildering,

that Frank could hardly realise that it was real. Once or twice during the morning, listening to the drone of Mr. Selby's voice in the Form-room, he had wondered whether he had dreamed it all.

But it was real—terribly real. The banknote had been in the book and it was missing, and he had to answer for it. His friends in the Third, Wally D'Arcy and Reggie Manners, had sympathised and consoled, but they could not help him. He had to answer to the headmaster; and what might happen was unknown to him; but he knew that the worst might happen.

No wonder he was pale and shrinking as Mr. Selby led him into the presence of the Head.

To Mr. Selby's mind his look was a confession of guilt. Fortunately, the Head was a better judge. Any fellow unexpectedly accused of a crime might well have looked as poor Frank looked then.

Frank Levison stood before the Head, his eyes on the carpet, his lips quivering. There was compassion in the glance that the kind old gentleman gave him.

If the boy had been guilty of theft, the Head was prepared to deal with him ruthlessly. St. Jim's was no place for a thief. But the Head did not forget the legal maxim that every man is innocent until he is proved guilty. And though it seemed to him probable that the fag had committed a reckless and revengeful act, he did not believe him guilty of theft, and was not likely to believe him guilty without incontestable evidence.

"Collect yourself, Levison minor," said the Head kindly. "You are here for inquiry, my boy. You must not suppose that you are already adjusted guilty. Collect yourself."

Frank ventured to raise his eyes.

Mr. Selby thinks, sir—" he began, faltering.

"Mr. Selby has an open mind on the subject so far, as I have," answered the Head.

"Oh, sir!"

Frank knew how "open" Mr. Selby's mind was on the subject, and perhaps the Head knew. Perhaps his remark was intended to convey a hint to the Third Form master that it was not yet time for judgment to be delivered.

"Now, Levison minor," went on the Head in the same kind tone, "I must ask you to answer my questions frankly."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"You know that there was a French banknote, of great value, in the book you took from Mr. Selby's study yesterday evening. That banknote cannot be found. Do you know where it is?"

"No, sir."

"Did you remove it from the book?"

"No, sir."

"Have you seen it at all?"

"No, sir."

The fag's answers were clear enough. Mr. Selby's face assumed an expression a good deal like a bulldog's, but he did not speak. Dr. Holmes' manner was quiet and placid, but he was in authority in this matter, and he made that fact quite clear.

"When did you first know that the banknote was missing, Levison minor?"

"When Mr. Selby told me, sir, in his study."

"Had you known of its existence before then?"

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A member of Study No. 7 in the Shell Form, and one of the most wild and reckless juniors at St. Jim's. The chief ally of Aubrey Racke, who usually leads all the shady escapades, and who shares the same study. Crooke would be even more dangerous than Racke but for the fact that he lacks courage. Crooke is a bitter enemy of Ernest Levison, who was once a member of the rotters' brigade, but who is now a decent fellow. Crooke is the sort of fellow St. Jim's could very well do without.

"No, sir."

"You did not know that Mr. Selby had such a banknote in his possession at all?"

"No, sir. I don't think anybody did. How could I know?"

The Head coughed.

"Have you any suggestion to make, Levison minor, as to how the banknote disappeared?"

"It must have dropped from the book, sir, while I was taking it away from Mr. Selby's study. That's the only thing I can think of."

"You are aware that the whole House has been most carefully searched?"

"Yes, sir," faltered Frank.

"If the banknote has fallen from the book within the walls of the House it must have been found before now, Levison minor."

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"Did you take it out of the House?"

"No, sir. It was after lock-up."

"Where did you take it?"

"I went back to the Form-room passage and met Wally and Reggie—I mean D'Arcy minor and Manners minor—and we went to a Shell study to read the book together. It was Tom Merry's study."

"Why did you go to a Shell study?"

"I—I thought Mr. Selby might be after me, sir—I mean, he might be looking for me when he missed the book from his table, and we wanted to finish reading a story before dorm."

"Did either D'Arcy minor or Manners minor see anything of the banknote, to your knowledge?"

"No, sir. It couldn't have been in the book then."

"Could either of them have abstracted the banknote, had it been there, without your knowledge?"

Frank started.

"Oh, no, sir! They wouldn't!"

"I am not asking you whether they would, but whether they could."

"Well, they couldn't, sir. We had the book open on Tom Merry's table, reading it together. Then my major came in and made me take it back to Mr. Selby and say I was sorry for having raided it—I mean, taken it."

"Your brother seems to have acted very judiciously, Levison minor."

"Yes, sir," groaned Frank. "I wish I'd taken his advice in the first place. He advised me to let the book alone after Mr. Selby took it away from me."

"You would have done well to be guided by your brother's advice," said the Head. "You were guilty of disrespect to your Form master in taking the book from his study without permission."

"I know, sir," muttered Frank. "I'm sorry I did that. But I haven't done anything else. I never knew there was a banknote—"

"Now, Levison minor, I must advise you to be quite candid," said the Head. "I shall be very slow to believe you guilty of theft. But it is clear that the banknote disappeared from the book while it was in your possession. If you had dropped it, it must have been found before now. That is clear to you, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir," said Frank, with a scared look.

"That you took the banknote, intending to keep it, I consider very improbable," said the Head. "But on the evidence, Levison minor, and on your own admissions, it seems established that you did remove it from the book."

"I—I did not, sir!"

"Listen to me, Levison minor. Did you take the banknote from the book without any dishonest intention, but with the idea of playing a prank on your Form master by hiding or keeping back the note?"

"No, sir!" gasped Frank.

"If you played such a foolish prank it is a matter for punishment," said the Head. "But such a matter, if trifling in comparison with what you may be suspected of, Levison minor, such a prank will be punished with a caning, and dismissed. You understand me?"

"Yes, sir. But—"

"If that is the state of the case you have only to restore Mr. Selby's property to him and the matter closes," said the Head.

Levison minor panted.

"If I had the banknote, sir, I'd give it to Mr. Selby at once. If I'd found it in the book I wouldn't have played pranks with it. I'm not fool enough to play japes with money. I never saw the banknote, sir. I never have seen it. I—I can't quite believe that it ever was in the book at all."

Mr. Selby jumped.

"Dr. Holmes!" he exclaimed.

"Allow me, Mr. Selby," said the Head calmly. "Explain yourself, Levison minor. What do you mean by that statement?"

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"I—I mean, sir, Mr. Selby must have put it somewhere else, and only thought he had put it in the book!" gasped Frank. "He might easily have made a mistake like that, sir."

"I see," assented the Head. "But in this case it was not possible for such a mistake to be made, Levison minor. Mr. Selby put the banknote into the book when your brother entered his study, and distinctly remembers doing so."

"Then—then I can't understand it, sir."

There was a long silence.

Mr. Selby broke it.

"Dr. Holmes, I was willing to believe—you were willing to believe—that this boy had taken away the banknote for a foolish prank. He denies it. His denial can only mean that he has concealed the banknote, intending to keep it. The boy is a thief!"

Frank shivered.

Hard and bitter as the Form master's words were, Frank could hardly blame him for the view he had taken. For the banknote had vanished while it was in the fag's hands, and he himself could offer no explanation, could make no suggestion. How had it vanished?

"Have you anything further to say, Levison minor?" asked the headmaster at last.

"No, sir, only what I've said—I never saw the banknote."

"I am sorry, Levison minor, that I cannot believe you," said the Head slowly and sorrowfully. "It is established that the banknote was in the book you removed from Mr. Selby's study. The book was in no hands but yours, and the banknote disappeared. What am I to believe?"

"I—I don't know, sir. Only I'm not a thief!" groaned Frank.

Mr. Selby made an angry gesture.

"What is to be done, sir? This boy's guilt is established, but the banknote must be found. Have you any objection, sir, to the police being called in?"

Frank shuddered at the word.

Already it seemed to the dazed and terrified fag that he could feel the hand of a constable on his shoulder.

Dr. Holmes looked steadily at Mr. Selby.

"I have every objection," he replied.

"But, sir, there is no doubt that a constable would be able to elicit the truth from this wretched boy. He has lied to me and lied to you, but he would not dare to lie to the police authorities."

Dr. Holmes made Frank a sign to leave the study.

The door closed on the unhappy fag.

"Now, Mr. Selby," said the Head quietly, "the banknote is your property, and the loss to you, if it be not recovered, will doubtless be heavy. You have the right to call in the aid of the police if you so decide. But I must tell you that if the police are called into this school, owing to your own carelessness with your property, I shall expect you to resign your position here."

"Dr. Holmes!"

"It is better to speak frankly, Mr. Selby. In the first place, it is expected of a Form master in this school to be above the temptation to dabble in risky speculations. In the second place, having the banknote in your possession, it was your duty to keep it locked up and avoid placing temptation in the way of any weak or unscrupulous character. You have therefore been guilty of two faults in this matter."

"Sir!" breathed Mr. Selby.

"I would not, for ten times the sum, have a scandal in the school and the good name of St. Jim's disgraced," exclaimed the Head. "Do as you think best, Mr. Selby, but—"

"I—I—I shall, of course, be guided by your advice, sir!" gasped Mr. Selby. "I have no intention—no desire—to act against your wishes in any way."

"Very good."

"But—but surely, sir, the thief is not to escape—he is not to enjoy his plunder with impunity?"

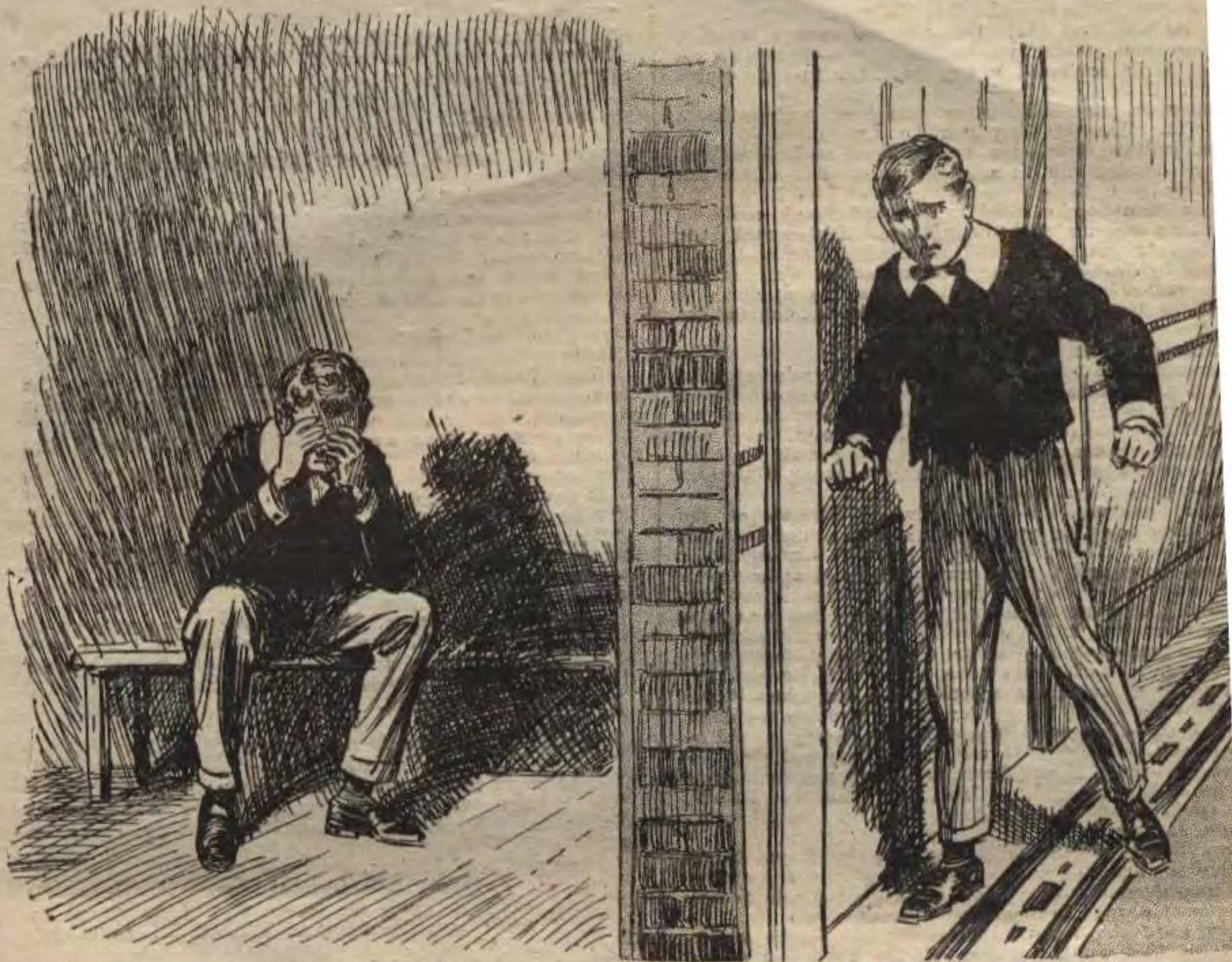
"Nothing of the kind! Levison minor will be given time to reflect upon the matter in the punishment-room," said the Head. "He must be kept away from the other boys for the present. Should he decide to confess that he has played a foolish prank and restore the banknote, the matter will end in a flogging."

"And—and if not—"

"If not, I must adjudge him guilty of theft," said the Head. "In that case he will be expelled from the school—a sufficiently heavy punishment for so young a boy. Doubtless, when he is sent home his parents will prevail upon him to restore what he has taken; in fact, I have no doubt that your banknote will be restored, unless this unhappy boy, in his terror, has destroyed it. I fear that that may prove to be the case and that it is the cause of his persistent denials."

"His father will be bound to make the loss good!" exclaimed Mr. Selby passionately.

"That is a matter you must settle with Mr. Levison personally," said the Head. "Whether an action at law would be practicable I cannot say. I am no lawyer. If such an action is entered upon you will, of course, no longer have any connection with this school, as I have said."



"Ernie!" cried Frank Levison's voice pitifully. "Will they say I'm a thief and turn me out of St. Jim's?" "Yes," muttered Levison major. There was a cry in the punishment-room. "Then, Ernie, can't you help me, somehow?" sobbed Frank. "I've never seen or touched any banknote. Can't you—can't you help me somehow—can't you save me?" (See Page 12.)

Mr. Selby choked.

"Am I to submit to the loss?" he articulated. "A loss of over one hundred pounds?"

"A serious loss, I admit," said the Head. "But if you regard it as the reward of reckless speculation, the punishment of being careless with money, even that serious loss may not be without its salutary effects."

Mr. Selby bowed his head, without speaking, and left the study.

He could not trust himself to speak.

Had he uttered the words that were on his lips, certainly he would have had to leave St. Jim's before Levison minor left.

He choked with rage as he went down the corridor.

His banknote was gone now. He had little doubt that the frightened fag had destroyed it to get rid of a proof of his guilt. He had lost his money, and the only solace that remained to him was to make Levison minor's punishment as hard and heavy as possible. In that, at least, Mr. Selby was not likely to fail!

CHAPTER 6.

Under The Shadow!

"WUBBISH!"

Thus Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

It was Gussy's verdict upon the proceedings. Many fellows echoed it, but others did not.

That afternoon Levison minor was not seen in class.

It was known that he was for the present confined to the punishment-room and left to his own company there.

He was not formally charged with the theft of the banknote. The Head still clung to the hope that he was not guilty of the greater offence and that he would confess to the lesser.

That he had made away with the missing banknote, in retaliation for punishment inflicted on him by Mr. Selby, was the charge, so far.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy pronounced that it was "wubbish," and Tom Merry & Co declared that it was "rot."

They knew Levison minor too well to believe that he would be guilty of a malicious act of revenge.

But other fellows had other opinions.

Mr. Selby was not popular in his Form, and punishment in the Third were frequent and painful and free. Many the fags yearned to deal with Mr. Selby in a drastic way.

Wally of the Third had been heard to say that when became an "Old Boy" he would return to St. Jim's special to "wallop" his present Form master. Certainly there were a good many fags in the Third Form who would have hesitated at little to make their hard-handed Form master "up."

In the Third there was little doubt on the subject. Frank Levison had "paid out" Selby for confiscating his book and caning him, and many other heavy-handed acts. That was how the fags looked at it, and they approved warmly. Wally and Reggie had been told by Frank that he knew nothing about the banknote; but, in the circumstances, they took liberty of doubting the statement. Nothing would have induced them to believe that he had stolen it, but they believed very easily that he had hidden it in some obscure recess to worry "old Selby."

"You see, young Manners, the giddy thing couldn't walk away," D'Arcy minor said, with the air of an oracle. "All very well for Franky to keep dark what he's done with it; but it couldn't walk away, and it couldn't fly. He's shoved it out of sight, of course."

"Young ass!" said Reggie. "Man shouldn't play tricks with money."

"Just so; but he has! He will shell it out as soon as Mr. Selby's had a good innings at worrying and grousing," said Wally confidently.

"I suppose that's it," admitted Reggie. "But if the young ass doesn't shell it out soon, Selby will be making out the best of it."

"I'll give him a tip to own up as soon as I can get at him," said Wally. "It's time he did, you know. A joke's a joke, but Franky is carrying this one too far."

Mr. Selby was not pleasant in the Third Form room that afternoon. The fags did not enjoy class.

In the Fourth Form room Levison had a clouded face.

His minor was shut up in the punishment-room, to give him a chance to confess what he had done with the French banknote. If he confessed and restored the note he would be flogged. If he did not—

And he could not, if his story was true, and he knew nothing of it. Was his story true?

Levison believed him. He was resolved to believe him. But in spite of himself his mind wavered. For where was the banknote?

It would have been a relief to him had Frank confessed to destroying it from malicious motives. That would have been bad enough, and it would have involved the repayment of the sum by his father—a serious matter for Mr. Levison, who was not a rich man. But at least it would have accounted for the vanishing of the banknote, and averted the terrible charge of stealing.

But Frank confessed to nothing.

He maintained that he knew nothing of the missing note, and that it was scarcely possible to believe: Levison believed him, or tried to do so; but he found that few shared his belief. D'Arcy did, most emphatically—Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther agreed. But even they could not offer an opinion as to what had become of the banknote, if Levison minor was telling the truth.

It was a black and bitter afternoon to Levison of the Fourth. After class, he walked out into the quad with his chums in silence. They looked up at the high window of the punishment-room, and Levison waved his hand as he saw a white face pressed to the glass far above. He could not help his brother. Even his keen and sagacious mind was at a loss. He knew that if Mr. Selby's property was not forthcoming, the present state of affairs could only be temporary; the accusation of theft must come. Mr. Selby, indeed, had already made it, as all the school knew; but when it was endorsed by the Head the matter would come to a climax. The possibility—the probability—that his brother would be expelled from the school, in undying shame and disgrace, almost overwhelmed Ernest Levison. There was nothing he would not have done to save him, but there was nothing that he could do.

"Hallo, Levison!"

Aubrey Racke of the Shell seemed to be drawn to the spot where the Fourth-Formers were staring up at the window of the punishment-room. The place of Levison minor's imprisonment seemed to draw him, somehow.

Levison gave him a nod. He did not like Racke, but he remembered that the black sheep of the Shell had spoken up in favour of his minor, and he was grateful.

"Your brother's there," said Racke, with a nod towards the high window.

"Yes."

"Have they accused him of—of—"

"That's coming," said Levison bitterly.

"It's a shame!" said Racke. "Look here, Levison, you don't think they'd actually make out that your brother stole that banknote?"

"It looks like it."

"But—but that means the sack; it means—why, it might mean prison," said Racke, with a deep breath.

Levison bit his lip hard.

"It means the sack," he said dully.

"It's a rotten shame!"

"It will be all right if Levison minor confesses what he did with the banknote," said Sidney Clive. "It seems pretty clear that he must have done something with it."

"Some silly jape," said Cardew. "Of course, he wouldn't pinch it; that's frabjous rot. But—"

"I don't believe he knows anything about it," said Levison.

"That's what he said, at any rate."

His comrades were silent.

"I agree with you, Levison," said Racke. "My belief is that Selby's lost the note, and don't know what he really did with it."

"I wish you could make the Head think so," said Levison.

Aubrey Racke walked away with a strangely troubled face. Levison left his chums and went into the House. He made his way up the stairs to the room which was called "Nobody's Study," of which the door was now locked on his brother. Two fags of the Third Form were outside the door—Manners minor and Walter Adolphus D'Arcy.

"Hallo! Here's his major," said Wally of the Third. "I say, Levison, we're just jawing your minor through the keyhole. Trying to make the young ass understand that he'd better own up what he's done with old Selby's rubbish."

"He won't own up," said Manners minor.

"So you believe he knows about it?" asked Levison, looking attentively at the fags.

"Well, of course he does," said Wally. "It was in the book, wasn't it, and he had the book? He's hidden it, of course."

"I haven't," came a voice from the other side of the keyhole. "I tell you I don't know anything about it, Wally."

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"Gammon!"

"Bosh!" said Reggie Manners.

"Can't you understand that it's time to own up, Franky?" howled D'Arcy minor. "Can't you get it into your head that if Selby doesn't get his goods back he will make out that you're a thief?"

"I can't help that."

"You can help it, fathead! What did you do with the thing?"

"I never saw it."

"Oh, you make me tired!" said Wally in disgust. "Look here, if you're jolly well bunked from the school, you'll jolly well deserve it! See?"

And Wally and Reggie walked away crossly. Levison stopped nearer the door of Nobody's Study.

"Frank!"

"Is that you, Ernie?"

There was a quiver in the voice of the fag.

"Yes. Frank, old man, nobody believes that you stole the banknote—so far. But everybody will believe it if it isn't given back. Frank, old man, if you have played tricks with it, for goodness' sake own up before it's too late!" said Levison huskily.

"I haven't, Ernie."

"If you've even destroyed it—"

"I haven't."

"That would be bad enough. It would make no end of a row at home, if the pater had to refund the money. But that's better than the sack—anything's better than disgrace. Frank—"

"I can't say any more, Ernie!" groaned the prisoner of Nobody's Study. "I'd own up like a shot, if I had anything to own up to. I know how serious it is; I know where I stand. But I've told the truth, Ernie."

Levison bit his lip hard.

"Ernie!"

"Yes, kid?" muttered Levison.

"If they don't find the banknote—"

"They won't find it now," said Levison.

"If—if they don't—do—do you think I—I—" Frank's voice broke. "Ernie, will they say I'm a thief, and turn me out?"

"Yes," muttered Levison.

There was a cry in the punishment-room.

"Ernie, can't you help me somehow? I never did it, Ernie; I never saw the thing or touched it! Can't you help me now?"

"What can I do?" said Levison hoarsely.

"What will father say—what will Doris say?" moaned the unhappy fag. "Ernie, I—I can't stand it! I couldn't face it! Can't you—can't you help me somehow—can't you save me?"

It was a cry of distress and pain that made Ernest Levison's heart ache. He was helpless—utterly powerless to help his brother; but the fag had always had faith in him, always relied on him; somehow, it seemed to Frank that Ernest could help him even now. His trembling voice came through the keyhole of the thick oak door.

"I couldn't face it, Ernie! I couldn't! I'd rather die! Shame and disgrace—oh, I couldn't! Ernie, can't you help me?"

"I—I'll try!" muttered Levison.

It was useless to say so; there was nothing that he could do. But he had to utter some word of comfort to the tormented fag. He moved away, and tramped down the stairs with a black brow and a heavy heart.

What could he do? Frank was innocent; and Frank was to be sentenced. What could he do? Frank relied upon him instinctively to save him. How could Levison save his brother?

CHAPTER 7.

Too Late!

TOM MERRY started a little, as his eyes fell on the face of Aubrey Racke. Tom was coming in at the school gates when Racke was going out. The Shell fellow's face was set hard, and his cheeks were pale; two or three fellows had stared at Racke, wondering what was the matter with him. Too many cigarettes, Crooke of the Shell opined. But it did not seem to Tom Merry that it was cigarettes; and he stopped to speak to Racke.

"Hold on a minute," he said.

"I'm in rather a hurry," muttered Racke.

"Look here, Racke," said Tom. "You told me yesterday that you were up against it—hard up. We're not friends, but if you're really in a serious scrape, I'd like to lend a hand. You're looking frightfully seedy at the present moment, old man."

"Am I?" muttered Racke.

"Yes. Is the trouble so jolly serious as all that?"

Racke looked at him.

"No; that's all right," he said. "I've got over that little



"Levison minor. For the last time, will you confess what you have done with Mr. Selby's banknote? Cannot you understand that your silence can only be interpreted to mean that you have stolen it?" "I can't, sir," said the Third Former. "I've done nothing with it. I've told the truth." Dr. Holmes sighed, and his kind old face hardened. "Then you must leave the school!" he said. (See page 17.)

trouble; it's all right. I'm feeling a bit seedy, that's all. I think a walk would do me good."

"Like a fellow to come along?" asked Tom.

"Thanks, no."

Racke walked quickly down the road, evidently desirous not to have Tom Merry's company. Tom glanced after him with rather a concerned expression. He did not like Aubrey Racke, and he rather strongly disapproved of him; but he did not like to see any fellow looking as Racke was looking now. Most of the Shell knew that Aubrey had had "cruel luck" with his underhand betting ventures of late, and that he was hard hit. Tom Merry remembered the mysterious letter which Racke had posted the night before, and which pretty clearly had been sent to one of his blackguardly associates outside the school. Doubtless it had been written to ask for an extension of time on his debt to Mr. Lodgey at the Green Man; and probably Racke was now going to see that shady sharper on the subject. This kind of thing was what Racke called "life"; but Tom Merry was quite unable to see where the enjoyment came in. The downs seemed to predominate over the ups in Racke's sporting career.

Aubrey Racke hurried down Rylocombe Lane.

That he was in difficulties over his racing concerns, that he owed money to a racing sharper, that he was afraid of what Mr. Lodgey might do in consequence, Tom Merry knew. But Tom was far from guessing the torment that was in Racke's mind at the present moment. Not for an instant did it enter his thoughts that it was Racke who had picked up the missing banknote, and that that banknote had been in the letter Racke had stolen out of bounds to post the night before. Had Tom suspected that, he would not have wasted much compassion on the blackguard of the Shell.

Racke undoubtedly was a blackguard, and a good deal of a rascal; but even Racke had his limits. It had not occurred to him, when he picked up the French banknote, that anyone would be accused of the theft of it. He had felt safe from any accusation himself, as no one had seen him; and

that the guilt might be laid at another door never entered his mind. He had been almost overwhelmed by what had happened afterwards. Bad as he was, Racke was not bad enough to let an innocent schoolfellow suffer for what he had done, if he could help it.

His own position was almost desperate; but to Racke's credit be it said, the dominating thought in his mind now was to recover the banknote, and allow it to be found, and clear Levison minor of suspicion.

Mr. Lodgey might be unwilling to give up so valuable a plunder; it would be easy for the racing sharper to get rid of the note, as Racke had known when he sent it to him. But Racke was prepared to quarrel with Lodgey on the subject, and take all risks, rather than sink deeper than he had sunk already.

He hurried down the lane, his mind quite made up.

Before the formal accusation of theft was made against the wretched fag, the missing note should be found; Racke himself might pretend to find it in some obscure corner. That was his plan.

Usually, when Racke ventured into the Green Man Inn, he was very careful; he looked this way and that way, to make sure that he was not observed; but on the present occasion he was too troubled and excited to think of caution.

He turned into the muddy lane beside the inn, and entered the crazy old wooden porch at the side door.

The porch concealed him from general view, as he knocked at the door and waited impatiently for it to open.

It was Mr. Joliffe himself, the landlord of the Green Man, who came. He nodded familiarly to Racke.

"You sir? Walk right in; always welcome, sir!"

"Lodgey here?" asked Racke.

"He's away at Lincoln," said Mr. Joliffe; "the races, you know. He went yesterday."

Racke almost staggered.

It was an utterly unexpected blow.

(Continued on page 16.)



LEVISON'S SACRIFICE!

(Continued from
page 13.)

"Gone away!" he muttered thickly.

"You wanted to see him partickler?" asked Joliffe, eyeing the St. Jim's fellow curiously. "I can take charge of anything you've got for him, sir. You can leave it in my hands." Apparently Mr. Joliffe knew something of Mr. Lodgey's financial dealings with Racke of the Shell.

"It isn't that," muttered Racke. "I wrote to him yesterday—last night—". He broke off, and began again eagerly: "There was a mistake—something in the letter. If he's gone, it's all right; he can't have had it. Give me my letter, Mr. Joliffe—"

"You see, sir—"

"You know my fist!" exclaimed Racke irritably. "Look at the letter you've got for Lodgey, and you'll know it came from me. I suppose you can give me back my own letter."

"Yes, but you see, all Mr. Lodgey's letters are sent after him," said Joliffe. "I noticed that there letter you speak of, this morning, among the others, Master Racke, but it was sent on to the Nag's Head at Lincoln, where Lodgey is now."

"Sent on!" stammered Racke.

"Of course. Lodgey wouldn't want his letters to wait ere for him a week p'r'aps."

"Oh!"

"That's his address for a week, if you want to write to him," said Mr. Joliffe, staring at Racke, and wondering at the white horror and dismay in his face. "You won't come in, sir?"

"No!" muttered Racke hoarsely.

There was nothing more to be done at the Green Man. Joliffe evidently was stating the facts. Lodgey's letters were readdressed to him while he was away, Racke's letter among the others.

Without a word more to the innkeeper, Racke turned and almost limped away. The banknote was gone—gone beyond recovery. Mr. Joliffe stared after him, shrugged his shoulders, and shut the door.

Aubrey Racke tramped back to St. Jim's. His brain was in a whirl.

"I can't help it," he said to himself a score of times. "I've done all I can. I can't help it now!"

At the school gates Kildare of the Sixth noticed him and glanced at him.

"Racke!" he called out.

The Shell fellow looked round.

"Are you ill, Racke?"

"Ill? No."

"You're as white as a sheet!"

"I—I feel a bit tired. I've had a long walk," muttered Racke.

He passed on, the captain of St. Jim's looking after him rather grimly. He realised that he had to pull himself together if fellows were not to begin to suspect him. He came into the School House and came on D'Arcy of the Fourth.

"Any news?" he asked.

He was thinking of Levison minor.

"Yaas, deah boy," answered Arthur Augustus.

"What is it, then?"

Racke wondered whether the wretched fag had already been sent away from the school.

"Tom Mewwy has picked me out, aftah all."

"Picked you out?" repeated Racke blankly.

"Yaas, wathah! For the Gwammah School match, you know," explained the swell of St. Jim's.

Racke stared at him for a moment, as if not understanding. He was far from thinking about cricket just then.

"Hang the Grammar School match!" he snarled. "You dummy!" And he strolled on savagely.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass after Racke. "Bai Jove! I was weally beginnin' to think a little bettah of Wacke, f'wom the wippin' way he spoke up for young Levison. But, weally, he does seem as wuffianly a wottah as evah! I wegard his mannahs as absolutely the limit!"

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Quite regardless of Gussy's opinion of his manners, Aubrey Racke went up to the Shell passage. He looked into Tom Merry's study.

"Anything further about young Levison?" he asked.

"No," said Tom. "Only Mr. Selby seems to have been talking a good deal, and it's all over the school now that young Frank's going to be accused of stealing that banknote."

"It's a shame!" said Racke.

"It is, rather," assented the captain of the Shell. "I can't believe he's telling lies about it, though it's a giddy mystery what's become of the banknote. It's gone."

Racke nodded and walked along to his own study. He spent most of the evening in his study, refusing to go down when Gerald Crooke went after prep. Levison minor was the one topic now, and it was a topic that was tormenting to Racke. To save the unfortunate fag by owning up to the truth was impossible to a fellow like Racke. To stand by while he was branded with shame as a thief and turned out of school was a prospect that made him shudder with horror and remorse, and the discussion of the affair was a torture to his ears. In the solitude of his study he tried to drive the matter from his mind, but not with much success.

But, remorseful, conscience stricken as he was, Racke had no intention, no thought of confession. If Levison minor was to be saved it would not be by Racke of the Shell. That he could be saved at all seemed impossible by the time the school turned in that night.

That Frank Levison had taken the banknote from the book seemed certain, and could only seem certain in the circumstances. Everyone in the school was prepared to believe that he had taken it for a foolish prank, if only he owned up to as much. But he had not done so, and the banknote was still missing, and belief now took a darker hue. Even Wally and Reggie, in the Third, did not know what to say. Even the Terrible Three, in the Shell, and Arthur Augustus, in the Fourth were troubled and silent. Worst of all, if poor Frank had known it, even Ernest Levison's mind swayed in doubt. But that tormenting doubt was rigidly driven away. Levison resolutely fixed his faith in his brother's innocence, inexplicable as the matter was. Frank was innocent! Frank was innocent! Levison repeated to himself as he stirred restlessly in a sleepless bed that night. Frank was innocent, and Frank must be saved. He must be saved, and his brother must save him. But how still remained a baffling problem.

CHAPTER 8.

The Last Sacrifice!

"THEN you must go!"

Frank Levison listened to the Head's words, his face almost dazed in expression, like a fellow in a dream.

There was little kindness or compassion in the Head's look now.

The culprit had been given time to reflect. He had ample time to realise his position. Yet he made no confession. He had admitted nothing.

He could only reiterate what he had said before, that he knew nothing of the missing banknote, that he had never seen it or known of its existence until Mr. Selby claimed it at his hands.

That the headmaster could not believe.

The banknote had vanished while admittedly in the possession of the fag, and Levison minor had to account for it.

For the last time he had been brought before the Head in the sunny morning. It was the break between second and third lessons, and the quad was crowded with fellows.

All faces were grave. All knew that Levison minor was before the headmaster for the last time. He had to produce the banknote or explain what he had done with it, or go.

Racke of the Shell withdrew into a quiet and secluded spot alone. He did not want anyone to see him while that crisis was on. He feared that his face would betray him. His remorse tormented him, but it did not drive him to confession. No one was thinking of Racke. All thoughts were with the unhappy fag now standing before the headmaster to receive his sentence.

Tom Merry & Co. were grave and troubled. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked utterly miserable. Even Cardew's light carelessness seemed to have left him, and he moved about uneasily, restlessly, with a shadowed face. Levison of the Fourth was not to be seen in the quad. Trimble reported to the fellows that he had seen Levison hanging about the Head's corridor. The juniors understood that Ernest Levison was waiting anxiously for the verdict on his brother, and they felt for him keenly enough.

Was Levison minor guilty?

Many believed so now. Many did not know what to believe. But all—even Levison of the Fourth—realised that the headmaster could only proceed upon what the clear evidence indicated.

"Then you must go!" repeated the Head. And it seemed to the dazed fag, listening to him, that it was a far-away voice in some evil dream that was speaking.

He raised his eyes to look at the Head. The sun glinted in at the study windows and gleamed on his face, white, colourless, helpless, pitiful. A glimmer of compassion crossed the Head's stern face.

"Levison minor, for the last time, will you confess what you have done with Mr. Selby's banknote? Cannot you understand that your silence can only be interpreted to mean that you have stolen it?"

"I can't sir. I've done nothing with it. I've told the truth!"

Dr. Holmes sighed.

"Then you must go!"

"Leave the school?" said Frank, in a frightened whisper.

"You will be sent home in charge of a prefect, who will carry a letter from me explaining the matter to your father."

"Sent home as a thief?" Frank shuddered. "Oh, Ernie, Ernie!"

It was a cry from the very heart of the unhappy fag—a cry of anguish and despair. Somehow his faith had been firm in his brother, always his friend, always his helper and counsellor. Somehow it had seemed to him that Ernest Levison would save him. And now at last his faith had failed, and he knew that his brother had failed him.

That involuntary cry reached the ears of Levison of the Fourth in the corridor outside.

It went to his heart like a dagger.

In this extremity his brother called on him for help, and there was none he could give.

None?

In the dark watches of the night a thought had come into Levison's mind—a thought of self-sacrifice that would have come to few. Frank was innocent, and he must save him. If the innocent must suffer, better the elder, the stronger, than the younger and weaker. That was the desperate thought that worked in Ernest Levison's mind as he lingered in Head's corridor, waiting and hoping. And Frank's cry of despair decided him at last.

Knock!

His knuckles struck the Head's door firmly. Without waiting to be bidden, he opened the door and entered the study.

Dr. Holmes glanced at him, frowning.

"Levison! This is no place for you! Go!"

Levison of the Fourth did not heed.

He came directly towards the Head, his face set, a slightly mocking expression on it—an expression that recalled the Levison of earlier days, the "hard case" of St. Jim's.

"Excuse me, sir," he said coolly, "I think I'm bound to speak out at this stage."

"To speak out! What do you mean?" The Head's brow darkened. "Is it possible, Levison, that you know something about this matter that you have not revealed?"

"Quite!"

"What do you know? Speak at once!" exclaimed the Head, and his eyes flashed with anger. "You have kept back something, with your own brother suspected of theft!"

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

If he had deliberately intended to anger and provoke the head master of St. Jim's he could not have done so more effectually.

The Head had not forgotten the "old Levison"—Levison of a few terms ago, the "hard case" whom he had come very near to expelling from the school. He believed in Levison's reform. But it seemed to be the old Levison who was standing before him now—cool, mocking, cynical, case-hardened. And his anger rose as he looked at him.

"Speak!" he said harshly.

"I'm going to, sir," said Levison coolly. "I hoped that my brother would get clear, or I'd have spoken before. But can't let him go—for my fault. There's a limit, even for me."

"Your fault?" repeated the Head.

He began to understand.

Frank looked at his brother. He did not understand yet, but he realised that Ernest had come there to save him—somehow his brother was plucking him back from the jaws of destruction—that his faith had not, after all, been misplaced.

"My fault!" said Levison coolly.

"You mean—"

"Will you send my brother away, sir?" said Levison lightly. "I'd rather not speak before him, if you don't mind, sir. It's not easy, in any case."

Dr. Holmes made Levison minor a sign to go.

Frank moved to the door, his eyes still on his brother. He went, and the door closed behind him.

Dr. Holmes fixed a hard, uncompromising stare on Levison of the Fourth. To the last he had felt some compassion for Frank; for Levison of the Fourth there was none.

"Now speak, and tell me all," he said. "The truth, mind! I know what is coming. But confess!"

Levison's lip curled bitterly.

In those moments he had lost all that he had fought for and struggled for since he had thrown his past behind him and set his face to the light, and resolved on better things, and manfully lived up to his resolve. He knew that all had gone for nothing, that already he was condemned in the Head's mind, and that so far from the headmaster suspecting his real motive, he did not dream of it—would not have credited it for a second. To the Head he was the "old Levison" again—hard, reckless, unscrupulous, with only a record of hypocrisy added. That was where he stood now.

And he did not care!

He did not care so long as he saved his brother! Let his name be shamed and his future blighted. Frank should not cry to him for help in his extremity, and cry in vain.

"It was I, sir!" said Levison, and his tone was sneering. The angrier he made the Head the less likely was Dr. Holmes to guess that he was taking the burden on himself to shield his brother. "I've got my limit. I can't let my brother suffer for me."

Dr. Holmes breathed hard.

"Tell me exactly what you did," he said icily.

"Mr. Selby slipped the banknote into the book, and I saw him," said Levison. "He went to speak to Mr. Lathom. While he was talking to Mr. Lathom, I whipped into his study and took the note. It was no longer in the book when my brother took it away."

"And where is the banknote now?"

"Burned!"

"You dared to destroy it?"

"I did not know there would be a fuss made about it. If Frank hadn't taken the book from Mr. Selby's study, and hadn't been suspected—"

"You would have kept the note and attempted to profit by it?"

"Naturally."

"You say naturally?" said the Head. "Good heavens! This depravity—this unfeeling depravity—Good heavens!" He stared at Levison as at some reptile. "And when there was a fuss, as you express it, you destroyed Mr. Selby's property?"

"It seemed safer," said Levison.

"You had no scruple in inflicting such a loss upon him, you wicked boy!"

"I wasn't thinking of him."

"I understand that—oh, I understand that very well!" said the Head bitterly. "I am glad to see that you—even you—have some bounds set to your wickedness—that you hesitated, at least, to let your own brother suffer for your sin. You have left your confession very late—very late. I quite understand that it never would have been made had Levison minor escaped."

"Quite so," said Levison.

"Enough!" said the Head. "If you hope, Levison, that your confession will obtain mercy for you—if you dream that you will be allowed to remain in this school after what you have done, undeceive yourself at once. Your brother's name is cleared—yours is stained beyond redemption. You will leave the school, your guilt known to all. Go now and make preparations for leaving."

"Very well, sir."

Levison left the Head's study without another word.

"Ernie!"

Levison minor was outside the door. He caught his brother's arm.

"Ernie, what—"

"It's all right, kid. You're all serene," said Levison lightly. "You're clear of it, old chap. I've made the Head understand that. You're right out of it, and you can go and tell them so in the Third."

Frank's face lighted up.

"Oh, Ernie! And you've done it?"

"Little me."

"But—but how—"

"What does that matter? Cut off, kid. I tell you it's all right for you now, and I dare say even Mr. Selby will tell you he's sorry. Cut off!"

Frank Levison cut off gladly enough to tell his friends in the Third. The clouds had rolled by; his brother had saved him. He did not know how, but his heart was light.

Levison of the Fourth stood and looked after the happy fag with a strange expression on his face. He had saved Frank and ruined himself, and he had no regrets. Slowly, but with a firm step, he went up the staircase, to answer the Head's order, and make his final preparations for going—for leaving St. Jim's for ever!

THE END.

(How would it all end? Ernest Levison asked himself that question as he made for his study. Be sure you read the next magnificent yarn in this splendid series, entitled: "LEVISON'S LUCK!" by Martin Clifford, which will appear in next week's GEM.)

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