

HAVE YOU MET ANGELO?

Read about him in the ripping
complete school story inside!

The GEM 2!

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EVERY WEDNESDAY.

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WHOSE HAT?

A sensational incident in this week's long complete school story of St. Jim's, featuring Angelo Lee—the new boy!

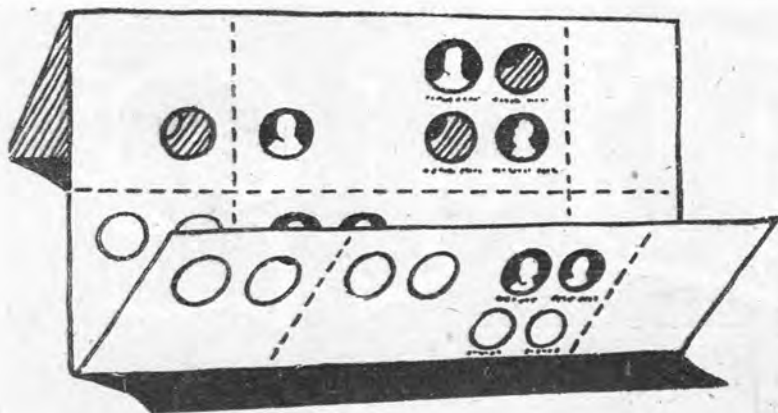


Fig. 1.

DIRECTIONS :

Hold the sheet of paper flat in front of you, so that the printed words "The GEM Footer Puzzle, etc." are uppermost. Then make a crease from left to right about a quarter of an inch above the photograph of Frank Barson, and bend the upper portion of the sheet BACKWARDS and DOWNWARDS. Then take the lower portion of the puzzle, and, making your crease about a quarter of an inch above the two inverted photographs, fold this UPWARDS as shown in Fig. 1.

Now take the right-hand portion of the puzzle; make your crease roughly a quarter of an inch to the right of the three photos of Puddefoot, Stephenson, and W. H. Walker and the vacant circle, and fold this portion UNDER.

Then take the left-hand portion of the puzzle—that which contains the three vacant circles—and, making your crease about a quarter of an inch to the left of the photo of F. Roberts, fold this part of the sheet OVER so that the circles fit the three photos. (Fig. 2 shows these folds practically completed.)

By pressing the puzzle flat it will now be seen that all sixteen photos automatically fit into their allotted circles, as shown in Fig. 3.

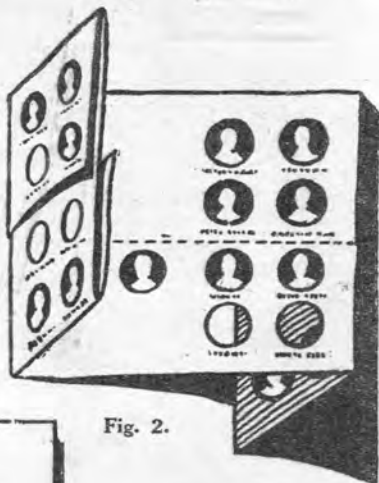


Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

WHICH
WAS
GIVEN
AWAY
FREE
WITH
LAST
WEEK'S
"GEM"

ASKING FOR THE SACK! Angelo Lee, the new boy in the Fourth at St. Jim's, goes to great lengths to be expelled from the school. To attain his object, he doesn't even stop short at assaulting a Housemaster!



THE SCAPEGRACE OF ST. JIM'S!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Tom Merry & Co., the Chums of St. Jim's, introducing Angelo Lee—the extraordinary new boy.

By Martin Clifford.

CHAPTER 1.

Fun in the Fourth!

"LEE!" There was a general grin in the Fourth Form-room at St. Jim's.

It was a grin of anticipation.

Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, frowned.

He was not a very observant gentleman, but he could not help observing the general brightening of faces in his Form when he called on Lee, the new junior, to construe. Mr. Lathom did not approve of hilarity in the Latin class.

Certainly, it was but seldom that there was anything like hilarity to complain of in the Latin class. Latin prose or verse, did not have a hilarious effect on the Fourth, as a rule. Rather the contrary.

But the present occasion was exceptional. Angelo Lee, the new junior, was known at St. Jim's as the fool of the school. In all subjects, in all classes, he had demonstrated that he was a hopeless dunce. His "con" was well worth listening to. It afforded a little much-needed comic relief. Even Trimble's con was masterly by comparison.

Mr. Lathom was a dutiful master. He was sorely tempted to leave that trying pupil unnoticed, in the dense ignorance in which Lee appeared to find satisfaction. That would have made Mr. Lathom's task much easier, but he could not have squared it with his conscience. So, instead of passing Lee over unnoticed he often gave him special attention.

That was all to the good, from the point of view of the Fourth Form. While Mr. Lathom was wrestling manfully with Angelo's extraordinary obtuseness other fellows had a rest. And it was entertaining to watch Mr. Lathom at it. So the whole class bucked up considerably when Mr. Lathom called on Angelo Lee to follow where Blake had left off.

"Lee!" repeated Mr. Lathom, with a deep frown.

Angelo Lee did not seem to hear.

As a matter of fact, Lee had a book on his knees, hidden by his desk, and was reading.

He seemed to have forgotten where he was, deeply absorbed in his volume and forgetful of his surroundings.

Mr. Lathom frowned still more portentously.

The fellow was a dunce, and a duffer, and a fool; but at the very least, he might have paid attention, in Mr. Lathom's opinion. Even a born fool, as Lee appeared to be, could pay attention.

"Lee, deah boy!" whispered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy anxiously.

"Lee, you ass!" murmured Levison.

"Lee!" thundered Mr. Lathom.

Angelo gave a jump.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" he exclaimed.

"I have spoken to you three times, Lee!" exclaimed the Form master.

"Have you, sir?" said Angelo, with his artless smile.

"That's very kind of you, sir."

"What? What?"

"Very kind indeed, sir. I am so much obliged to you, sir," said Angelo innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Lathom. "This boy's obtuseness is not a laughing matter."

"Isn't it?" murmured Bates, and some of the fellows near Bates chuckled.

"Bates!" snapped Mr. Lathom.

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bates, realising that his Form master was unusually keen of hearing that morning.

"Take a hundred lines for talking in class."

"Oh, dear! Yes, sir!" murmured the dismayed Bates.

The Fourth Formers were all serious now. It was clear that Mr. Lathom was not in a mood for hilarity. He glanced over the class with a gleaming eye; but nobody was talking now, and nobody was smiling. Nobody wanted to bag a hundred lines.

"Lee, you will go on where Blake left off."

"Certainly, sir!"

"Well, I'm waiting," snapped Mr. Lathom.

"Where did Blake leave off, sir?"

"Have you not been listening?" snorted Mr. Lathom.

"No, sir."

"Are you not aware, Lee, that a boy is expected to pay attention to the lessons during class?" hooted Mr. Lathom.

"Lee, I make great allowances for you, as you appear to be a very backward and obtuse boy. But I warn you that there is a limit to my patience. You can do no more than your best, but I expect you to do your best. Otherwise you will be caned. Make a note of that, Lee!"

"With pleasure, sir!" said Angelo.

He picked up his pen and dipped it in the inkwell. Then he proceeded to write on the title-page of his Virgil. Mr. Lathom gazed at that proceeding in angry astonishment.

"What are you doing, Lee?" he demanded.

"Making a note of what you told me, sir."

"Bless my soul! I did not mean that you were to make a written note of my warning to you, Lee. I meant that you were to bear it in mind."

"So sorry I misunderstood, sir," said Lee meekly.

Mr. Lathom looked at him fixedly.

Really, it seemed almost incredible that Angelo's stupidity could be genuine. But his face was so artless and innocent that Mr. Lathom was disarmed.

"Herries, show Lee the place," said the master of the Fourth, breathing hard.

Herries grinned, and pointed out the place to the fool of St. Jim's.

"You go on with 'est in conspectu Tenedos,' Lee," he said.

"Thank you!"

"You prepared this lesson yesterday evening, Lee?" asked Mr. Lathom.

"Oh, yes, sir. I am always very careful with my preparation, sir," said Angelo.

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"Very well; go on."

Angelo proceeded, with a cheery expression on his face, and the Fourth listened, prepared for a treat.

"Est in conspectu Tenedos, notissima fama insula, dives opum. Priami dum regna manebant."

"Construe!" thundered Mr. Lathom. Angelo appeared to be under the impression that he was called upon to recite the *Æneid*.

Lee obediently proceeded to translate, wrinkling his brows in what seemed to be a great mental effort.

"Priam was expecting a tenner," he began.

The Fourth Form gasped.

Angelo's "con" was always a thing to make the angels weep and a Form master tear his hair.

But this was really too rich. A fellow who could turn "est in conspectu Tenedos" into "He was expecting a tenner" was really too good to be true. In spite of Mr. Lathom's frowning brow the whole Form burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "Silence! Silence! Lee, what—what—what did you say?"

"He was expecting a tenner, sir," said Angelo brightly, looking as if he expected praise.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! The next boy who laughs will be caned!" spluttered Mr. Lathom. "Lee, you say you have prepared this lesson?"

"Yes, sir; very carefully."

"And you do not know that 'est in conspectu Tenedos' means that the island of Tenedos was in sight?"

"Does it really, sir?" asked Angelo, with an air of great interest. "So kind of you to tell me, sir. Shall I make a note of that?"

"Bless my soul! Go on! Go on!" gasped Mr. Lathom.

Angelo went on:

"Priam was a dumb diver—"

"What, what, what?" shrieked Mr. Lathom.

"Priam was a dumb diver—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This—this—this is incredible!" stuttered Mr. Lathom. "Are you an absolute idiot, Lee?"

"No, sir! Are you?"

"Boy, how dare you? Upon my word, I—I— You incredibly stupid boy, do you not know that 'dives' means 'rich,' and 'dum' means 'while'?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! I cannot understand why you were sent to this school, Lee! I shall speak to Dr. Holmes very seriously on this subject. It is absurd that so stupid a boy should be expected to take part in this class. My opinion is that you should be sent to a school for boys of defective intellect!"

"Thank you, sir!"

"You need construe no more. I cannot listen to sheer imbecility!" fumed Mr. Lathom. "Boys, you are laughing! This is no laughing matter! The whole class will take a hundred lines!"

"Oh!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Whew!"

The Fourth Form was reduced to instant gravity. A hundred lines was no joke—and Mr. Lathom really looked in a humour to make it a thousand.

"Any boy guilty of unseemly merriment again will be caned!" thundered Mr. Lathom.

And there was no more merriment, seemingly or unseemly. A hundred lines each was quite enough for the Fourth, and for the remainder of the lesson the juniors were as solemn as judges.

CHAPTER 2.

Tom Merry's Tip!

TOM MERRY came along to Study No. 3 in the Fourth Form passage and thumped on the door. The door flew open, and the captain of the Shell walked in.

There were two juniors in the study: Harold Bates, of the Fourth, and Angelo Lee, the new junior at St. Jim's.

Bates was sitting at the study table, scribbling lines, with a scowl on his face. Angelo was seated in the armchair, and looking quite cheerful and contented.

"Footer practice at three!" said Tom.

Bates looked up blankly.

"I've got to get these dashed lines done!" he said. "That born idiot got me lines this morning, as well as the rest of the Form!"

"Lines or no lines, footer practice at three!" said Tom cheerily. "It's compulsory practice to-day, you know!"

"I know!" grunted Bates. "I'm not a slacker, I suppose. But Lathom wants the lines, and I've got a

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double dose through that blinking idiot! What did they want to send the fool here for, that's what I want to know? Sticking him in my study, too!" And Harold Bates gave a glare at the innocent, simple face of Angelo.

"My dear chap—" murmured Angelo.

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Bates.

Angelo smiled and shut up.

"Look here, Tom Merry! You give me your opinion, as junior captain of the House," said Bates anxiously. "It's rather a doubtful point, I think. Old Lathom gave me a hundred lines for talking in class. That idiot, Lee's, fault! Later on he gave the whole Form a hundred lines each. How many is that for me?"

Tom Merry stared.

"Two hundred for you and a hundred each for the rest, I should say," he answered.

"Well, yes," agreed Bates. "But isn't a fellow entitled to suppose that it's the same hundred lines he meant for me?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"He said a hundred lines for the whole Form," argued Bates. "Well, as I had a hundred lines already, ain't I entitled to consider that in my case he was referring to the same lot?"

And Bates eyed the junior captain of the House anxiously. It was an important point. A hundred lines depended on the decision.

Tom Merry laughed.

"I shouldn't care to try that on with Mr. Linton," he said.

"But Lathom isn't a keen old blade like your Form master, is he?" said Bates hopefully.

"No. It might work with Lathom," said Tom. "Try it on, anyhow. If it doesn't work, you're no worse off!"

Bates nodded.

"Good! I've done a hundred, and if Lathom sees the point, I'm through. I'll try it on, at any rate!"

And Bates of the Fourth, in a hopeful mood, gathered up the written lines and left Study No. 3. Tom Merry smiled and turned his attention to Angelo Lee. That youth was still reclining lazily in the study armchair and did not seem disposed to move.

"It's close on three now," said Tom.

"Is it?"

"Yes. As you're new here, I'd better explain that football practice is compulsory on certain dates. You can always find the dates on the notice-board. To-day's your first practice; you can't miss it."

Lee did not move.

"Get down to the changing-room," said Tom.

"I was going out of gates this afternoon, as it's a half-holiday," said Angelo.

"Sorry," said Tom, "but it won't do. You see, as junior House captain, I have to see to these matters; I'm answerable to Kildare of the Sixth, who is head of the games. I can't let you off unless you are sick!"

"Not because I'm silly?" asked Lee, with a grin.

Tom Merry did not grin, however. He came further into the study, sat on the edge of the table, and looked seriously at Lee.

"I'm going to speak to you on that subject, Lee. When you came here you made all the school believe you were a born fool. The fellows called you the fool of the school, and you lived up to it. Some of us have found you out since then. We know you're only playing a cheeky game to get sent home by the Head."

"Between ourselves, quite correct!" said Lee coolly. "I'm not staying at St. Jim's if I can help it. I'm going to be an airman. And my Cousin Peter, who is an air pilot, has promised to take me in hand if my father consents. The pater will see reason if I'm sent home from St. Jim's as a hopeless case. I mean business. That's confidential, of course. You're not to mention it to prefects or masters!"

"It's not my bizney to put prefects and masters wise," said Tom. "They can take care of themselves, I dare say. But I want to warn you that it won't do. You seem to have set out to turn your Form master's hair grey. You make Lathom sit up every time he takes you in class."

Angelo grinned.

"He's getting fed-up," he said. "I know he's put it to the Head that I ought to be sent home. I want him to put it again, and keep on putting it, till the Head agrees. See?"

"I see," said Tom. "But it won't do. I've been speaking to Blake and Cardew and some other Fourth Form chaps. You seem to have got the whole Form an impet this morning by worrying Lathom. Most of them know by this time that you're only pulling Mr. Lathom's leg by pretending to be a dunce and a fool. They don't approve of it."

"So sorry!" murmured Angelo. "In that case they will have to disapprove. And I must try to survive it somehow."



"I'll see the Head," said Kildare. "And do what I can for you." "That is so kind of you," said Angelo gratefully. "I should like to give you some toffee!" "Eh?" Angelo took a stick of toffee from his pocket and offered it to the astounded captain of the school. (See Chapter 6.)

"A lot of them are grinding out lines now," said Tom. "They are rather wild about it."

"I suppose so," assented Angelo regretfully. "I don't see how it's to be helped. The process of turning Mr. Lathom's hair grey is bound to affect his temper. And he is sure to take it out of the Form to some extent, being human, you know."

"You can't expect the Form to like it."

"I don't!" said Angelo calmly.

"What you can expect is a Form ragging, or three or four fights on your hands," said Tom.

"Dear me!"

"You don't mind the prospect?" asked the captain of the Shell.

"Dear man!" smiled Angelo. "What I really enjoy is whizzing along in an aeroplane three miles up, looping the loop, and doing air stunts generally. After that I really can't feel very much alarmed at the prospect of a fight or two with schoolboys."

"Well, I've warned you," said Tom. "Let it drop! I felt bound to give you the tip, as junior captain. Now, about the footer?"

"Nothing about the footer," yawned Angelo.

"You don't like the game?"

"I do; I'm rather keen on it. I fancy I can put up a game as good as most here of my age. But not this afternoon. I've got an appointment."

"Wash it out, then!" said Tom decidedly. "I can't let you off."

"I'm not asking you to let me off."

"You mean you'll turn up for practice?"

"No, I don't."

Tom Merry's good-tempered face grew a little grim in expression. He slipped from the study table.

"Footer practice at three on Little Side," he said. "You'll be there, Lee, you cheeky young ass! If not, you'll take the consequences!"

"Thanks!" said Lee, unmoved.

Tom Merry quitted the study. He was getting angry, and he did not want to quarrel with the new junior. To a certain extent he sympathised with Angelo and with his ambition to train for the Air Service. It was a worthy ambition enough, and to the fellow's credit. It was likely enough, too, that Lee's father had made a mistake in insisting upon sending him to St. Jim's, instead of allowing him to follow his own natural bent. But with all that Tom had nothing to do. So long as Lee was a St. Jim's fellow he had to play up like other St. Jim's fellows.

Angelo's extraordinary scheme for making the masters fed-up with him, and thus getting himself sent home, was his own business. But it was the junior House captain's business to see that Lee, or any other fellow, did not shirk compulsory practices. And Tom Merry intended to do his duty on that point. If Lee wanted to go, the sooner he went the better, in Tom Merry's opinion. But so long as he stayed he had to toe the line.

Manners and Lowther of the Shell were waiting for Tom at the head of the stairs. They smiled as they observed the frown on his brow.

"Lee been getting your rag out, old man?" asked Monty Lowther.

"He's got out the rag of the whole Fourth Form, I think!" grinned Manners. "Some of them are threatening to scalp him!"

"He wants to cut games practice," said Tom. "I've told him he can't. If he doesn't turn up—" Tom paused; then he smiled. "No good getting waxy," he said. "I suppose he will turn up all right. Bother the fellow, anyhow!"

And Tom Merry went out of the School House with his chums, dismissing Angelo from his mind for the present.

CHAPTER 3.

Pulling Angelo's Leg!

"HERE he is!" murmured Racke of the Shell.

And Crooke of the same Form chuckled.

Racke and Crooke were loafing near the big doorway of the School House when Angelo Lee came sauntering out.

Apparently the two Shell fellows were looking for the fool of the school—as Angelo was still regarded by fellows who had not "tumbled" to his extraordinary wheeze.

"Lee, old chap," said Aubrey Racke, in his friendliest tone.

Angelo stopped.

"We've been looking for you, old bean," said Crooke.

"So kind of you!" murmured Angelo.

His face expressed only the most artless unsuspectingness. There was nothing in his look to indicate that he knew perfectly well that the two Shell fellows were planning a jape on the fool of the school.

"You've been here some days now, Lee," said Racke; "but I hear that you haven't climbed the flagstaff yet."

"The flagstaff?" repeated Angelo.

"I suppose you don't know that new fellows are always expected to climb the school flagstaff, to show that they've got nerve?" said Racke.

"No, I didn't know," said Angelo simply. "So kind of you to tell me!"

Crooke stared at the new junior. He believed, as most of St. Jim's did, that the fellow was a born fool. But he hardly expected even a born fool to accept Racke's statement without doubt.

But there was no sign of doubt in Angelo's innocent face. He only looked obliged for Racke's kindness in giving him information.

"Well, you ought to get on with it, you know," said Racke, with a wink at his chum. "The idea is that a fellow climbs the flagstaff to the top and sticks a silk hat on top of it, to show he's done it. See?"

"I see," assented Angelo, while Crooke turned away his face to hide his emotion.

"You'll do it?" asked Racke.

"Certainly, if it's the rule!"

"Oh, quite! Better get your best topper; you have to climb the pole in a topper, to show that you can do it."

"I'll get a topper at once."

Angelo walked back into the House. Racke and Crooke stared at one another and grinned.

"Is he really fool enough?" murmured Crooke.

"Looks like it!"

"I say, it's jolly dangerous climbing the flagstaff, you know," said Crooke. "The Head's whacked fellows for trying it. If a chap got high up and then lost his head—"

"My dear man, he will get about six feet up, and then be too frightened to move," said Racke. "He won't be able to go higher, and he will be afraid to drop, and he will stick there in his Sunday hat."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crooke was still a little doubtful; but his doubts were removed when Angelo came out of the House in a shining silk hat. The two jesters led him away to the flagstaff, and several more fellows, observing them and wondering what was on, joined up. There was a general chuckle as it was learned that Angelo was going to climb the flagstaff in a silk hat.

"How far up do you think you will get, Lee?" inquired Lumley-Lumley.

"Isn't it the rule for new fellows to climb to the top, Racke?" asked Angelo.

"Oh, certainly!"

"Then I shall climb to the top."

"I guess not!" chuckled Lumley-Lumley. "What's the betting that he doesn't do more than three feet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall try to climb to the top," said Angelo simply. "You see, I have to place the topper there."

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

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They chortled at the bare idea of the school flagstaff adorned with a silk hat at the top. Such an adornment was likely to cause a sensation in the school. But as nobody believed that the fool of the school could climb half-way to the top, or a quarter for that matter, it was not likely to happen.

"Here you are!" said Racke cheerily. "Take your jacket off! Now get on with it!"

"I'm ready."

Angelo stepped to the tall pole and grasped it. He swung himself up with an agility that rather surprised the onlooking juniors. So far Angelo had displayed nothing but clumsiness. A fellow who had dropped inkpots and knocked over the blackboard in the Form-room was not expected to be handy at anything. But Angelo looked as if he could climb.

With hands and legs gripping the stout pole, Angelo went up almost like a monkey, the silk hat jammed securely on the back of his head.

"Great pip!" exclaimed Kerruish of the Fourth. "Why, he's doing it! He can climb!"

Aubrey Racke stared after the climber blankly. Not for a moment had he believed that Lee had either the nerve or the ability to climb the tall pole. He had not had the slightest doubt that at a short distance up Angelo would hang on helplessly, a figure of fun to set all the spectators in a roar.

"Well, great gad!" ejaculated Racke.

Angelo was sixteen feet up now—a serious matter if he should chance to fall. Fortunately, he showed no sign of falling.

The sight of a fellow high up the flagstaff drew spectators from near and far. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther hurried up, Blake and Herries and Dig and D'Arcy arrived, Figgins & Co. came scudding from the direction of the New House; a score more juniors came from various directions, gathering round the flagstaff and staring up at the bold climber. Twenty feet above their heads Angelo was still climbing easily and lightly, apparently without exertion.

"Lee!" shouted Tom Merry.

There was no answer from the climber.

"Come down, you ass!" shouted Tom. "You're not allowed up there."

Perhaps Lee did not hear. At all events, he did not heed. He climbed steadily on and upward.

Tom Merry's face was very anxious. Certainly, he knew that Angelo was not the clumsy duffer he pretended to be. But it was a difficult and dangerous task he had essayed; and if he should lose his nerve the end was inevitable; a sudden hurtling through the air to certain death on the earth.

"Better let him rip!" murmured Manners. "If he looks down now he will very likely lose his head."

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus.

"You've climbed it yourself, Tom," said Lowther.

Tom Merry nodded. He and one or two other St. Jim's fellows had performed that difficult feat. But it made him very anxious and uneasy to see the new fellow attempting to perform it. But it was obviously too late to stop him now. Angelo had to take his chance.

"Here comes Kildare!" murmured Blake.

Kildare of the Sixth hurried up, with a frowning brow. He had sighted the climbing figure on the tall pole. Such a feat was strictly against all the rules of the school.

"The fool!" exclaimed Kildare. "Climbing the flagstaff—and with a silk hat on, too! Of all the duffers—" He broke off and shouted: "Lee, slide down the pole at once!"

No answer.

"Hold on to it, and slide down, Lee!" shouted the captain of St. Jim's.

Still Angelo did not heed.

He was getting near the top now, at a dangerous height, where the tall staff swayed to his weight.

Kildare set his lips.

At every moment now he expected a terrible catastrophe; but there was no help for it. Lee was beyond the reach of help or hindrance. Racke of the Shell was quite pale. He was thinking of the consequences to himself, if Lee should fall and be killed.

The crowd round the flagstaff thickened. Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, came striding up. His brow was dark.

"What does this mean?" he exclaimed angrily. "The foolish boy! Was there no one here to stop him in time? You all know that that boy is simple. He should have been stopped."

"We—we didn't think he could do it, sir!" stammered Crooke.

Mr. Railton stared anxiously upward. Angelo Lee was at the top of the pole now, looking quite small in the distance. There was a deep-drawn breath in the crowd below, as he was seen to release one hand from its hold.

Aubrey Racke felt quite sick for the moment, in the belief that Lee was going to fall.

But he was not losing hold. He had released one hand to take the silk hat from his head.

"By gad!" said Lowther.

Angelo calmly placed the silk hat on the summit of the flagstaff. Then he looked down at the sea of upturned faces, and smiled. Evidently the fool of the school had a nerve of iron.

"Come down!" shouted Mr. Railton. "Do you hear me? Come down at once!"

Angelo curled legs and arms round the pole, and came down, with a slithering rush. Almost in a moment, as it seemed, he was at the foot of the staff, and stepped away from it. And there was a general gasp of relief.

"Bless my soul! Some thoughtless boy has been deceiving Lee," said Mr. Railton. "Really, only an incredibly stupid boy could be so deceived, I think. There is no such rule here, Lee—if you had even a glimmering of common sense you would be aware of that, without being told."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Angelo.

"You must not believe everything that is said to you, Lee. You are so very simple that it is a temptation to others to make a fool of you. It is strictly forbidden for boys to climb the flagstaff, such climbing being very dangerous. If you ascend the flagstaff again, Lee, you will be severely caned! Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Angelo meekly.

"I will not ask you the name of the boy who told you

CAMEOS OF SCHOOL LIFE! THE HOUSE MATCH.



THE rival House-teams take the field,
All men of might and muscle,
Resolved to fight, and not to yield,
However hard the tussle.
Tom Merry leads the School House side,
He wins the toss (good omen!)
And Figgins, with his swinging stride,
Leads forth the New House foemen!

The cheering echoes round the ground
And sets the welkin ringing;
Scores of supporters stand around,
Their cups to heaven ringing.
"School House for ever!" comes the cry,
"Play up, play up, you fellows!"
Then New House sportsmen make reply,
And give deep-throated bellows!

The frisky ball bobs to and fro,
The rivals are in action!
The eager crowd, with cheeks aglow,
Looks on with satisfaction.
Arthur Augustus, on the wing,
Flashes the ball to Merry;
But Wynn in goal, with agile spring,
Effects a grand save, very!

But School House will not be denied,
They swoop down all together;
Talbot, ambitious for his side,
Secures the bounding leather.
"Shoot, Talbot!" cries the School House throng,
Their appetites are whetted;
Then fellows cheering, loud and long—
The ball is smartly netted!

With many a thrill, and many a spill,
Each player grimly strives;
The School House leads by one to nil.
When "lemon-time" arrives,
Then New House play up heart and soul
To pierce a stout defence;
They score an equalising goal—
Excitement is intense!

Barely a moment from the end,
Tom Merry gets the ball;
Sternly the New House backs defend—
Their goal must never fall!
But Merry's shot is hard and true,
Not even Wynn the Wonder
Can stop the sphere from passing through—
"WELL WON!" booms forth like thunder!



CHAPTER 4. Whose Hat?

MR. Railton fixed his eyes on Angelo. The new junior was breathing rather hard, after the exertion of climbing the flagstaff. He looked at the Housemaster with his usual artless expression.

"I have done it, sir," he said.

"What—you have done what?"

"Climbed the flagstaff, sir, and put a silk topper on the top." Angelo pointed to the silk hat far above, adorning the summit of the pole. "There it is, sir."

"Boy, why have you done this?" gasped Mr. Railton. "For what possible reason have you placed a silk hat on top of the flagstaff?"

Angelo raised his eyebrows in mild surprise.

"Don't all new fellows have to do that, sir?" he inquired.

"What!" stuttered Mr. Railton.

"I was told, sir, that it was the rule here for all new fellows to climb the flagstaff, and put a silk hat on the top," said Angelo innocently.

this absurd story," said Mr. Railton, glancing round. "But I desire to warn all boys present that it is unfeeling and unfair to make a fool of a lad who is below the average of intelligence."

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"Lee, you are not to climb the pole again, in any circumstances whatever."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Railton walked away, and Kildare of the Sixth, after a very curious glance at Angelo, followed him.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy fixed his eyeglass on the new junior, with a grim and disapproving stare.

"I wedged this as wotten, Lee!" he said.

"Go hon!"

"You are pwactically deceivin' Mr. Wailton! You have made him believe you an uthah fool!"

"So have you."

"Wha-a-t?"

"Are you deceiving him?" asked Lee gently. "Or is his opinion of you well-founded, D'Arcy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus gazed at Angelo, at a loss for words.

"Look here, Lee," said Tom Merry, "it's not good enough! A lot of fellows here know that you are only playing a trick; and pulling our Housemaster's leg isn't the thing. See? You've got to chuck it. You're making Mr. Railton look a fool!"

"Dear me," said Angelo.

"What does that mean?" asked Racke of the Shell in astonishment. "Mean to say that Lee is making himself out a fool when he isn't one?"

"Just that!" said Tom.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Aubrey Racke chuckled.

"Well, you can believe that, if you like; I don't! When a fellow sticks his Sunday topper on top of a flagstaff, that he's not allowed to climb again, I rather think he's a genuine fool—as fatheaded as they make them!"

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Crooke. "How are you going to get your hat back, Lee?"

There was a general laugh. Fool or not, Lee had certainly placed a handsome and expensive topper out of the reach of recovery. There were few fellows who would have dared to climb the flagstaff to the summit, at the risk of life and limb. Lee was able to do it, but he had been expressly forbidden by his Housemaster to ascend the staff again. Apparently that handsome topper was to remain there till some strong wind lifted it and blew it away.

"Bai Jove! The fellow must be a silly ass!" said Arthur Augustus. "That toppah is a gonah!"

"Wind and rain won't improve it," chuckled Monty Lowther. "But when there's a jolly strong wind, it will come sailing merrily home."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I must say it serves you right, Lee," said Tom Merry. "You've lost your topper now."

"My topper?" said Lee, with a puzzled look.

He turned to Racke of the Shell.

"You told me it was the rule for a new fellow to climb the flagstaff and put a topper on the top of it," he said.

Racke chuckled.

"Certainly. I was pulling your leg, you fathead! Don't you go around asking fellows to pull your silly leg?"

"My dear fellow, I don't mind a joke," said Angelo amiably. "Why, I'm rather a joker myself at times. But you never told me that a fellow had to climb there with his own topper. That's not my topper."

"Bai Jove! Not your toppah?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Not at all."

"You've put somebody else's topper up there, where it can't be got down again?" yelled Blake.

"Yes. You see, Racke told me a topper, not specially my own topper, and I thought any topper would do," said Angelo innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Racke. "And whose topper have you shoved on the flagstaff, Lee? D'Arcy's?"

"Bai Jove! If you have taken liberties with my toppah, you uttah ass—" began the swell of St. Jim's hotly.

"Not D'Arcy's."

"Whose, then?" asked Racke.

"Yours!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Yours!" said Angelo artlessly. "I got it out of the hat-box in your study in the Shell. I thought any topper would do, you know."

Aubrey Racke gazed at him speechlessly. There was a yell from the crowd of juniors. Evidently it was a case of the biter being bitten.

"M-mum-my topper!" gasped Racke at last. "Why, that was my best topper in the hat-box in my study!"

"Yes, I thought it looked an expensive one," assented Angelo. "Do you mind?"

"Mind?" gasped Racke. "Why, I—I—I—I gave two guineas for that topper. I—I—I'll—" Racke gasped with rage.

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

"Bai Jove! This is weally vewy funnny, you know!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "It weally serves you wight, Wacke. Ha, ha, ha!"

Racke clenched his fists.

"You—you—you silly fool! Get up there and get my topper back at once, or I'll punch your fool head! Do you hear?"

"Mr. Railton says I must not climb the staff again," said Angelo, with mild regret. "I should be caned. But he has not told you so, Racke. You can climb the flagstaff if you like."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lowther. "I can see Racke doing it! Go it, Racke! We'll stand round to catch you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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Aubrey Racke was crimson with rage. Not for two guineas, or for two hundred guineas, for that matter, would Racke of the Shell have essayed that perilous climb. The juniors roared. The expression on Aubrey's face was quite entertaining. Even Crooke was laughing. Only Racke himself failed to see the comic side of the incident. He stepped towards the new junior with his fists clenched.

"Get that hat down!" he hissed.

"So sorry—" murmured Angelo.

"Or take a hiding!"

"You see, Mr. Railton says—"

"Are you going?" roared Racke furiously.

"No!" murmured Angelo. "I am not going. You see, I—"

Racke struck at him savagely.

Greatly to his surprise, Angelo's arm came up like lightning, and the fierce blow was warded, with a crack on Aubrey's wrist that made him utter a howl of pain. Racke jumped back, nursing his right wrist with his left hand, and staring at the fool of St. Jim's in rage and amazement.

He did not seek to repeat the blow.

He turned and tramped away, followed by a shout of laughter. Crooke chuckled and followed him.

Angelo glanced up at the shining topper crowning the summit of the tall flagstaff, and grinned. Then he sauntered away. Tom Merry tapped him on the shoulder as he went.

"Footer practice in five minutes," he said.

"Thank you so much!" murmured Angelo.

And he sauntered on, the captain of the Shell glancing after him very doubtfully.

CHAPTER 5.

Cheek!

"NOT here!" said Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry frowned.

The School House juniors had gathered on Little Side for footer practice. Most of the fellows were there.

Tom, as junior House captain, had the power to exempt any fellows from games practice for good reasons given. Glyn of the Shell had been left off to go home and see his people. Trimble of the Fourth had been excused, the fat Baggy pleading illness. Lumley-Lumley was not there, being under detention. Two or three other fellows were absent, for one good reason or another. But, in Angelo Lee's case, there was no good reason—an appointment outside the school, on a day given to compulsory practice, not being counted as a reason. Tom had warned him not to fail, but he had failed. He was not there, and there was no sign of him.

"Cheek!" remarked Manners.

"Well, that born fool can't play footer or anything else!" remarked Dick Julian. "What's the good of his coming here?"

"He's not such a fool as he looks," grinned Lowther. "It's only a funny game he's playing to get sent home."

"Gammon, old chap! There never was such a born idiot!"

"I told him specially he had to turn up," said Tom Merry. "He can pull the leg of the masters and prefects as much as he likes; but he will find that he can't kick over the traces with his House captain. You take charge here, Kangy, and carry on, while I round him up!"

"Right-ho!" assented Kangaroo of the Shell.

Tom Merry left the footballers and walked back to the School House, with a glint in his blue eyes.

He went directly to Angelo's study in the Fourth, but he found the room empty. Then he went down and looked into the changing-room; but Lee was not there.

Apparently he was not in the House at all.

Tom compressed his lips. He was a good-tempered fellow, and quite easy-going—too easy-going for a House captain in the opinion of many fellows. But there was a limit to good temper and patience. If Angelo had deliberately gone out of gates, after being directly warned, there was an account for Angelo to settle when he came back.

Tom took the trouble to walk down to the porter's lodge and speak to Taggles. From Taggles he learned that Angelo had gone out.

With a grim look, the captain of the Shell walked back to the junior football ground.

"Missin', deah boy!" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Gone out of gates!" answered Tom.

"Frightful nerve!" said D'Arcy. "If Kildare misses him there may be a wow."

Kildare of the Sixth was taking the junior games practice in hand that afternoon. Tom intended to deal with Lee when he came back, and he rather hoped that the captain of the school would not remark on his absence. Lee was, after all, only one of half a dozen fellows who, for one reason or another had not turned up.



Knox of the Sixth came out of his study with a grim brow, and a cane in his hand. Whack! Whack! Whack! — "Ow! Oh, my hat! Yow!" "Yarooooogh!" Bates and Angelo separated, rolling breathlessly on the floor under the raining cane. (See Chapter 6)

But Kildare called to Tom Merry at once. He had noticed that Angelo was not on the ground.

"Isn't that new kid, Lee, here, Merry?" he asked.

"No, Kildare."

"And why not?" asked the Sixth-Former. "I know the fellow is a fool, but that's no reason why he should cut games practice."

"You see—"

Kildare frowned.

"You ought to have seen that he was here, Tom Merry. I quite understand that you don't want to be bothered with a fumbling fool who will be nothing but a nuisance. But it's for that very reason that you ought to see that he turns up here. A junior House captain has his duty to do, like a senior House captain, and he can't expect it to be all easy."

Tom Merry crimsoned. A dozen fellows heard that little lecture, and smiled. In the circumstances, it was rather hard for Tom to be called over the coals.

"You see—" he began again.

"I see that the fellow's not here," said Kildare tersely. "Go and rope him in."

"Can't be done," said Tom, rather brusquely. "He's gone out of gates, and I don't know where."

"Probably he did not see the notice posted up," said Kildare. "You might have spoken to him, as he's new here."

"I did!" snapped Tom.

"You warned him to be here?"

"Yes."

"Oh!" said Kildare, mollified. "If that's so, it's not your fault, of course. Mean to say that he went out of gates, after being warned that he had to attend games practice?"

"Yes."

"Very well; you can leave him for me to deal with," said the captain of St. Jim's. "Fool or not, he's got to learn to play the game while he's at St. Jim's. Get on with it."

Games practice went on, without the assistance of Angelo. Where the new junior was was not known to anyone. Angelo had confided to nobody his plans for the half-holiday. No one gave the incident much thought, however—a junior of the Fourth Form was not a very important personage—and Tom Merry, as he devoted himself to footer, soon forgot his annoyance.

Games practice over, the Terrible Three walked back to the School House, and, after changing, went up to Study No. 10 in the Shell to tea. Bates of the Fourth looked in while tea was going on. Bates had a ferocious expression on his face.

"That idiot here?" he demanded.

"No idiot here till you came, old bean," answered Monty Lowther.

"Oh, don't be an ass! I'm rooting through the studies for that chump Lee," howled Bates. "Kildare's sent me. Thinks I'm bound to find the born idiot because I'm his study-mate. I never asked to be his study-mate, did I? Know where the fathead is?"

"I know he went out of gates," answered Tom.

"Oh, he's come in. He's been seen, and now he's disappeared," snorted Bates. "I'm jolly well not going to look for him much further. I know I'll punch him when I do find him."

And Bates of the Fourth slammed the door of Study No. 10 after him as he went. After tea, the Terrible Three strolled down, wondering whether Angelo had turned up yet. They met Bates coming away from the Sixth Form passage, with a still more intense expression of ferocity on his face.

"Found him?" grinned Manners.

Bates gasped with wrath.

"No. I've told Kildare I can't find him, and he says I'm to look for him till I do. You fellows like to help?"

"Thanks, we're not interested in Fourth Form kids,"

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yawned Manners; and the Terrible Three went out into the quadrangle, leaving Bates snorting.

Tom Merry knitted his brows.

"That ass Lee is laying it on too thick," he said. "There's hardly a Lower School man that doesn't know he's only putting on being a goat. If Kildare tumbles to it there will be trouble for him. He knows he's wanted, and he's keeping out of the way."

"Talk of angels," grinned Monty Lowther. "There he is!"

There was Angelo, seated on a secluded bench under the elms, with a notebook on his knee, and a pencil in his hand, and a deep wrinkle of thought in his brow. So occupied was he that he did not observe the chums of the Shell approaching till Lowther woke him up with a slap on the shoulder.

Angelo jumped.

"You silly ass! What—?"

"Kildare of the Sixth wants you!" said Tom Merry gruffly.

"I know that."

"Bates is hunting for you everywhere."

"I know that, too."

"And you're sitting here, nosing over some rubbish, when the captain of the school has sent for you!" exclaimed Tom.

"Yes. Don't bother."

Angelo dropped his eyes to his open notebook again.

"You cut games practice, after all," said Tom.

"Yes. Dry up."

"That's what Kildare wants to see you about. He told me to leave it in his hands."

"You're interrupting me."

"If he hadn't," went on Tom calmly, "you'd have had a beating from the junior games committee."

"All right. Give us a rest!"

Angelo did not even look up. Monty Lowther leaned over, and jerked the notebook away from him. Then the new junior jumped with a yell.

"Mind what you're at, you silly owl! There's all my notes of the lecture in that book—"

"Your what?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"You duffers probably don't know that there was a lecture at Wayland Hall this afternoon, a big man on aerostatics," snapped Angelo. "I wasn't going to miss that for the sake of games practice—not likely. I've got to go through my notes. Most of them are in shorthand. Give me that book."

"Are you going to tell Kildare that you attended a lecture on aerostatics, and took notes in shorthand?" asked Tom.

Angelo grinned.

"Hardly. He might tumble to it that I am not the fool he thinks me. I shall pull Kildare's leg all right when I see him. Give me that book, Lowther, you silly ass!"

"You're going to Kildare now," said Tom.

"Oh, don't be an ass! I've no time for him now. I've got to work through my notes on the lecture!" snapped Angelo.

"Give him the book, Monty, and take one of his arms," said Tom.

"Good!"

"Look here—" shouted Angelo, as the book was jammed into his pocket, and Lowther gripped one of his arms and Tom Merry the other.

"There's such a thing as discipline," explained Tom. "You're wanted by the head of the House, and you're going."

"I'm not!" roared Angelo.

"I think you are."

Angelo struggled angrily.

"Start him, Manners," said Tom.

"What-ho!"

Manners of the Shell ranged up behind Angelo and started him—by the simple process of planting a boot behind him. Angelo yelled, and started. The Terrible Three escorted him into the House, and marched him along to the Sixth form passage.

"Come in."

"Here's Lee, Kildare," said Tom; and the new junior was pushed into the study.

Tom Merry closed the door after him, and the chums of the Shell walked away, leaving Angelo to his interview with the captain of St. Jim's. Harold Bates, of the Fourth, met them as they were on their way to the quad. Bates was breathing wrath.

"Seen the piffing idiot anywhere?" he asked.

"He's found, and delivered to Kildare, this side up with care," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Oh, good! He's in Kildare's study now?" asked Bates.

"Yes."

"I'll wait for him to come out," said Bates, breathing hard. "I'll give him letting me hunt for him for a whole hour, the cheeky cad. I'll knock a little sense into his silly

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head—there's room for it. I'll jolly well mop up the House with him!"

And Bates of the Fourth took up his stand at the corner of the Sixth Form passage to wait there for Angelo, while Tom Merry & Co., smiling, walked out into the quad.

CHAPTER 6.

Artless Angelo!

KILDARE of the Sixth looked at Angelo with a rather curious expression on his face.

Angelo met his glance with a simple, artless smile.

He was no longer the quiet, earnest, thoughtful fellow whom the Shell fellows had found under the elms, conning over shorthand notes of a lecture on aerostatics. He was once more the simple, mooning fellow who had earned the name of the fool of the school. Certainly he did not look now like a fellow who was acquainted with either aerostatics or shorthand.

"Where have you been all this time, Lee?" asked the prefect.

"I went out this afternoon, Kildare," answered Lee innocently. "I walked to Wayland."

"Tom Merry told you it was compulsory games practice to-day?"

"Yes; we had quite a pleasant talk," said Angelo. "It was so kind of him to tell me all about it."

"Didn't you understand that you had to turn up on Little Side?" asked Kildare, eyeing him. "You've got sense enough to understand plain English, I hope."

"I hope so," said Angelo.

"You have broken a strict rule of the school."

"Oh dear!" said Angelo, looking distressed.

Kildare's hand was resting on the ashplant on his table. He withdrew it now.

"Look here, Lee, you seem to be a young ass in every way," he said. "I can't imagine why your people sent you here. But you must try to have a little sense."

"I have," said Angelo meekly.

"What?"

"Mr. Lathom says I have little sense—very little!"

"Oh, gad!" said Kildare. "I mean, you must try to be a little more sensible, Lee. Surely you can understand that you must do as you are told by persons in authority?"

Kildare was speaking very kindly. Any other fellow who had done as Angelo had done would have had six from the ashplant. But the captain of St. Jim's could not find it in his heart to lick this simpleton, who, apparently, did not know enough to go in when it rained.

"I'll try, Kildare," said Angelo meekly. "I'll try very hard to understand things. Sometimes it makes my head ache."

"Poor little beggar!" muttered Kildare.

There were obtuse and stupid fellows at St. Jim's; but Kildare had never come across a case like this before. It seemed to him, as it seemed to Mr. Lathom, that it was sheer cruelty to this absolute fool, to expect him to take his place among normal boys.

"The fact is, Lee, you ought not to be here at all," said Kildare abruptly. "St. Jim's is no place for you."

Angelo's eyes glimmered for a moment. That was exactly what he wanted the head prefect of the House to believe; though it would have been a great surprise to Kildare to learn that his leg was being pulled by this apparently artless youth.

"I—I think I should like to go home, Kildare," faltered Angelo; "I seem to do everything wrong!"

"Not much doubt about that."

"Mr. Lathom thinks me a dunce," said Angelo, almost tearfully. "He was quite angry over my construe this morning."

"I dare say!"

"Mr. Railton thought me very foolish to climb the flagstaff," said Angelo. "I was told that it was the rule for new boys to climb it."

"Fellows ought not to play jokes on you," said Kildare, suppressing a smile. "But, really, it's too thick; you risked your life climbing the flagstaff, and if you're such a fool as that you ought to be taken care of. Would you like to be sent home?"

"Oh, yes!" said Angelo. "I should so like to see my dear dolls again!"

"Your what?" ejaculated Kildare.

"My dolls, and my little puff-puff!" said Angelo innocently.

"Great Scott!" gasped Kildare.

He blinked at Angelo's innocent face. A fellow of fifteen, sturdy for his age, who played with dolls and a toy engine, which he called a puff-puff! It really was the limit. Why his people wanted him to come to St. Jim's, and why the Head let them send him there mystified Kildare. If the poor lad was really of defective intellect, a public school was certainly no place for him.

"Look here, Lee, I'll speak to the headmaster," said Kildare. "It's utter rot for a kid like you to be here at all. If you want to be sent home, I'll see what I can do for you."

"Thank you so much!" murmured Angelo. "I think Mr. Lathom has already asked the Head to send me away, and I am sure Dr. Holmes would do so if he knew how very hard it is for me."

"Well, you can cut now," said Kildare. "I'll see the Head soon and do all I can."

"That's so kind of you!" said Angelo gratefully. "I should like to give you some toffee."

"Eh?"

Angelo took a stick of toffee from his pocket, and offered it to the captain of St. Jim's.

Kildare gazed at him.

He could scarcely believe his eyes or his ears. This benighted duffer was offering him a stick of toffee—him, Kildare of the Sixth, head of the games, head prefect of the House, captain of the school—offering him a stick of toffee as if he were a fag in the Third Form. Kildare's hand strayed to the ash-plant, but he withdrew it again.

"Won't you take it?" asked Angelo.

"Oh, my hat!"

"It is such nice toffee," said Angelo.

"For goodness' sake travel!" said Kildare, bursting into a laugh. "I won't lick you—you haven't sense enough to know what it is for. No, I won't have the toffee, thanks! Get out of my study!"

Angelo left the study, and closed the door softly behind him. Having closed it, he winked at it expressively.

Then, in a satisfied frame of mind, he walked down the passage. Already his Form master was more than fed-up with him, and had spoken to the Head on the subject. With Kildare's testimony added, Angelo considered that it ought to "work." Some fellows, certainly—if not most fellows—would have jibbed emphatically at the bare idea of being sent away from school on the ground of hopeless stupidity. But Angelo was prepared to be sent away on that ground, or any other ground, so long as he was sent, and given a chance to realise his daring ambition.

"Oh, here you are!"

It was Bates of the Fourth, at the corner of the Sixth Form passage. Bates had waited, and his wrath had not lessened with waiting; rather it had improved, like wine, with keeping. Bates was almost at boiling-point when Angelo came along at last.

"Waiting for you!" he bawled.

"So kind of you, Bates!" murmured Angelo.

"I was hunting for you a whole hour. Do you think you can keep me hunting for you a whole hour?" hooted Bates. "I'm going to punch your silly head, and knock a little sense into it—see?"

"My dear chap—"

Angelo had no time to say more. Bates was rushing at him, and they were struggling the next moment.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

"Take that!" gasped Bates.

"That" was a hefty punch on Angelo's nose. Angelo took it—he could not help it; but he returned it with a drive in Bates' ribs that made Harold Bates roar.

Thump, thump, thump! Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Crash!

The two juniors went over, and rolled on the floor.

Had Bates of the Fourth been a little less wrathful, he would not have tackled Angelo in the sacred quarters of the Sixth. It was dangerous ground for juniors. But Bates, at boiling-point did not consider such trifling matters; he was thinking only of knocking a little sense into the head of the fool of the school. Two or three Sixth Form doors opened, and angry seniors looked out, unheeded.

"Take that—"

"Ow! Wow!"

"Grooogh!"

Knox of the Sixth came out of his study with a grim brow, and a cane in his hand.

He strode up to the scene of the combat. He did not waste time in words. He laid on the cane with terrific swipes, both the combatants getting an equal share.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Ow! Oh, my hat! Yow!"

"Yarooogh!"

Bates and Angelo separated, rolling breathlessly on the floor under the raining cane. They picked themselves up and fled wildly, followed by Knox with long strides, the cane still lashing. Not till they reached the staircase and bolted up to the junior quarters did Knox desist. Then he tucked his cane under his arm and walked back to his study—what time Angelo and Bates, in a state of anguish, were filling the Fourth Form passage with the sounds of woe.

CHAPTER 7.

A Startling Discovery!

DARRELL of the Sixth stooped and picked up a notebook that lay on the floor of the Sixth Form passage. Kildare was coming along from his study on his way to the Head, and Darrell held up the notebook.

"Yours?" he asked.

"No; what is it?"

"Somebody's dropped it here—a notebook," said Darrell.

"You don't happen to know who?"

Kildare shook his head.

"Most likely there's a name inside," he said.

"I'll look."

Darrell opened the notebook. It was a plain cardboard-covered notebook, such as may be bought for a shilling at any stationer's, and looked new. That some member of the Sixth Form had dropped it was Darrell's natural thought. Certainly it did not occur to him that it had dropped out of the pocket of a junior who had been rolling on the floor in deadly combat with another junior. Darrell had come along five minutes after Angelo and Bates had vanished and Knox had gone back to his study.

"No name in it," said Darrell. "It looks quite new! My hat! The chap this belongs to knows something." He stared at the pages. "What fellow in the Sixth knows shorthand, Kildare? That's the man."

"I don't know any Sixth Form man who does," answered Kildare. "Are there shorthand notes in it?"

"Look!"

Kildare glanced at the open book.

A dozen of the pages were covered with notes, some in longhand, but most of them in shorthand.

Shorthand was a mystery to the Sixth-Formers; it was not, naturally, a subject in the St. Jim's curriculum. But the longhand notes rather surprised them. Evidently they were notes of a recent lecture on the subject of aerostatics, and the handwriting, very clear and steady as it was, had a youthful look.

"Easy enough to find the owner from that," said Kildare, with a smile. "I know there was a scientific lecture at the Wayland Hall to-day—some big scientific Johnny lecturing on air navigation. You've only got to find out the fellow who went. Judging by the look of the book, he dropped it at the stationer's on his way to buy a notebook."

Darrell nodded and stared at the notes.

"Whoever did this goes jolly deep," he said. "It may belong to a master. I don't know any fellow who scribbles shorthand, anyhow. What shall I do with it—I want to let the owner have it. Perhaps he's tearing his hair by this time over losing it."

"I'm going to the Head now," said Kildare. "I'll take it along, if you like. He will know."

"Good!"

The captain of St. Jim's slipped the notebook into his pocket and continued on his way to the Head's study.

Dr. Holmes gave him a kind nod as he entered. He signed to a chair, and the Sixth-Former sat down.

The Head, of course, had many matters to discuss with his head-prefect, and for twenty minutes they discussed various matters of business connected with the House and the school. Then Kildare, before leaving, brought up the subject of Angelo, of the Fourth.

"There's a matter I should like to speak of, sir, if you will allow me," he said diffidently.

"Pray go on," said the Head.

"It's about the new boy in the Fourth Form."

"Lee, of the Fourth?"

"Yes, sir," said Kildare. "I believe his Form-master has the impression that he is—well, a fool, sir, and not at all suited for a school like this."

"Mr. Lathom appears to believe that the boy is of defective intellect," said Dr. Holmes, pursing his lips.

"It mayn't be so bad as that, sir; but I have observed him a good deal, and I think he is absolutely silly," said Kildare. "I have had an interview with him specially this afternoon."

"And you think—"

"I think his people made a great mistake in sending him here, sir," said the prefect. "I think he will be useless here—useless to himself and to the school; and likely to suffer a great deal for nothing. I felt bound to mention it, sir, as he seems a harmless sort of kid, and seems to me to be utterly out of place here."

Dr. Holmes nodded.

"Mr. Railton has told me something of the kind," he said. "And Mr. Ratcliff, of the New House, also. That is your fixed opinion, Kildare? I had intended to ask you for your opinion, and I am very glad to hear it."

"Then I will speak out, sir," said Kildare. "I think the boy is so foolish that it is cruelty to make him mix with other boys who are normal. He must have a very hard time

in the Fourth Form; and it cannot do him any good. Indeed, it may do him a lot of harm."

"In what way, Kildare?" asked the Head gravely.

"Some junior fooled him to-day, sir, to the extent of making him believe that it was a custom for new boys here to climb the flagstaff and place a hat on top."

"Bless my soul!"

"He actually performed the feat, sir—and I needn't say how alarmed I was to see so stupid a boy at a dangerous height from the ground. Luckily he came down safely; but—"

The Head nodded again slowly.

"I have been thinking this matter over very seriously, Kildare," he said. "My first impression was, that this boy was pretending to be stupid in order to be sent away from the school."

"Oh!" said Kildare.

"I am informed that he was very reluctant to come here, and was sent against his will," said the Head. "It seems that he has some boyish ambition to become an airman."

Kildare smiled involuntarily.

"That young ass?" he exclaimed.

The Head smiled, too.

"If he is anything like so foolish as you suppose, Kildare, as his Form-master supposes, certainly his ambition is ridiculous enough," he said. "It is, of course, a worthy ambition; but utterly out of place in a boy of backward intellect."

"I should say so, sir."

"I certainly had the impression, at first, that his assumption of impenetrable stupidity was a kind of trickery, to induce me to send him back to his home," said Dr. Holmes. "From your observation of the boy, do you think this possible?"

Kildare shook his head decidedly.

"Not at all, sir. He is a complete fool. I gathered from his talk that at home he plays with dolls and what he calls puff-puffs—toy engines, I suppose. Like a child of seven or eight."

"My first impression has been very much shaken," admitted the Head. "I was beginning to believe that Lee is, as you say, an absolute foolish boy, unfitted to be here. What you tell me must, I think, settle the matter. Your opinion is that he should be sent home?"

"Certainly, sir."

"He has been here only a week," said the Head thoughtfully. "But that time is ample for his character to be ascertained. Everyone apparently is of the same opinion regarding him."

"I am sure his Form-fellows are, sir. He is called the fool of the school in the Lower Forms."

The Head frowned a little.

"This school is no place for him," he said. "I am bound to concede to the opinions of his Form-master and House-master, confirmed by my head-prefect, and, indeed, by my own observation. I shall write to Mr. Lee to-day and make arrangements for the boy to leave immediately."

Kildare rose. He was about to take his leave when he remembered the notebook in his pocket.

He drew it out.

"What is that?" asked the Head, glancing at it over his pince-nez.

"Darrell picked this up in the Sixth Form passage, sir," said Kildare. "It contains notes of a lecture given at Wayland this afternoon, some of them in shorthand. I think it must belong to one of the masters, and so perhaps you would know."

"Let me see it," said the Head.

He took the notebook and glanced into it.

His gaze became fixed.

An extraordinary expression came over Dr. Holmes' face. Kildare, watching it, wondered what was up.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head faintly, at last.

Kildare waited in wonder. Dr. Holmes raised his eyes at last from the pages of the notebook.

"You cannot guess to whom this belongs, Kildare?"

"No, sir—but I suppose one of the masters, as the stuff is too deep for one of the fellows."

The Head smiled.

"You do not recognise the handwriting, of course?"

"No, sir."

"It is the handwriting of Angelo Lee, the new boy in the Fourth Form!" said the Head.

CHAPTER 8.

Bowled Out!

KILDARE jumped. If the Head had told him that it was the handwriting of Peter the Great or Pontius Pilate, he could scarcely have been more surprised.

"Lee!" he stuttered.

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"Lee!" said the Head.

"That fool!" ejaculated Kildare involuntarily.

The Head set his lips.

"Whoever took these notes of an abstruse scientific lecture, Kildare, was no fool; but a boy of uncommon attainments in a very difficult branch of knowledge," he said.

"But—!" stuttered Kildare.

"The boy is well acquainted with shorthand—not an easy thing in itself—for a Lower School boy!" said the Head.

"But Lee—"

"And these notes show a keen knowledge of the subject—a knowledge which, of this particular subject, exceeds my own," said the Head.

Kildare could only stare blankly.

"And it is in Lee's hand," said the Head quietly. "There is no doubt at all on that subject."

"I—I can't understand it, sir," stammered Kildare, "unless I have been thoroughly taken in; the boy is an absolute fool."

"I am afraid that you have been taken in, as you express it, Kildare; and the same applies to Mr. Lathom."

"The young rascal!" exclaimed Kildare indignantly.

"My first impression," said the Head, "is evidently, after all, the correct one. Lee desires to go home, in the hope of realising his ambition to become an airman; and for this reason he has made the whole school believe him a hopeless dunce and fool. He has very nearly succeeded in his object—for I was about, as you know, to write to his father to take him away. But for your handing me this notebook, Kildare, the boy would have been sent away from the school!"

"The young rogue!" said Kildare. "Then—then—when he was talking to me about—about dolls, and—and puff-puffs—he—he was simply pulling my leg, and making a fool of me." Kildare's face was crimson.

"I fear so."

"I—I told him I would mention him to you, sir, and point out that he ought to be sent home," said Kildare. "And—and that was the young rascal's object all the time. Making a fool of me."

"It would appear so, Kildare," said the Head. "I shall deal very severely with this boy. There is no longer any question of his being sent away from the school—his trickery is exposed now. I shall endeavour to impress upon his mind that he cannot play such tricks with impunity." The Head's face was grim for a moment. "Will you send him to me immediately, Kildare?"

"Certainly, sir."

Kildare left the study in a state of great astonishment and wrath.

It was amazing to learn that his leg had been pulled to such an extent by a seemingly artless and innocent "kid"; still more amazing that any junior schoolboy had the nerve to play such tricks with the Head of the House.

Darrell, of the Sixth, met Kildare as he came away from the Head's study.

"Found the giddy owner of the notebook?" he asked.

"The Head knew," said Kildare.

"And who's the scientific johnny?" asked Darrell rather curiously.

"Lee, of the Fourth."

"Eh?"

"The kid that the other juniors call the fool of the school," said Kildare grimly.

Darrell stared at him.

"Is that a jest?" he asked.

"Not at all; it's a fact. The young rascal has been pulling our legs—making fools of all of us for a little game of his own. I'm going after the cheeky young villain now."

And Kildare went on, leaving Darrell whistling with astonishment. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was coming down the stairs, and Kildare called to him.

"Do you know where Lee is, D'Arcy?"

"Yaas, wathah."

"Well, where is he?"

Arthur Augustus grinned.

"In the Fourth Form passage, Kildare—gwoanin'."

"Groaning!" said Kildare. "What on earth is he groaning about?"

"It appears that some pwefect found him fightin' with Bates in the Sixth passage," said D'Arcy. "The pwefect laid into both of them with a cane. He appears to have laid it on wathah hard."

"Oh! That was how he came to drop his notebook there, I suppose," said Kildare, and he passed D'Arcy on the stairs, and went up to the Fourth Form quarters.

There was a sound of mumbling and groaning from Study No. 3. The captain of St. Jim's looked in. Angelo and Bates were there—still in the throes of anguish from the thrashing Knox had given them. They were not thinking of "scrapping" now. Both of them had received enough



Angelo had only a second—but he made the most of it. He caught hold of a chair and hurled it at Knox's legs. There was a terrific crash as Knox went over the chair, and measured his length on the study carpet. "Oh!" roared the prefect. (See Chapter 11.)

damage from Knox, of the Sixth, and they did not want any more from one another.

"Lee!" rapped out Kildare.

"Ow! Oh, dear! Yes, Kildare," mumbled Angelo.

"You seem to have bagged a licking," said Kildare.

"Ow! Yes! A great rough person rushed at me with a cane, and whacked me," said Angelo. "I'm sure I don't know why. I thought it was very unfriendly of him—very rough and unfriendly indeed."

Kildare smiled grimly. Angelo was still on his artless tack, unconscious, so far, that it was, so to speak, a chicken that would no longer fight.

"I do wish I was home again," went on Angelo plaintively. "It seems such a long, long time since I have played with my doll's house."

There was a scoffing snigger from Bates.

"Did you go to Wayland this afternoon, Lee?" asked Kildare.

"Yes, I mentioned to you that I had a walk to Wayland, Kildare. I was going to buy a doll—a large dolly that opens and shuts its eyes. But I was afraid Bates would not like it in the study!" said Angelo mournfully.

"Hear him!" sniggered Bates. "Oh, my hat!"

"Did you go to the Wayland Hall, Lee?"

Angelo started a little.

"Did you attend the lecture, there—"

"The—lecture—" faltered Angelo.

"Did you take notes of it in shorthand?"

"I—I—"

"In a notebook which you afterwards dropped in the Sixth Form passage?" went on Kildare ruthlessly.

Angelo's hand went like lightning to his pocket. It was empty; and his face was blank with dismay.

"That notebook is now in Dr. Holmes' hands."

"Oh dear."

"He recognised the writing in it—"

"Great pip!"

And now you're to go to him, to answer for playing cheeky tricks," said Kildare, "and I warn you, Lee, if you know what's for your own good, not to put on playing the fool any more with the Head, now you're found out. I'd jolly well give you the licking of your life; but I think you'll get enough from the Head. Go at once."

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Angelo.

"Come!" snapped Kildare.

"I—I say—" stuttered Angelo.

"That's enough."

The captain of St. Jim's took Angelo by the collar, and hooked him out of the study. Bates stared after them blankly, not understanding at all. The "fool of the school" walked away dismally with Kildare, realising that the game was up. Success had been fairly within his grasp, when chance had betrayed him; and now the game was up.

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with a vengeance. Kildare tapped at the Head's door and opened it, and pushed the dismayed Angelo in. "Come in, Lee!" said the Head's deep voice. And Kildare walked away and left him to it.

CHAPTER 9.

The Head Comes Down Heavy!

"O H, my hat!" breathed Angelo. For once, the nerve of the peculiar new boy in the Fourth almost forsook him. He blinked round at the Head's study in dismay.

Dr. Holmes was not alone there.

Mr. Railton, the Housemaster, and Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth Form, were also in the room.

Evidently, the Headmaster had sent for them to be present when Angelo was called on the carpet.

The tell-tale notebook lay on the Head's desk. It had passed from hand to hand; and both the Housemaster and the Form Master knew now precisely how much Angelo was the "fool of the school."

Mr. Railton looked very stern; Mr. Lathom deeply annoyed. Of the two, Mr. Lathom was the more irritated. Only that morning, Lee had construed "est in conspectu Tenedos" into "he was expecting a tenner." That was all very well in a born fool, who could not be supposed to understand Latin more than anything else. It was distinctly exasperating in a fellow who was able to make shorthand notes of a scientific lecture.

Angelo realised that he was "for it."

On that point there was no shadow of doubt, no possible doubt whatever. The three masters looked as grim as gorgons to the eyes of the hapless spoofer.

"Lee!" the Head's voice was deep.

"Yes, sir," faltered Lee.

Dr. Holmes' fingers indicated the notebook on the desk.

"Is this your property, Lee?"

For a second, Angelo hesitated. But it came into his mind that his handwriting was in the notebook, well known to the Fourth Form master, and not unknown to the Head and the Housemaster. There was no denial possible, if Angelo had thought of it.

"Yes, sir," he answered meekly.

"You attended the science lecture at the Wayland Hall this afternoon?"

"Ye-e-s, sir."

"And made these notes upon the lecture?"

"Yes, sir."

"Both in longhand and in shorthand?"

"Oh dear! Yes, sir."

"With shorthand," said the Head, "I am very slightly acquainted. But I have read the longhand notes, Lee. They show a remarkable acquaintance with the subject, in one so very youthful."

"Very remarkable, indeed," said Mr. Railton, his eyes curiously on the junior.

"And a degree of intelligence and reflection, Lee, which your Form-master would never have expected from a boy consistently dull and obtuse in class!" went on the Head.

"Never, indeed," said Mr. Lathom. "Lee's construe this morning, sir, was apparently the work of a boy in a state of semi-idiotcy. It is only too clear now that he could have done better had he chosen."

"I think there is no doubt upon that point," said the Head.

"None at all," said Mr. Railton.

"I have been deceived!" said the master of the Fourth.

"And I!" assented the Housemaster.

"And I very nearly—very nearly, indeed," said the Head. "Lee, in the belief that your assumption of impenetrable stupidity was genuine, I was about to write to your father, to request him to remove you from this school without delay."

"Oh dear!" groaned Angelo.

It was a case of "so near, yet so far." Angelo had been on the very verge of success in his remarkable scheme, when his luck had failed him. At the very last moment he had tripped.

"Needless to say, I have now changed that intention, Lee."

"Have—have you, sir?"

"Undoubtedly. So far from being an absolute fool, as you have pretended, you are a boy of unusual intelligence, and could easily make your mark in your Form if you chose to do so."

Angelo was silent. Such a tribute from his headmaster would have pleased almost any fellow. But to Angelo it brought only dismay and the sense of defeat. It marked the end of his scheme for getting away from St. Jim's, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 972.

and changing that ancient seat of classical learning for Cousin Peter's aerodrome.

"In a word, Lee, you have deceived your masters!" said the Head portentously.

Angelo coloured a little.

"I didn't mean that, sir," he faltered. "I—I never meant—I never thought of it like that. I just wanted to go."

"Nevertheless, it amounted to deception," said the Head, "and in addition, your conduct has been the very extreme of impertinence and disrespect."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Angelo.

From this moment, Lee, your Form-master will expect from you work of a very different kind. I have requested Mr. Lathom to report you for a flogging if you display obtuseness in class."

"Oh!"



Angelo Lee stood facing the half circle of prefects, all of whom look scowl on his face. His eyes gleamed at Angelo, who gave him a clenched his hands w

"Mr. Lathom has told me of your construe this morning. Bless my soul, the boy is laughing!" exclaimed the Head. Angelo had grinned involuntarily for a second. He was grave again at once, however. It was not a time for merriment, in the presence of three wrathful and indignant masters.

"It may seem a laughing matter to you, Lee. Your headmaster does not regard it as a laughing matter," said Dr. Holmes. "You will, as a penalty, translate the whole of the second book of the *Aeneid*. You will bring the translation to me personally. If it is not a good translation, I shall cane you severely, and you will perform the translation a second time."

"Oh dear!" gasped Angelo.

This was something terrific in the way of an impot, as

the second book of the *Æneid* contains 804 lines. Angelo was likely to be kept very busy in his leisure hours for a long time to come. He was likely to make a much closer acquaintance with the great Latin poet than any other Fourth Form fellow had ever made. It was a heavy price to pay for telling Mr. Lathom, in class, that the ancient king of Troy was expecting a "tenner."

"You will be detained for all half-holidays until your task is done, Lee," pursued the Head.

"Ow!"

"I think that this will be both a punishment and a warning to you," said Dr. Holmes. "It will also have the effect, I hope, of turning your thoughts definitely towards matters proper for the attention of a schoolboy. You may go now, Lee."

Angelo limped from the study.



looked very grave and solemn. Knox was there, with a black cheery nod and a smile, that made the bully of the Sixth wrath. (See Chapter 12.)

He limped down the corridor, feeling quite crushed. He limped up the staircase, and limped along the Fourth Form passage. Blake & Co. were going into Study No. 6 to tea; and they spotted the dismayed Angelo and looked at him inquiringly.

"Bai Jove! What's the mattah, deah boy?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Haven't you got ova the lickin' yet?"

Groan!

"Head's licking?" asked Blake.

"Worse than that!" moaned Angelo. "I say, anybody know how long the second book of the *Æneid* is?"

"Goodness knows—yards and yards," said Blake.

"Miles and miles, if you tried to read it through," grinned Dig.

"What does it matter?" asked Herries. "I suppose nobody's given you a whole book of Virgil for an input?"

"Worse!" groaned Angelo. "I've got to translate the muck from end to end. I think I'd rather be hanged, if the Head gave me the choice."

"Oh, my hat! Why, that's a job for a whole term."

"Oh dear! All holidays cancelled till it's done."

"Great pip!"

"Bai Jove! It's wathah wuff!" said Arthur Augustus. "I suppose this means that the Head has found you out, Lee. I must say that it serves you wight. A fellow who tries to pull his headmastah's leg deserves to get it in the neck."

"Hear, hear!" said Dig.

And Blake & Co. went into Study No. 6, grinning. They considered that Angelo had got what he had asked for.

Possibly Angelo realised that himself. If so, it did not bring him any consolation. He limped into his study; with so woebegone a look on his face, that even Harold Bates felt sympathetic.

"My hat! Had it hot and strong?" asked Bates.

Groan!

"Sorry, old chap," said Bates. "You're a fool, and a cheeky ass, and a blithering idiot, and a burbling chump! But I'm sorry!"

Groan!

"Still, don't make that row in a fellow's study," urged Bates.

Groan! Angelo was in the lowest of spirits.

"Chuck it!" said Bates.

Groan!

"Oh, my hat! I'll leave you to it, then," said Bates.

And Bates quitted Study No. 3, leaving Angelo to groan.

CHAPTER 10.

Angelo Means Business!

TOM MERRY smiled as Angelo Lee came into the junior Common-room that evening. So did a good many other fellows. St. Jim's fellows had grown rather accustomed to smile at the sight of Angelo—his mooning face and his air of being a lost sheep, and his title of fool of the school, made them smile when they saw him. Now they smiled for quite a different reason. All the House knew what Angelo's little game had been, all the House knew that he had been found out, and all knew that he had a whole book of the *Æneid* to translate as a reward.

And all the House agreed that the wily youth had got just what he had asked for, and just what he deserved. His desire to leave St. Jim's was naturally regarded as sheer cheek by St. Jim's fellows proud of the old school—his method of attaining his end provoked merriment mingled with derision—and his complete failure was regarded as a great joke. So there were smiles all round when Angelo came in—though he was no longer looking like a lost sheep, and no longer had an artless, mooning expression on his face. That game being up, Angelo was not taking the trouble to play the part of the fool of St. Jim's any more.

He came over to the Terrible Three, who were talking football by the fire, with a serious expression on his face. They smiled at him.

"Getting on with jolly old Virgil?" inquired Monty Lowther blandly.

Lee shook his head.

"Haven't touched it yet," he answered.

"Better look after your prep this evening," grinned Manners. "Mr. Lathom will expect something better to-morrow than he got to-day. No good telling him again that old Priam was expecting a tenner."

Angelo grinned faintly. But he became serious again at once.

"I'm for it, it seems," he said.

"Well, what the dickens did you expect?" demanded Tom Merry. "You couldn't expect to keep up such a game all the time. It was the fatheadedest stunt a fellow ever thought of, to begin with."

"It jolly nearly came off, all the same," said Angelo. "The Head told me he had decided to send me home, when that unlucky notebook turned up. But a miss is as bad as a mile. Not that it makes any difference—I'm not going to stay at St. Jim's."

"That's just cheek!" said Manners, with a frown. "St. Jim's is a jolly lot too good for you."

"Too good or too bad makes no difference; I'm going to be an airman and an inventor of flying gadgets, and I'm not going to waste my time on footling classics."

"That's for your father to decide," said Tom. "Your father knows best."

"I'm going to help him decide. The fact is, he doesn't know best," said Angelo calmly. "What he's thinking of

(Continued on page 17.)

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Do you know a good story, chum? Of course you do! Would you like a ripping Tuck Hamper? What-ho! Then send your joke along, as these other chaps have done. All efforts should be addressed: Special "Tuck Hamper Competition" No. 3, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

POOR OLD JOE!

The old fellow was asking a friend's advice on how to apply for a rise in wages. "Just you go up to the master, Joe," said the friend, "and say, 'Look here, sir, you must give me a rise, or else I'll—' Say it just like that, then he'll think you mean to leave unless you get the rise." Joe acted on the instant and went to his master. "Look here, sir," he said, "you must give me a rise, or else I'll—" "Else you'll what?" snapped his employer angrily. Joe scratched his head in perplexity. "Else I'll go on working for the same money!" he continued meekly.—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to Fred Wallis, 8, Hazelhurst Road, Tooting, S.W.17.

TRANSFORMING MA!

A little girl asked her mother the meaning of the word "Transatlantic," and was informed that it meant across the Atlantic. "And does 'trans' always mean across?" asked the child. "Yes," said her mother hastily, for she was very busy. "And now run away, and don't bother me again." "Then," rejoined the youngster anxiously, "I suppose transparent means a cross parent!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to H. Robinson, 65, Charles Street, Newark, Notts.

Each Hamper contains:

An Iced Cake, Chocolates, Biscuits, Jam, Sardines, Honey, Sweets, Figs, Lemonade, Etc.

PUTTING HIS FOOT IN IT!

She was a sweet young thing, and as she happened to be staying near by he asked her over to his camp to see some football on the Saturday afternoon. He sat by her side chatting. "That's Jackson in goal," he explained. "Jolly good sort, Jackson. And there's Dicky Holmes—he's playing centre-forward. He'll be our best man before long—" The young lady interrupted him with a gasp. "Will he really?" she cried. "But, James, this is so sudden!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to Miss V. Bartrum, 2, West View Villas, Eastchurch, nr. Sheerness, I. O. Sheppey, Kent.

Owing to the interest taken by readers all over the world in this Weekly Joke Competition a Delicious Tuck hamper will be awarded for EVERY joke published on this page. Cut out the coupon below while you are of the mind to win one of these NOVEL PRIZES. Editor.

A SURE THING!

"Baby was taken very bad, mum, while you were out," said the new maid. "Oh, dear!" cried the young wife. "Is he better now?" "Oh, he's all right now, but he was bad at first! He seemed to come over quite faint. Luckily, I found his medicine in the cupboard, and—" "Found his medicine! Good gracious! What have you given the child? There's no medicine in the cupboard!" "Yes, there is, mum; it's written on it!" And the girl triumphantly produced a bottle labelled "Kid Reviver."—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to G. A. Mould, 4, Carters Cottages, Canonbury Road, Highbury, London, N.1.

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SIMPLE SAM!

Sam: "I hear your car is for sale, Bill. What do you want for it?" Bill: "Five hundred pounds." Sam: "I'll give you a surprise. 'I'll offer fifty pounds.'" Bill: "Then I'll give you a shock. I'll accept it!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to William L. Lowe, 50, Werburgh Street, Derby.

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(Continued

from

page 15.)

is the danger of air stunts; and, of course, it's no good saying that the game isn't dangerous; it is. But if every fellow's father kept him out of danger, where should we get an Air Force from, and where should we be in the next war? The pater means well, but when he finds out that I mean business, I think he will think again. You see, it's my vocation."

"You're hardly old enough to settle that for yourself," said Tom.

"My dear chap, I've lived and dreamed aviation since I was a little kid playing with a toy aeroplane on the Margate sands," said Lee. "I tell you I've got wheezes in my head that will make the whole world jump, when I get going. Cousin Peter thinks I'm clever at the game; and Peter was a big noise in the business in the War-time—he put down no end of German airmen in Flanders. Peter knows. I may be only a kid—but I tell you I've worked out a scheme for a wingless aeroplane that will come off. The planes of to-day are just in their infancy—like the steam-engines of our great-grandfathers' time. Ten years from now, a fellow will run his little plane out of a shed and send away over the house-tops, just as you wheel out a bike now to pedal down the road. I'm going to be the man that does it."

Tom Merry laughed.

"I hope so!" he said. "But just at present you'd better give some attention to jolly old Virgil, like the rest of us. It mayn't save us from a beating in the next war; but it will save you from a beating to-morrow."

And the juniors chuckled.

"Oh, can it!" said Lee. "I tell you I'm going, and the only question is, how? I've tried one stunt, and it nearly came off; but it failed. The next may be luckier. I'd rather be sent home quietly; but if it's got to be the sack, let it. Anyhow, I'm going. Now, since I've been at St. Jim's I've learned that the Sixth Form are terrific great men—especially the prefects. Junior kids are supposed to walk in fear and trembling when a prefect appears in the offing."

"Well, hardly that," said Tom. "But you have to be jolly respectful to Sixth Form prefects."

"Suppose a fellow punched a prefect—"

"Eh?"

"Punched him in the eye," said Lee.

The Terrible Three stared.

"What's the good of supposing that?" asked Manners.

"No fellow would be fool enough, or have nerve enough, either."

"Would a fellow be sacked?"

"Most likely," said Tom Merry.

"Flogged at least!" said Monty Lowther.

"Well, I don't want to be flogged, but I want to be sacked," said Lee. "I was whacked to-day by a prefect when I was scrapping with Bates in the Sixth Form passage—big fellow named Knox. That was really the cause of all the trouble—that was when I dropped my notebook. This fellow Knox is a bully, from what I hear."

"All that, and more," said Lowther. "Everybody will wish you good luck if you begin punching Knox. He's a bully and a rotter. But bear in mind that, if you do, first of all Knox will slaughter you personally, and then the Head will flog what is left of you, and your remains will be expelled from the school."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm chancing it," said Angelo. "You really think there's a good chance of being sent away, if a fellow punches a prefect hard?"

"A jolly good chance," said Tom. "Generally speaking, a cert."

"That's good enough for me."

Angelo turned and strolled to the door. The Terrible

Three exchanged glances. It was difficult to believe that the new junior was in earnest.

"Lee!" called out Tom Merry, rather anxiously. "Come back, you ass, and don't play the goat!"

Angelo walked out of the room without replying.

"Only gas!" said Manners, shrugging his shoulders. "As if any fellow would have the nerve to walk into a Sixth Form prefect's study and punch him."

"No fear!" said Lowther.

"Well, I'm dashed if a fellow can tell what Lee might or might not do," said Tom. "If he means it, he ought to be stopped. The silly young ass is so keen on his air stunts that he doesn't seem to understand that it's a disgrace to be sacked from school."

"Oh, let him rip!" said Manners. "Only gas, I tell you!"

Tom Merry looked rather worried.

"Well, Cousin Ethel asked me to keep an eye on the young ass, and keep him out of trouble, if I could," he said. "I think I'd better chip in."

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who had heard Lee's talk with the Shell fellows with great astonishment depicted on his noble countenance. "I weally think he must be wight off his wockah, you know! Aftah all, we told Ethel we would keep an eye on the young ass. Let's go aftah him."

"It's gammon!" said Racke of the Shell. "I can see him punching Knox of the Sixth—I don't think!"

"Just gas!" said Clive.

"I fancy he means it," drawled Cardew of the Fourth. "Why stop him? It will do Knox of the Sixth good to be punched, and Lee good to be flogged for punchin' him. Why stop the good work?"

But Tom Merry hurried from the room after Lee. The new junior had disappeared from view, but Baggy Trimble was in the passage, and the captain of the Shell called to him.

"Seen Lee, Trimble?"

"Yes; he's just gone up the Sixth Form passage."

"Oh, my hat!"

Tom Merry scudded away for the Sixth Form quarters. He was just in time to see Angelo tap at Knox's door and enter. The door closed behind Angelo. Tom Merry halted. A score of fellows had followed him, all intensely interested in the proceedings of Angelo Lee.

"He's gone in to see Knox!" said Levison of the Fourth, with a deep breath.

"Only pulling our leg," said Manners. "He will ask Knox some question or other; and walk out again, and grin at us."

"We shall soon see," chuckled Cardew. "If he punches Knox of the Sixth, something will be heard."

"Yaas, wathah."

And the juniors waited, with tense ears, for some sound from Gerald Knox's study. They did not have to wait long.

CHAPTER 11.

Punching a Prefect!

KNOX of the Sixth was seated at his study table, with a pen in his hand, a cigarette in his mouth, and a scowl on his face. Knox was working at Greek, and not enjoying it. Knox was accustomed to giving as much thought to the racing news as to his Form work; and the Head had recently talked to him very seriously in the Sixth Form-room. Certainly, the Head did not suspect what it was that made Knox so very indifferent a pupil. Had he known about Knox's private manners and customs, Knox would not long have remained a prefect, or indeed a St. Jim's man at all. Idleness and carelessness were the faults the Head found, and Knox had been severely rated and warned that it would not do. Hence Knox's present task, and the scowl on his face. He had put on a cigarette, in the hope that smoking would help him with his task—a very delusive hope, as the cigarette certainly did not make the Greek any easier. Knox hated work; and especially he hated Greek. But he did not want another slanging before all the Sixth; so he worked hard, in a state of temper that made him rather dangerous to approach.

It was not a judicious moment for any junior to butt into Knox's study. In his present mood Knox would have enjoyed giving any fellow "six," and he would not have waited for much provocation.

Suddenly there was a tap at the door, and it opened.

Knox glared up.

The cigarette was in his mouth, and had the visitor been his Housemaster, that would have meant trouble for Knox. Sixth Form prefects were supposed to set a good example to the school, not a bad one. Knox, remembering the

cigarette, clutched it from his mouth and dropped it to the floor, setting his foot on it as the door swung wide open.

It was Lee of the Fourth who entered.

Knox breathed hard.

He had been given a fright; and his difficult task had been interrupted: two good reasons for licking any junior who came to his study. Angelo's proceeding in visiting Knox's study just then was a good deal like that of Daniel in stepping into the lion's den. The expression on Knox's sullen, savage face would have warned any other Lower boy to give him as wide a berth as possible. But Angelo, evidently, dared to be a Daniel. He came cheerily into the study and closed the door.

"Well," said Knox. "What do you want, Lee?"

He rose to his feet, and glanced round for his cane.

"It's something rather important, Knox," said Angelo.

"Well?"

Knox picked up his cane, and moved to place himself between the junior and the door. There was no escape now from the lion's den.

"You walloped me this afternoon, Knox," said Angelo.

"Quite so," agreed Knox, with a nod. "I didn't give you enough, I see. That's easily remedied."

"You gave me more than I wanted," said Angelo. "I've come here to tell you that you are a beastly bully, Knox!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"A beastly bully," said Angelo.

Knox gazed at him. It was a little difficult for the bully of the Sixth to believe his ears. He was quite well aware that the Lower School regarded him as a beastly bully. But indubitably he had never expected a Lower boy to come to his study and tell him so.

"And a rotter!" went on Angelo cheerfully.

"A—a—a rotter!" repeated Knox quite dazedly.

"Yes; and a rank outsider. You walloped me, and I'm going to punch you for it, Knox!"

"Pip-pip-punch me!" gasped Knox.

In his utter amazement he forgot to use the cane in his hands. He stood and blinked at the happy Angelo.

"Just that!" said Lee. "Where will you have it?"

"By gad!" stuttered Knox. "I—I suppose you're mad! Must be mad, I think, to come here and ask for it like this! Bend over that chair!"

"No, thanks!"

"Bend over!" roared Knox.

"My dear man, I haven't come here to bend over—I've come here to punch your head!" said Angelo. "I know what a great man you are, Knox—no end of a big gun in an awfully important Form. Well, I don't give two-pence for the Sixth—and not even a German mark for you, Knox! You're a bully and a rotter—and there isn't a fellow in the House that wouldn't like to punch you! Well, I'm going to do it, see?"

"Will you bend over that chair?" gasped Knox.

"No!"

Knox of the Sixth wasted no more time in words. He rushed at Angelo, to grasp him and bend him over the chair, in a favourable position for a record thrashing.

Angelo promptly dodged round the study table.

"Stop!" roared Knox, pursuing him round.

"Rats!"

Knox rushed furiously in pursuit.

Angelo dodged actively round the table, sweeping it with his arm as he went. The inkpot and the Greek exercises went to the floor together, with three or four books. Knox fairly panted with rage. He flew after the junior—who flew faster. Knox grasped the table and whirled it aside and rushed directly at Angelo. Angelo had only a second. But he made the most of it. He caught hold of a chair and hurled it at Knox's legs. There was a terrific crash as Knox went over the chair and measured his length on his study carpet.

"Oh!" roared Knox.

He scrambled to his feet and hurled himself at Angelo, who hit out from the shoulder as he came.

Crash!

It was a hefty drive, and it caught Knox on the point of the jaw. He sat down with a sudden shock.

The next moment Angelo Lee had whipped out of the study. He wanted to be turned out of St. Jim's; but he did not want to remain at close quarters with Knox of the

Sixth just then. The expression on Knox's face was positively alarming.

Before the bully of the Sixth could regain his feet Angelo was gone. He went down the Sixth Form passage as if he were on the cinder-path. There was a collision as he came on the excited crowd at the corner.

Tom Merry grasped him by the shoulder.

"You silly chump! What have you done?"

"Punched Knox!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Bai Jove! You feahful ass!"

"Leggo!" panted Angelo. "He's coming!"

"Hook it, Lee!" gasped Monty Lowther, as Knox of the Sixth appeared in the passage, cane in hand, and fury in face.

Tom Merry released the new junior, and Lee fairly bolted. Knox came along with a rush.

"Where's that young scoundrel?" he roared.

"Which?" asked Lowther cheerily.

He yelled the next moment as the infuriated Knox gave him a cut across the shoulders with the cane. Knox was not in a mood to be a respecter of persons. There was a hurried scattering of the juniors.

"Wun for it, you fellows!" chirruped Arthur Augustus.

"Knox is feahfully watty! Wun like anythin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors scattered far and wide, laughing as they scattered. Knox rushed on in search of Angelo. Two minutes later he was thumping at the door of Study No. 3 in the Fourth. But the door did not open; it was locked on the inside. For five minutes or more Knox stood outside Study No. 3, addressing Angelo through the oak. But the door remained shut and locked; and the bully of the Sixth retired at last, baffled for the moment. Tom Merry & Co. watched him stride away to Kildare's study, and they wondered what would happen next. And the general opinion was that Angelo would get what he wanted, or what he professed to want—the "sack" from St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 12.

A Prefects' Beating!

"TOM MERRY!"

"Yes, Kildare?"

"Lee of the Fourth is wanted in the prefects' room."

"Ye-e-es."

"Fetch him there," said the captain of St. Jim's; and he turned away, leaving Tom Merry to his task.

Tom made a grimace.

As junior House captain, many duties fell upon him and, as a rule, he did not mind. But he did not fancy this one. However, there was no help for it; so he started for the Fourth Form passage to fetch Angelo.

Quite an army of fellows went with him. The Lower School fellows of the House were in a buzz of excitement now. Half an hour had elapsed since Angelo had punched Knox of the Sixth, and the excitement had not abated. It was an absolutely unheard-of incident. The head prefect, naturally, had taken a very serious view of it when Knox had reported it to him. And all the fellows knew that a prefects' meeting had been called.

Prefects' meetings were extremely important functions. Very seldom indeed was such a meeting called to deal with a Lower boy. Evidently, Angelo's case was regarded with deep seriousness by the great men of the Sixth.

Angelo was still locked in his study, apparently careless of what was going on. No other fellow, certainly, would have cared to be called on the carpet in the prefects' room. It was a case, as Lowther remarked, of fools rushing in where angels feared to tread. Lee of the Fourth, with utter recklessness, had asked for it, and he was going to get it—perhaps not exactly what he expected to get, but something exceedingly unpleasant.

Tom Merry thumped at the door of Study No. 3 in the Fourth.

"Hallo!" called out Angelo. "Is that Knox again? Clear off, Knox!"

"It's little me!" said Tom. "You're wanted in the prefects' room, Lee! Kildare's orders!"

"Nothing doing!" said Lee. "I'm waiting for the Head to send for me. I'll wait."

"The Head hasn't sent for you, fathead!"

"I'll wait till he does!"

"The prefects are waiting for you!"

"Let 'em wait!"

Some of the fellows laughed. But Tom Merry was serious. He had the head prefect's orders to carry out.

"Open the door, Lee, and don't be an ass!" he said.

"You've weally got to come, Lee!" called out Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It's Kildare's ordah, you know!"

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The ball rose from Angelo's foot and whizzed fairly at the long sharp nose of Mr. Horace Ratcliff and crashed there. "Goal!" gasped Blake. "Oh, my hat!" "Bal Jove!" Bump! The New House master sat down quite suddenly. Tom Merry & Co. stood gazing on in horror. (See Chapter 13.)

"Oh, bother Kildare!"
Tom thumped on the door again.
"Kildare's waiting, you ass! Will you come out?"
"No, not till the Head sends for me!" answered Angelo coolly. "That's what I'm waiting for!"
"Weally, Lee—"
"It's a prefects' meeting!" exclaimed Tom.
"Is it?" yawned Lee. "Can a prefects' meeting sack a fellow from the school?"
"Of course not, you ass! Only the Head can do that?"
"I thought so. I'll wait till the Head gets his ears up."
"You won't!" said Tom grimly. "I've got orders to take you to the prefects' room, and I'm going to take you, fathead!"
"Coming in through the keyhole?" asked Lee cheerfully.
"Or is it your idea to come down the chimney?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I'm coming in at the door," said Tom. "I've got my orders to carry out. If you don't unlock the door, I shall break it in!"
"Oh, my hat!"
"Blake, old man, will you get a hammer and a cold chisel from your tool-chest?" said the captain of the Shell.
"Certainly, old bean!" grinned Blake.
"It will take me about five minutes to deal with this lock, Lee. And the damage will be put down in your bill," said Tom. "If you've got any sense, you'll unlock the door. I mean business!"
Apparently Angelo realised that Tom Merry meant business. The study door was unlocked and opened.
"That's better," said Tom. "Now come on, you young ass! I know why you want to see the Head. But it's the prefects you have got to see, and I've got to see that you do it. Come along!"

"You're such a persuasive chap, I really can't say no!" murmured Angelo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Lee walked along to the stairs with the Shell fellow, the army of juniors following, in great excitement. Half the Lower School almost arrived at the door of the prefects' room, a large apartment near the end of the Sixth Form passage. The big door stood wide open, and the juniors had a view of the Sixth Form prefects, sitting in great state and awaiting the delinquent. All the House prefects were there, and on the table lay a cane in readiness.

Angelo walked into the room coolly enough, and round the open doorway crowded the School House juniors, eager to watch the proceedings. Darrell of the Sixth made a move to close the door; but Kildare signed to him to leave it open. No doubt the captain of the school considered it judicious to let Angelo's punishment take place in public. "Punching a prefect" was so extremely serious an offence, that the punishment of the offender could not be too public and exemplary.

Angelo Lee stood facing the half-circle of prefects, all of whom looked very grave and solemn. Knox was there, with a black scowl on his face. His eyes gleamed at Angelo, who gave him a cheery nod and a smile that made the bully of the Sixth clench his hands with wrath.

"Now, Lee—" began Kildare.

"Adsum!" said Angelo, as if he were answering to his name at call-over.

And there was a chuckle in the corridor.

"You are a new kid here," said Kildare; "but you know the rules well enough by this time. You have struck a prefect of the Sixth Form. You went to Knox's study with that deliberate intention, it appears."

"Quite," agreed Angelo.

"The young scoundrel—" began Knox.

"Leave it to me," said Kildare. "I suppose you know, Lee, that a junior who strikes a prefect is liable to be reported to the headmaster and turned out of the school?"

Angelo's eyes glimmered.

"I'm ready to go to the Head," he answered.

"No doubt," said Kildare dryly. "But I happen to be aware that you want to be turned out of the school. You've been playing one trick after another, ever since you came, to get sent away from St. Jim's. The fact is, you've been guilty of assaulting a Sixth Form prefect, for the very reason that you might be expelled for it. I haven't the slightest intention of gratifying you. The matter will not be reported to the Head at all."

Angelo's face fell.

"Oh!" he murmured.

"The Sixth Form prefects are quite able to deal with matters of discipline," went on the captain of St. Jim's grimly. "No need to trouble the Head about it. We shall deal with you personally. You will receive a prefect's beating. I think it will be a warning to you. If not, the lesson can always be repeated. Bend over that chair!"

Angelo did not move.

"You hear me, Lee?" said Kildare, taking up the cane.

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, do as you are told."

"Rats!"

"Wha-a-a-?"

"Rats!" repeated Angelo.

There was a movement among the House prefects. Kildare looked at the new junior, and his look grew grimmer and grimmer.

"I quite understand," he said. "You want the matter to go before the Head. In the ordinary way, you'd have your wish. In the present circumstances you will not. You will bend over that chair."

"I jolly well won't!" said Angelo.

"Darrell, Langton, bend him over."

The two prefects named rose from their chairs and took Angelo by the arms. Angelo struggled. His little scheme, like his previous scheme, had been a failure—a hopeless failure. Any fellow would have supposed that "punching a prefect" was a royal road to getting the "sack." But the fact that Angelo desired the sack made all the difference.

His struggling was futile. The two powerful Sixth-Formers pinioned him, and bent him by main force over the chair. Then Kildare started in with the cane, watched breathlessly by the crowd of fellows at the door.

A prefects' beating was quite a serious matter. Every prefect took the cane in turn and laid on the lashes—light or heavy, as he deemed fit. Kildare laid on two heavy strokes that made Angelo wriggle. Then he handed the cane to Rushden, who laid on two more. Angelo yelped.

Rushden handed the cane to Jones major, who laid on two rather lightly. Mulvaney major came next, with two that fairly rang. Angelo's yells rang yet louder. Macgreggor of the Sixth whacked more lightly, and then the turn came to Knox. Knox's eyes glittered as he grasped the cane.

"Only two!" said Kildare, rather sharply.

Knox looked as if he would have liked to make it two dozen.

Being limited to two, Knox put his beef into them. The cane came down with terrific vim, and Angelo wriggled and yelped.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "That was a corkah!"

Knox's arm went up again, and again the cane came down with a mighty swipe. Angelo gave a fearful yell.

The rest of the House prefects took their turn, but they laid on the strokes lightly, doubtless considering that Knox had done enough. Angelo's impression probably was that Knox had done more than enough. His face was quite white, and he was no longer thinking of resistance. The juniors in the passage, who had been grinning, were quite serious now. Certainly, Angelo had asked for it—begged and prayed for it, as Blake remarked. But it was a terrible castigation, now that he had got it.

The cane was laid on the table at last, and Angelo was allowed to rise from the place of punishment.

"Now you can cut," said Kildare. "And bear in mind, any more cheek, and you get the same again. So far as I'm concerned, you're not wanted at St. Jim's; but so long as you're here you'll toe the line. Now cut!"

Angelo limped from the room.

The door closed on the prefects.

"Well, you've had it, and no mistake, you ass!" said Blake.

Angelo groaned.

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"You weally asked for it, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus.

"Ow! Wow, wow!"

"For goodness' sake, Lee, let this be the end of it, and stop playing the goat," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ow! Wow, wow, wow!"

Bates of the Fourth kindly took Angelo by the arm and led him away to his study. And until bed-time dismal groans were heard proceeding from Study No. 3 in the Fourth. The junior who wanted to be sacked had not been sacked, but he had reaped a punishment which, as Kildare had said, was a warning to him. Whatever scheme Angelo schemed for gaining his peculiar ends, he was not likely to try again the method of "punching a prefect."

CHAPTER 13.

Rough on Ratty!

MR. RATCLIFF frowned.

It was the sight of Lee of the Fourth that caused the ready frown to knit the brows of the sour-tempered New House master.

Mr. Ratcliff never saw Lee without frowning. He had not forgotten the occasion when he had heard the new junior allude to him as an "old donkey." Had Lee been in Mr. Ratcliff's House he would certainly have had a hectic time at St. Jim's. But as Angelo was a School House fellow, Mr. Ratcliff seldom came in contact with him, and only frowned when he saw him.

It was morning break, a few days after the beating in the prefects' room in the School House. A crowd of juniors were punting a football about in the interval before third lesson, and Angelo was among them. Mr. Ratcliff, coming out of his House, glanced sourly at the merry crowd, and frowned darkly as he spotted Angelo Lee.

Since the prefects' beating, some of the fellows had kept a rather curious eye on Angelo, wondering whether he would break out again, and what would be his next scheme. In these days Lee was not exactly enjoying life. He had made an enemy of Knox of the Sixth, as was not surprising, and the bully of the School House gave him a good deal of unpleasant attention. He had incensed his Form-master, Mr. Lathom, kind little gentleman as he was, did not like having his leg pulled, and he naturally resented it.

Lee was expected to do good work in the Form-room, and if his construe was not up to the mark the vials of wrath were poured down on his devoted head. Now that Angelo was no longer playing his extraordinary part of the "fool of the school," he had no object in posing as a dunce in the Form-room, and he did quite well there; but he found his Form-master rather exacting, and he was frequently in hot water. And the enormous imposition the Head had given him still hung over him, and accounted for his half-holidays. Lee was likely to be busy every half-holiday that term in the delightful task of translating the second book of the *Æneid*.

It was his own fault undoubtedly; but he received some sympathy from the other fellows, and a good deal of assistance in the studies in his task of translation. But he was "gated" till the task was done, and it seemed really interminable.

The general impression was that Angelo had had enough, and that he would settle down, like a sensible fellow, to what could not be helped.

Certainly, day followed day without any further outbreak on Angelo's part. So far from dreaming of punching a prefect, he was very careful indeed in his manners towards those great men, and sedulously avoided Knox of the Sixth as much as he could. So far from playing the dunce, he worked unusually hard in the Form-room to placate the wrath of his Form-master.

But Angelo, as a matter of fact, was only biding his time. He did not want canings in the Form-room, and he assuredly did not want another prefects' beating. He wanted to leave St. Jim's, and the "sack" was the only way, and Angelo did not intend to commit any delinquency punished by a lesser sentence.

As Mr. Ratcliff came along, frowning, it seemed to Angelo that the time had come. Mr. Ratcliff was a Housemaster, second only to the headmaster in importance. Punching a prefect had turned out a failure; but in the case of a House-master it was not likely that a licking would be the only outcome. The ball was at Angelo's feet, and instead of punting it back among the other fellows, he dribbled it into the path the Housemaster was following.

"Lee!" shouted Figgins, in alarm.

"Lee!" roared Tom Merry.

"You uttah ass!" shouted Arthur Augustus.

Angelo did not heed them. They rushed after him, but he had too good a start.

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He was dribbling the muddy footer along the path directly towards Mr. Ratcliff.

That gentleman halted, in amazement and wrath.

It was a colossal act of impertinence for any junior to dribble a footer along the path at all when a master was walking down the path. So far Mr. Ratcliff did not dream that Lee intended anything more than impertinence; but that alone was sufficient to rouse Ratty's deepest ire.

"Lee!" he gasped. "You—your insolent boy—"

Angelo did not heed him.

He had stopped the ball a dozen feet in front of the New House master, and was taking a kick.

The juniors pursuing him stopped in sheer horror. Angelo was taking a kick at the Housemaster.

It was quite a good kick. Angelo would have made his mark in junior football had he so desired. The ball rose from his foot, and whizzed fairly at the long, sharp nose of Horace Ratcliff, and crashed there.

"Goal!" gasped Blake.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Bai Jove!"

The crash of the footer was quite unexpected on the part of the New House master. It was not likely to cross his mind that the most impudent Lower boy in existence would think of punting a footer at his august features. Mr. Ratcliff sat down quite suddenly.

Bump!

The footer rolled away from him. During the punt-about it had passed through several puddles, and collected a good deal of mud. Quite a large quantity of the mud had been transferred to Horace Ratcliff's features. Indeed, the New House master was scarcely recognisable, masked in mud.

Mr. Ratcliff sat and spluttered.

Tom Merry & Co. stood gazing on in horror.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus faintly. "That howlin' ass has done it now!"

"Hook it, you dummy!" exclaimed Levison of the Fourth.

But Angelo did not hook it. He remained where he was, with a cheery grin on his face.

Mr. Ratcliff staggered to his feet. He was almost beside himself with rage.

He strode towards Lee, and grasped him by the shoulder. "Boy!" stuttered Mr. Ratcliff. "Boy! Rascal! That—that—that was deliberate—a deliberate assault!"

"Think so, sir?" asked Angelo meekly.

"Do you deny it?" thundered Mr. Ratcliff.

"Not at all, sir."

"Come with me!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff. "I shall take you to the headmaster, Lee! I shall demand your expulsion from the school—your instant expulsion! You—you young ruffian! You—you unmitigated hooligan! Come!"

With a grinding grasp on the junior's shoulder, Mr. Ratcliff marched him away to the School House.

Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another.

"That does it!" commented Monty Lowther. "It's the sack now, and no giddy error!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"He's asked for it again, and he will get it this time!" said Blake.

This time, undoubtedly, it was the limit. Not a fellow in the crowd doubted that Angelo was "for it" at last.

Angelo himself had no doubt. His face was properly grave; but there was a glimmer of gleeful anticipation in his eyes as Mr. Ratcliff marched him into the School House, and directly to the Head's study.

The door of that august apartment was open; the Head was standing there, with majestic wrath in his countenance.

"Dr. Holmes!" spluttered Mr. Ratcliff. "This—this boy has—"

"I saw his action, Mr. Ratcliff, from my study window!" said the Head.

"An assault, sir—a deliberate assault upon a Housemaster!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff. "Such unexampled insolence, I—"

(Continued overleaf.)

"Unexampled, indeed!" said the Head.

"I demand this boy's expulsion from the school, sir!" stuttered the New House master. "I am sure, sir, you will see—"

"Quite so, Mr. Ratcliff."

The Housemaster released Lee's shoulder, and grabbed out his handkerchief, and dabbed his muddy face. Through the mud his cheeks were crimson with wrath. Lee stood waiting quietly under the grim, stern glance of the Head.

"Lee," said Dr. Holmes, in a deep voice, "you have deliberately—intentionally—assaulted a Housemaster of this school. Any boy guilty of such an act, must naturally expect to be expelled, in ignominy, from a school he has disgraced by such an act of—of ruffianism!"

"Certainly!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff.

"Oh, sir!" murmured Angelo.

"No doubt," resumed the Head, "you expect me to dismiss you from this school, in the disgrace you deserve, Lee?"

"I—I suppose so, sir!" murmured Angelo.

"This very day, sir!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff. "This very hour—"

"But there are other considerations," said the Head.

Angelo's heart sank. Mr. Ratcliff gave a start.

"Dr. Holmes! Surely, sir, you will not think of allowing this—this young scoundrel to remain—"

"In ordinary circumstances, not an hour, Mr. Ratcliff. Any other boy guilty of such an act would be expelled on the spot. But pray listen to me."

"Sir! I—I—I—"

"Pray listen to me, Mr. Ratcliff. This boy, Lee, desires to be sent away from the school. He has endeavoured to gain that end, Mr. Ratcliff, by a series of unparalleled tricks and deceptions. By expelling him I should merely gratify his desire, and give him the reward he looks for, and for which he has been guilty of this outrageous act. That I cannot do. He has committed this act, Mr. Ratcliff, because he desires to leave the school. Expulsion would be no punishment to him, but a reward. I am sure you will agree with me that his act is not one to be rewarded."

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff.

"I shall therefore award him the severest punishment possible, short of expulsion," said the Head.

"I—I think I understand, sir!" articulated Mr. Ratcliff. "Certainly the young rascal should not be allowed to attain his end by such means. But the severest punishment—the very severest—"

"That," said the Head, "I leave entirely in your hands, Mr. Ratcliff. You will deal with Lee, on this occasion, as if he were a New House boy. I only suggest that you should not err on the side of leniency."

Mr. Ratcliff, really, did not need that suggestion.

Leniency, of all things, was not in his thoughts just then. His eyes fairly glittered at Lee.

Now that he comprehended the position, Mr. Ratcliff did not desire to see Lee expelled. The young rascal was not to be gratified by being sent home, after getting a goal on a Housemaster's majestic features.

"Lee!" said the Head sternly.

"Oh, yes, sir!" groaned Angelo.

His face was dismal.

The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley, as the poet has declared. And Angelo's schemes seemed fated to "gang agley."

He had counted upon the "sack" as a certainty. And it was as far-off as ever. Only he was landed in Mr. Ratcliff's hands—at Ratty's tender mercies!

"You will follow Mr. Ratcliff to the New House," said the Head. "Mr. Ratcliff will punish you as he deems fit for your act of rebellious rascality."

"Oh!" gasped Lee.

"Go!"

"Follow me, Lee!" said Mr. Ratcliff, in a grinding voice. The New House master strode from the study, and Lee limped after him. They left the School House, and came into view of the excited crowd in the quad. Tom Merry and Co. stared at them as they crossed towards the New House, Angelo trailing along dismally in the wake of the lean, angular Housemaster.

"Sacked?" called out a dozen voices.

Angelo shook his head dolorously.

He followed Mr. Ratcliff into the New House.

"Floored again!" grinned Monty Lowther. "Come to think of it, the Head knows jolly well what Lee is aiming at, and it stands to reason he won't let him score so easily as all that."

"Yaas, wathah."

"My hat! I shouldn't care to be in his shoes now!" muttered Figgins. "You can see that he's handed over to Ratty for punishment. And Ratty's in a rare bate!"

The crowd of fellows gathered near the window of Mr. Ratcliff's study in the New House.

The window was closed; nevertheless, they could hear the steady, rhythmic swishing of a birch.

The swishing was accompanied by loud and anguished yells, which told very eloquently what Angelo was feeling like.

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "Watty's goin' it! This is wathah thickah than a Head's floggin'!"

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

The hapless Angelo's voice was raised in one continuous yell now. He was undoubtedly getting something more severe than even a Head's flogging. No doubt he repented by that time of having "biffed" a muddy footer in Mr. Ratcliff's features. The sack was as far off as ever, and he was getting—

Swish, swish, swish!

"Bai Jove! Watty's weally ovah-doin' it, you know!"

"I've no doubt Lee thinks so!" said Blake.

Swish, swish, swish!

The swishing stopped at last. Probably Mr. Ratcliff's arm was tired. Perhaps even the incensed Ratty considered that Lee had had enough, unexampled as his offence had been. Certainly his flogging had been unexampled.

"Here he comes!" said Tom Merry.

Angelo limped out of the New House.

He did not speak—he did not even groan. Tom Merry and D'Arcy joined him, took his arms, and kindly walked him away.

That afternoon, Mr. Latham excused Lee from class in the Fourth Form room. He really had suffered too severely to sit at classes with the Form. After class Angelo retired to his study. When some kind-hearted fellows sought him there, to ask him to tea, Angelo only shook his head dolorously. It was not till late in the evening that he appeared in the junior common-room in his House, looking a little recovered, though still wriggling occasionally. All eyes were turned on him as he wriggled in.

"Better?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes, thanks," Lee grinned faintly. "It was thick! Old Ratty is rather an athlete. But it's wearing off."

"You'll chuck up playing the goat now, I hope?" said Tom. "You're booked for St. Jim's, you know. Make the best of it."

Lee shook his head.

"Weally, you ass!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy warmly. "Do you mean to say that you haven't had enough yet?"

"Some fellows are greedy!" grinned Monty Lowther.

Angelo smiled, and then wriggled.

"I shall be more careful next time," he said. "Next time there won't be any mistake!"

"Fathead!" said Tom Merry.

And Angelo smiled and said no more. But evidently he had not changed his mind; the new junior at St. Jim's was still seeking the sack.

THE END.

(Mind you read the next story in this wonderful series, chums. It's a scream from beginning to end. The title alone—"LOOKING AFTER ANGELO!"—will give you in advance some idea of this yarn for next week. Get your pals to read it, too!)

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WHITE EAGLE

A Thrilling New Story of Adventure amongst the Apache Indians of New Mexico, introducing Tom Holt—Britisher, and real grit right through.

By **ARTHUR PATTERSON.**

The Dog Devil!

AS Tom approached the place he heard White Cat's voice raised high. He was talking fast in Indian, with a weird sing-song intonation, standing before his father and gesticulating wildly. Suddenly he leaped from the ground, stamped hard with both feet, one after the other, and, seizing a piece of wood

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE!

TOM HOLT, a sturdy young Britisher of seventeen, lands in New Mexico—at the invitation of some friends of his father's—to start business on the Doggett Ranch.

He finds the place in a deserted and dilapidated condition, and from a letter, left by a former employee, learns that his two friends have died. Tom's in a quandary, for he knows nothing about ranching, but he buckles to and makes the ranch-house ship-shape. In the course of this general clean up he comes across a dog, with whom he makes friends instantly. Hunks, as he names the dog, proves a real pal.

Shortly after his meeting with Hunks Tom runs across a wandering tribe of Apache Indians. Their chief is Black Hawk. Unknown to Tom, the chief cherishes the hope of wiping out the "whites" in the country, and to help him to collect the necessary knowledge before a successful raid can be made on the white settlements he offers to take Tom on the trail and show him how to become a successful rancher. Tom, whose knowledge of corraling, branding, woodcraft, following a trail, etc., is very remote, jumps at the opportunity, little dreaming of the reason that lies behind it. Some time later the young Britisher distinguishes himself by "sticking in the saddle" on the back of an untamed mare called Malinka. The chief is so pleased with the performance that he makes a present of the mare to his young paleface friend. It is intended that the tribe should hit the trail in two days' time, to hunt bear and mountain lion. Determined to be properly equipped, Tom travels to Santa to buy himself a rifle and a hunting outfit. He leaves Malinka and Hunks behind. On his return White Cat, the chief's son—with whom Tom is very friendly—rushes out with the news that some of the Redskins have deliberately locked Hunks in the stable with Malinka. White Cat jumps to the conclusion that Hunks has been savaged to death by Malinka, for he knows the mare's antipathy to dogs. Eager to avenge his paleface brother, White Cat and his father have caused the offending Redskins to be tied to the stake to be tortured. Full of alarm, Tom rushes to the stable, sees that Hunks is very much alive and kicking, having made friends with Malinka in his usual spontaneous fashion, and then races pell-mell for the camp.

(Now read on.)

from a pile close by, lit it at one of the small fires. It was a long sliver of pinon, or pitch pine, and it blazed up like a candle. White Cat, with another cry like the howl of a wild beast, waved his improvised torch in the air. Just as Tom broke through the circle of Indians, seeing now what was up, White Cat slowly jabbed the lighted end between the ribs of one of the bound Indians. The man made no sound, but there was a horrid sizzle. Tom, who was now on the spot, smelt scorched flesh.

The effect of this was to send him nearly as wild as the torturer. He caught White Cat by the neck and flung him to the ground; and, heedless of everything but disgust at the sufferings of the wretched warrior, was about to cut the thongs which bound him to the stake, when he found himself in the midst of a fiery ring of Apaches, all of whom had armed themselves with torches and were dancing round the stake, intoning hoarsely a monotonous war-song.

It was a horrible sight. To Tom, the men seemed all to have gone mad. They did not look at him or seem to pay the least attention to his presence. They simply moved round the doomed creature at the stake, with shuffling feet, making passes with their chips of lighted wood and getting closer to him every moment. Their eyes, in the dim light of the torches, were glassy and staring; their mouths wide open like thirsty dogs, with curling, protruding tongues.

Tom's blood ran cold. He would not give way. As one Indian stooped to follow White Cat's example, he kicked him full in the stomach and sent him rolling. He pushed another violently into a third, so that they burnt each other's faces. Nevertheless, he saw that it was all hopeless. He had no chance against such numbers or the senseless ferocity of their attack upon the captives.

But at this instant an amazing thing happened which completely turned the tables. Hunks, who had paused cautiously outside the crowd, not at all liking this display of fire-sticks, no sooner saw his master go to work than he put aside all conscientious scruples and determined to take a hand in the affair. He bore no ill-will to White Cat now, but those creatures, with their humming voices, excited every nerve in his little head, and, losing all fear of fire for a moment, he rolled full tilt into the fray, and with a ferocious, howling bark planted his body up against his master's knees, gnashed his teeth like castanets, and snapped ferociously right and left at the Apaches.

The effect of Hunks' intervention was like a transformation scene in a pantomime. At the sound of his yell every Indian about the stake sprang away as if shot, and at the sight of his grinning jaws fled with one accord into the darkness. But the strangest thing of all was that the men

tied up were every bit as scared as their would-be torturers. They struggled and contorted their bodies furiously to get free, with short cries of agonised terror; while as for the watching circle of Apaches outside, it simply vanished as if it had never been. In less than a minute after Hunks' arrival there was not an Indian on the ground, except Black Hawk, who was standing some paces off, very still, and White Cat, who lay crouched, his head in his hands, where Tom had landed him in the first instance, and, of course, the men tied to the stakes.

Tom's first action was to calm the excitement of Hunks. This was easily done. The disappearance of everybody, indeed, was enough in itself, and, except for a desire to chase them—which he prudently repressed—the pup became at once as mild as a mouse. Then Tom turned to Black Hawk. He was so angry at what he had seen that his respect for the chief was at zero, and he spoke harshly:

"Why did you allow this? Malinka would not touch my dog. She never kicked him at all."

"No!" cried Black Hawk, with a catch in his teeth which began to enlighten Tom as to the meaning of the situation. "Malinka wise horse; she not kick a devil. My warriors wise now. Huh?"

He stepped back as he spoke to where White Cat lay, and Tom saw that they were clinging to each other. The cause was the pup, who had made an approach to Black Hawk, as he often did, with an inquisitive, sniffy sort of interrogation.

"Keep him away!" the chief exclaimed. "Me not hurt him. What he want?"

Tom bit his lips hard to prevent a laugh coming. It was all plain as a pikestaff now. White Cat's yell at the stable of "Dog Devil" had been passed on, and was believed even by the chief himself. But Tom composed his features carefully as an idea occurred to him.

"You speak truth," he said coolly. "Hunks is a bit of a devil. Some day he'll be a pretty savage one. Now he is all right; but he wants you to set those warriors free."

Black Hawk grunted again.

"So he may chase and kill them?"

Tom had to turn away at this, for at that moment Hunks was wagging his curly tail, with a particularly sheepish expression, ready to lick the hand of anything in the shape of a man.

"No! He has—he has recovered his temper. No one will be hurt. Tell the warriors to come back."

"Good!" Black Hawk exclaimed, in a relieved tone; and White Cat got up. "They shall come, and you, Tom, will make a speech to them, which I will repeat in our tongue."

This was more than Tom had bargained for. He had never done such a thing in his life. The idea made cold drops of perspiration trickle down his spine. But there was no escape. At a shrill, sharp whistle from the chief the Indians began to slide into the camp. The captives were released, and Tom, to his surprise, saw them mingle with their companions as if nothing had happened; while the wounded one actually went up to the big fire and displayed his sore side to several others with the pride of a Third-Form junior who has been well hacked at Rugby.

In a very short time—far too short for Tom—the whole party was assembled in solemn silence round the fires, and Black Hawk stepped out into the open space and began an harangue in his own tongue.

What he said, Tom had no idea, but he saw him point to Hunks, now lying at his master's feet, and then at Tom himself; and it was clear, from the low murmurs of satisfaction which greeted his words, that he was pouring oil on troubled waters.

Then, with a short exclamation which meant he had finished, he turned and waved a solemn finger at Tom, retired abruptly, and sat down, without a word of suggestion or guidance of any kind.

Tom stepped forward. Just for a minute he felt as he had done years ago when, a mere kid, he had to recite one prize giving day at a private school. But that feeling vanished as his eye caught the expression on the faces of the Indians. None of them were looking at him. Their eyes were fixed on Hunks, who, as Tom went forward, followed.

Has a dog a dramatic sense? Hunks had. Perhaps it was the collie blood. The collie is very sensitive to atmosphere. At any rate, as Tom braced himself for his ordeal he felt Hunks' nose touch his hand, and, looking down, saw that he was standing stiffly erect. His white ruff was out, his thick neck arched proudly, and the bulldog front teeth in the lower jaw a-gleam under his black upper lip. His carriage was rigid as steel, and the expression of the whole of him at the moment was that of a full-grown dog who knew his power and meant to assert it for all he was worth. He stood on tiptoe, his shoulder above his master's knee, and when Tom spoke, Hunks seemed to the superstitious

Indians not only to understand all that was said, but to be presenting the words.

"Men of the Apache Nation," Tom began, "what I say to you comes from the heart of my dog." He stooped and laid his hands on Hunks' head, who responded with a deep growl, at which every Indian shivered. "He is young, but his sire was the wisest of all guardians of sheep, cattle, and horses, and his mother the most savage of fighters. She belonged to the breed that takes the wild bull by the mouth and brings it to its knees. Malinka the mare knew this." Tom was warming to his work now. "Therefore she kicked him not, though all other dogs she kills. Remember and beware! He is watching those who were his enemies. If they anger him again they will die—like that!" He clapped his hands and the crowd moved uneasily. "That is all. Good-night!"

The end was rather an anti-climax, but as Tom's powers of invention had given out, and a sudden desire to laugh laid hold of him, there was no help for it. Black Hawk now rose to translate, and all Tom had said, though of course he did not know it, lost nothing in this telling; and the whole time Hunks stood as he had done from the first, fierce, snarling, never moving an inch.

When they were alone at the ranch Tom praised him, while Hunks, a baby once more, rolled upon his back.

"But look here, my boy," his master said warningly, pulling both ears, "see that you act up to it now! What price that mountain lion?"

Fear!

THE start was made at the earliest streak of dawn, and though Tom had not slept as soundly as the night before, he rose fresh and well-satisfied with himself.

These Apaches, he now realised, were savages through and through. Pahl! He smelt that human flesh still. Black Hawk, for all his dignity and friendship—Tom absolutely trusted him—and little White Cat were just as barbarous under their skin as the rest. His position, therefore, if he looked facts in the face, was going to be very much like that of a fellow living among a pack of tame wolves—and not such very tame ones, either. But, on the other hand, they had proved themselves to be friendly towards him. Black Hawk was in complete command; White Cat, he felt instinctively, his sworn friend; and now, thanks to Hunks, the great and mighty Hunks, the warriors had elevated him to the dignity of a demon-charmer, if they did not, as he rather suspected, look upon him as a kind of devil himself.

They called Hunks the Black Devil, he found, among themselves; and when he thought of this, now that things had turned out all right, Tom had private fits of laughter, for if there were a baby among dogs, Hunks was one. That these stark, fierce Apaches should treat him, as they now did, with a fearful and wondering respect, giving him the widest berth when he wandered near them, actually shivering when he took up his favourite position, at any halt, between Malinka's fore-legs, was the most marvellous joke he had ever known in his life.

The party travelled slowly. Tom rather chafed at this to begin with; he was so eager to get to those mountains which stretched away to the North-West, range after range, until they ended in a line of jagged peaks and a white, snow-covered expanse in the far distance. But before the day was half over he saw the wisdom of it all.

By noon, when they had a short rest which, though Tom did not know it, was for his benefit only, since Indians on a journey never halt between sunrise and sunset, they had left the prairie behind and begun an ascent of the first range of hills. The going was hard and laborious. There was a track, apparently, for Black Hawk, who led the way, went onwards unhesitatingly between great rocks, over terraces of slippery grass, across benches of turf and along dry watercourses which in winter had been torrents of water or small avalanches of snow.

But it was a desperate climb all the way. Tom now renounced for ever, and mentally apologised for, his first opinion of Indian ponies. The way these skinny little beggars briskly made the pace against every obstacle, mounted rocks, and jumped them, too, like chamois, never stumbling, never missing their footing, never pausing to rest, was a revelation. He decided that mules were not in it, and that they could beat the stoutest donkey ever created. They proceeded in single file, and as Tom was placed last of all, with White Cat just in front to direct him when they came to a particularly difficult place, he had a comparatively easy time.

He was too tired, however, to speak and too stiff to walk by the time the day's march was over, and away up in a grove of fir at the crest of the first range of foothills the



The Redskins moved round the doomed creature at the stake, with shuffling feet, making passes with their chips of lighted wood, and getting closer to him every moment. (See Page 23.)

party halted for the night. Packs were now taken off the backs of the ponies and they made camp. Tom, however, was speedily to find that the weariness which he felt was unknown to Indians. Hardly had they settled down, and the fragrant odours of frying bacon and baking dough-cake begun to titillate his voracious appetite with delightful anticipations, than White Cat, who had mysteriously disappeared when the journey ended, came out of the trees like a ghost from nowhere and touched him on the shoulder.

"You hunt to-night," he observed, with a smack of the lips. "She-bear with cubs other side of this hill. Warriors had started to get them, when Black Hawk say 'No!' You to have first shot with me because you guest. We eat supper smart and then go ahead like winking."

The hard face of the young Apache was full of eagerness, though he spoke with decorous gravity and calm. It was evident he was ready to walk five miles on the spot.

Tom, for his part, wanted to groan aloud he was so tired. But he saw that to shirk this invitation was out of the question. The eyes of the Indian race, albeit only a shabby crowd of little men, were upon him. Britons never, never must be slaves, not even to aching bones at the end of a long day; so he grinned feebly, expressed his gratification, and tried to pretend he was as limber as White Cat.

Had Tom known it—later on he did—he was to learn to-night the difference between life out West and all other kinds of life, except perhaps that of a soldier on active service in an engagement with the enemy. He had been to sea in a sailing ship, which is roughing it with a vengeance. But at sea, just as on a farm, in an office, or at a factory, there are, as a rule, so many hours to work in each day, and so many to sleep or play. But out West, on the frontier, as in battle, there is nothing of this kind.

A man may have very little to do for a day or so; then he must go on the trail for a week on end without rest of any kind day or night, and sometimes without food. This, of course, requires training. Indians get such training from babyhood. These Apaches were about to give it to Tom in the best way by taking it for granted that he could do what they did, without thinking. He hated them for it at the time, but he was very grateful later on.

In any case, whatever he felt, he was bound to go and shoot this beastly bear—or try to. Whether he would succeed, or whether any Indians who might accompany him would be in greater danger than Bruin, he was not at all sure.

Following Black Hawk's advice he had purchased a Winchester repeating carbine, a handy little rifle with twelve chambers, which did not kick, and being short in the barrel was easy to carry slung over the shoulder. He found, indeed, much to his surprise, that every Indian

possessed such a weapon, though this did not become apparent until they had started for the mountains. In addition, without Black Hawk's advice, Tom had purchased a heavy Colt revolver, with a ten-inch rifled barrel, warranted to project a bullet larger than that of the Winchester—a measured mile, though, of course, only getting home at short distance.

With these weapons he had practised for some hours the day before, bruising his fingers black and blue with trigger use in the process. By evening he had got the hang of the thing, and, to the surprise of the Indians, who have no use for revolvers, he showed unexpected promise in pistol play. But whether he could possibly dispatch a bear was quite another matter.

There was a moon to-night, a young one, presently to disappear, but by her light, and the stars, the way was fairly clear, and Tom, doing his best to step lightly, followed White Cat down the mountain-side.

The black and cinnamon bears of the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains are mild beasts. Unless wounded, or otherwise enraged, they have never been known to attack a human being. But Tom did not know this then, and, hearing that this particular bear had cubs, he privately prepared himself for the very worst, which was the best thing he could do.

He tied up Hunks, to the pup's infinite disgust. The little beggar should be kept out of harm's way this time. Now, as the camp was left behind, and they plunged into a canon, silent and lonely, the only sound being the creaking of tall pines strained by a wind above, Tom clutched his rifle pretty closely, and tried vainly to remember where hunting stories said was the proper place to hit a bear.

A touch on Tom's arm, and they paused. White Cat did not speak, but pointed to a little grove of birch-trees which seemed to surround in an irregular way what Tom at first took to be a rough hut of some kind. As his eyes grew accustomed to the dim light, however, he saw it was a pile of rocks in the centre of which was a black hole.

There was no sign of life or movement—nothing but this hole—but White Cat seemed quite satisfied, and quietly crouched down on the grass, his rifle at the ready, the butt pillowed in the hollow of his elbow.

Tom, concluding that this was the bear's domicile, followed the Indian's example. But he was not happy. Supposing the brute had gone out to pay a call, and was now returning, from behind? Strangely enough, this fear of Tom's, which White Cat would have scoffed at, had he known of it, having good evidence that the bear and her family were in the cave, was well founded. The boys had

not been lying in their concealment more than a few minutes when from a thicket of oak scrub at their backs came a rustle, the swish of a soft, heavy tread, and an immense black bear thrust an inquisitive and suspicious muzzle almost into the back of Tom's neck. He was the father of the family in the cave.

Tom jumped. Of course he ought to have kept still, as White Cat did. Had he done so it is probable that the bear would not have known of their presence, for he was to windward, and a thick though narrow screen of bushes was between. But Tom was no hunter yet, and this irregular and very sudden eruption of bear upset him altogether.

The embarrassment was mutual. At Tom's movement the bear, in his surprise, turned a half-somersault backwards, and was making a rapid strategic deployment to the rear when Tom fired. The shot scored a small flesh wound in the bear's shoulder. It was not enough to make him turn, mercifully, but it set him furiously to think. And when he had scudded at extraordinary speed for so unwieldy a creature into that cave, ideas of many kinds, none of them pleasant, crowded into his brain, and the conversation which ensued with his spouse as soon as he was in safety was an extremely animated one.

In the meantime the boys outside had to decide what they were going to do. White Cat, with some experience, decided upon retreat. If the family came out of doors now it would be in a very evil and dangerous mood, and the odds of two full-grown bears was too great.

But Tom did not agree. He felt the boundless confidence and courage of the Tenderfoot who knows nothing. He was, as we know, of an obstinate turn of mind, and he was extremely comfortable in that long grass.

But it was the excitement of that most unfortunate shot which moved him most. The moon was shining quite brightly upon the scattered birch-trees in front of the bears' cave. Tom was sure, he told White Cat, that he could shoot both bears before they crossed that space, which, apart from those small trees, had no cover. His only fear was that the report of his rifle had frightened the family, and that they would not come out at all.

White Cat had nothing definite to say on this point. His own knowledge was not great, but it was sufficient to make him nervous, and he had had enough. He reasoned, with excellent logic, that either the bears would not come out—in which case there was no fun to be had—or, if they did, the position of the hunters would be far too dangerous. Anyway, he was going.

Tom told him to go. For his part he should wait until the moon was too low to give light enough for a shot, and then, if nothing happened, follow. And with that he settled down again, jerked his rifle into a good position for covering any advance of the bears, drew his revolver, and placed it, cocked, in a convenient place, in case he should need it, and resumed his watch upon the cave. White Cat therewith departed, and Tom was alone.

Time passed quickly at first. The boy was keyed up with excitement of the chase. He had seen the bear snap at his shoulder after he had shot, and was sure he had touched him. He hoped this would irritate the animal without frightening him. That way lay no chance of completing the job. There was a risk, of course. But then, no fellow who went hunting bears must count risks. That would be absurd, and with a repeating-rifle he could chuck in several shots before the old chap got to him; and, supposing the lever jammed, there was the six-shooter with a heavier bullet still.

All this reasoning, though imaginative, was fairly sound, and Tom, being a person of coolness in danger, was to be trusted to give a good account of himself. The odds, on the whole, were not on the bear. But there was that other bear, the mate of the first, and mother of two extremely small, and particularly precious, baby-cubs. Tom, in his excitement, did not take her into account at all. Family responsibilities sometimes divide creatures of the wild, even to the extent of the mate making a toothsome meal of his own offspring in their mother's absence. But not black bears.

The father, in this case, was returning at speed to inform his better half that he had found near by an excellent and juicy repast for them all. After the abomination of that gun-shot and its unpleasantly smarting consequences had been discussed, and his wife had smelt and examined the sore place and given her opinion upon it, and offered advice as to its treatment which had been gruffly ignored, they considered the matter of the meal.

Both were hungry. The cubs were very hungry indeed, and old enough to require much more nourishment than they could get from their mother. It was therefore urgent

to replenish the family larder. On the other hand, the precious lives of the children must not be exposed to any risks. It was finally decided that the father of the family should do a little prospecting, and if he found the coast clear his spouse should follow.

A bear is a clumsy animal, and when he has not been disturbed, having nothing to fear from anyone but man, he does not trouble to conceal his whereabouts. Tom had noticed this already, and expected no difficulty in spotting his friend should he leave the cave. But Bruin without care, and Bruin with an inflamed shoulder and the smell of man in his mind, are two very different creatures. This gentleman was injured both in feelings and in body, and being charged with the safety of his family, crept out of his cave with the stealthiness of a serpent, and so slowly that Tom did not see him until he had covered half the distance towards him, and did not hear him at all.

Nor did the beast see Tom, and both again were taken by surprise. But this time the animal, though he stopped suddenly, showed no signs of retreating. He would have done if his family had not been behind him; but, with his wife close by, and that aching sore in his side, he gave a challenging growl and stood his ground. Tom's head beat like a hammer with excitement. The bear was not a good mark for a young sportsman, as the light was very bad and he was half-hidden by a birch-tree; but he was too near for Tom to hesitate, and he fired.

There was a yell of pain, and the bear rolled over. But, though the bullet had penetrated the chest and entered the lung, the bear was not crippled. He was still able to charge, and, getting up, came on at full speed.

Tom was in very great danger. He found he was not sufficiently expert in such an emergency to hold the rifle steady, jerk the lever, and fire again. He dropped the weapon and caught up his revolver. This he discharged coolly in the bear's face when it was not more than two yards off. The bullet went to the brain, and the animal fell dead almost at his feet.

It was a great moment. Tom wanted to shout at the top of his voice. He could have danced in his delight. But he remembered in time that an Indian would show no outward feeling at all, and that he must keep up his reputation with the fellows. So he repressed the impulse to jubilate, and, after examining his trophy as well as he could by the light of the waning moon, and privately deciding that this was the finest bear that had ever been shot, he proceeded to return to camp.

He did not see that from the cave, the moment his back was turned, the she-bear trotted up to the body of the dead one and smelt it tenderly all over. These two bears had not often agreed with one another. The deceased had been crusty and harsh-tempered; but he was her mate, and the two-legged animal, swaggering off as if the universe belonged to him, had murdered him, and she wanted revenge.

But she hesitated. The cubs were her first care. Was it safe to leave them?

She decided that it was. They could not get out of the cave without her help, the floor being two feet below the level of the ground outside. It was her duty to follow that man. She would be cautious. Though no hunter had ever been to this mountain before, and the bear had never seen a man, she had heard about them and of the teeth of fire they carried in their hands. There were her cubs, too. But, on the other hand, she knew there was no safety for her precious ones unless this enemy was destroyed.

So, as Tom scrambled away up the hillside, the bear, with one long parting sniff at her dead mate, followed him.

She went slowly at first, skulking in the darkest places, sliding softly over stony ground, treading with care to avoid all dry twigs and branches, as unnoticeable in the starlight—for the moon had gone—as a black shadow. But she went drawing nearer every minute to the gay figure tramping heedlessly ahead; while Tom, reaching the summit of the hill, and without any instinct yet to guide his steps, lost his way, and marched off triumphantly—in the wrong direction.

Hunks!

HUNKS was the most wretched dog in New Mexico. He had never been tied up in his life, and the condition of his mind and temper when, having heard White Cat's announcement of the discovery of the bear, he found he was to be left behind at the end of six feet of rope, does not bear description.

It is not sufficiently well known that intelligent dogs, living in close companionship with their masters, clearly understand what is said in their presence by human beings. They are not necessarily interested in what they hear, and doubtless the greater part of men's talk sounds to them nonsense and ridiculous waste of breath—and so it is! Again, knowledge of human language does not come all at once; while if a dog is stupid, or indifferent to his master, he may never understand more than a few words. But when his brain is lively, and his affection great, he picks them up, and all that they mean, as a pigeon picks up peas.

Hunks was a case in point. He had been in the house with men from the time he could crawl, and all that time his intelligence had developed precociously. He had fallen in love head-over-ears with Tom, and their experiences since their first meeting had caused that love, like the beanstalk in the fairy tale, to become a great tree in one night. Therefore, he knew what a great many words meant, and when he heard Tom inquiring for a piece of rawhide lariat, and saw him cutting it into lengths, one for the collar and one for the chain, Hunks' heart sank to his dew-claws, and he wished himself dead.

Once, for a moment, when Tom had gone off to speak to Black Hawk, a wild impulse seized him to run away and hide himself, and then follow his master secretly. His desire for freedom was not for the sake of freedom; it was to be with his master. There would be no pleasure in that if his master did not want him. Unjust as Hunks felt his beloved to be to tie him up, as it was his will, there was no more to be said. He must submit. So he did not even struggle when the rude collar was adjusted, and the rope fixed to it and knotted round the tree. He only turned his face away, and when Tom patted him farewell, refused, for the first time since they had set eyes on each other, to wag his expressive tail.

His master gone, Hunks nearly gave way. The collie blood in him, hot, irritable, easily excited, impelled him to howl at the top of his lungs, and tear and strain upon that rope, and generally make night hideous and as uncomfortable as possible for himself and everyone within hearing. But the bulldog side of him shrank from any such weakness, and on this occasion the bull won.

This was because of the Indians largely. No sooner had Tom left camp than one Apache after another came and squatted down—at a safe distance—to take observations of their Black Devil. He was securely tied up, therefore could do them no hurt, and it was an excellent opportunity to find out in what way this fiend, which had thrown a spell upon the dog-killing mare, and held communion in speech with that white fellow whom their chief had adopted as his son, differed outwardly from other dogs.

Now, whatever Hunks might feel, as soon as he found himself an object of attention to these warriors, he decided to suppress all signs of emotion, and the inquisitive Apaches, who had expected to hear him utter frightful yells, and to see a demoniacal glare in his lurid eyes, saw nothing but a quiet creature, which lay staring at them, very watchful and perfectly still, with vigilantly cocked ears and square head buried between big paws.

This successful effort at self-control on the part of Hunks was to have momentous consequences. Had the pup yielded to his impulse to howl, he would have lost his balance and common-sense, as men do when they bemoan themselves over a piece of ill-luck, instead of thinking how to make an opportunity out of it to get even with Fate. But by keeping his tongue between his teeth, Hunk began to forget himself and to think of his master, and presently he set his quick dog's brain to work to wonder where his master had gone, and what he was doing with White Cat on the mountain-side. Hunks had seen him take his rifle, and though as yet that did not convey much to the pup, it meant something. The day before, when that rifle appeared, Hunks was left in the stable. Now he was tied up. Hunks decided that the rifle was an evil thing. He began to make plans for carrying it away, when he saw it again, and burying it somewhere his master could not find it.

By this time the Indians, very much disappointed in their Black Devil, had departed in disgust and Hunks was left in peace. He was now inclined to doze. The day had been a hard one, and he had eaten half a rabbit—a present from White Cat. He was getting sleepy. But just as he was beginning to turn round three times to curl himself up he heard something. It was a very faint sound. But it dispersed all Hunks' drowsiness, for it was the bang, far, far off, of that rifle thing.

Up sat Hunks, straight as a dog-fox when he hears the first Tally-Ho! of the hunt after another fox. The bang did not concern him directly, but perhaps it did his master. What was he doing? Hunks tried hard to imagine this, but having no experience or knowledge, failed. Nevertheless, the sound had the effect of keeping him fully on the

alert. He began to listen for his master's step. He did not hear that, but he heard White Cat's, and presently saw the young Indian come into camp—alone.

Hunks did not like that. This mountain was full of queer smells of strange beasts. Hunks had the nose of a wolf, thanks to his father's family, and one of the reasons he resented so bitterly his present confinement was that it prevented him from a voyage of exploration and discovery after those smells.

He stood up, sniffed the wind, walked uneasily round the tree and caught sight of White Cat talking to Black Hawk. Their speech was Greek to Hunks, but their gestures were not. As he watched them he became more uneasy still. The old chief was asking sharp questions. When White Cat answered them Hunks saw Black Hawk shake his head, walk away and stand by himself, listening. Hunks listened too, for all he was worth, but there was nothing to be heard. Then all of a sudden, far away again, came another rifle shot, followed a minute later by the deeper report of Tom's revolver when he killed his bear.

This was heard by Black Hawk. Hunks heard the chief give a sharp order. Three Indians ran up to him, one handed him a rifle, and, with White Cat leading the way, they all disappeared down the mountain-side. Now, indeed, Hunks became desperate. But he felt no hysterical impulse to howl. With all the intelligence and tenacity of purpose he possessed he fell upon the thongs which bound him.

First he tried to squeeze out of the collar. That was not possible. Then he attacked the rope. At first he felt he might as well have bitten steel. It was harder than leather, being the untanned hide of a cow plaited when soft and green. It was now hard as wood. Most dogs must have given up the job. But the blood of the puppy was boiling. Some seventh sense in him knew that Tom was in danger, so he would cut that lariat or he would die.

One of the Apaches happened to pass the tree. He stopped, stared, and then made a signal to others. In the shortest possible space of time a crowd was gathered there. The Black Devil was behaving himself at last in a becoming manner. He was not, indeed, crying out, but every tooth in his head was exposed; his eyes were blood-shot and glaring furiously; his breath was coming in short, sharp gusts through his turned-up and glaring nose, and he was shaking, grinding and chewing the lariat in a way they had never seen any animal bite raw hide yet.

The rope was comparatively new, and when Hunks, with the full bulldog's "pin" set his powerful teeth into it it began very slowly, moistened by his saliva, to yield. Nothing but the grinding, badger-like grip of those jaws, which tore mauled and chewed, could have worked through the strands of woven hide; but at last one gave, then another, and finally Hunks uttering for the first time a hoarse, furious howl, threw his whole weight against the rope, and it parted.

The shock, and his own clumsiness, threw Hunks backwards head over heels, upon which the Apaches fled in all directions.

But little did Hunks reck of Indians. He was free. He could go to his master; and that horrible quivering of the nerves which warned him of impending danger, and had given him strength to cut that rope, was now but a spur to urge him away at utmost speed. With his nose to the ground, Hunks sought rapidly for Tom's trail.

At first he followed the track of Tom and White Cat together. But Hunks was no bloodhound. The collie has not the tenacity of scent-finding in difficulties possessed by the hound. But he has more general intelligence. When on a search for a man he uses his eyes as much as his nose, and his ears more than either.

Hunks pursued his way steadily for a time; then paused to look about and to listen. He was not satisfied with the trail. It was too much mixed up with White Cat, and with the Indian's fresh tracks. Hunks' intelligence, working with that nervous dread of danger, told him that his master must be somewhere alone. So he paused.

An instant he stood motionless, his nose in the air, catching the wind, which excited him—a smell, now strong and unmistakable, which he had noticed faintly in camp. At the same time, with this scent, which was not on the ground, he began to perceive another—that of his master.

Three times Hunks sniffed, then he became sure, and leaving the trail started away at a slower pace, head up and every sense on the alert, in a different direction.

(Will Hunks reach his master before the infuriated bear makes its attack? Mind you read the continuation of this fine serial in next week's GEM, chums.)



Your Editor Chats With His Readers.

Address all letters: The Editor, The "Gem" Library,
The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.
I write me, you can be sure of an answer in return.

HE BITES HIS NAILS!

A LOYAL chum from Yorkshire writes and tells me that he has developed the habit of biting his nails, and in consequence he is not on quite the same terms with his parents as he was before the habit took hold of him. He cannot understand how it is, but unconsciously his fingers seem to wander into his mouth at all odd moments in the day. Unfortunately for him, so he says, the habit appears stronger than ever when he's at home, and his parents have constantly rebuked him. These scoldings, apparently, have had no effect. The idea to please his parents is always uppermost in my chum's mind, it would appear, and yet he finds such a simple matter so difficult to overcome. He asks me for advice. There's little I can give you, my chum, except to stress the point that such a small matter should not beat such a big character as yours. If you are really out to please your parents, surely that nail-biting habit will take the count? It simply must. You're far too grown-up now for me to suggest an application of alum, for instance, to be shoved on your finger nails. That's pretty bitter stuff, you know, and some people swear by it; but I don't recommend it in your case. Rather would I suggest a little control "up aloft." When you find those fingers wandering into your mouth, tell yourself, my chum, that it is something very childish you're doing. Tell yourself that you're not hungry; and lastly, just give a thought to those parents of yours. You used to be on better terms. Good gad, you're not going to let this habit of yours upset things at home, surely? Come, come, pull yourself together. Write me again and let me know how the "control" goes.

CYCLING WITHOUT BRAKES!

Do I think there's any danger in cycling without brakes? asks a Gemite from Liverpool. Well! Mark you, I've done this kind of thing myself, but I found out quickly enough, from practical experience, that it wasn't good enough. Not by any manner of means. It stands to reason if one is straddled over a bike that brakes are very necessary; especially these days with the fast motor traffic. I know some people are inclined to say that if the frame of the bike is low enough the feet act jolly well as brakes. But will they help the cyclist in emergency? And it is to meet emergency that brakes were fitted to bikes and cars and practically everything that moves on wheels. If my chum is serious about this inquiry he will see to it that he doesn't take out that cycle of his without getting a brake fitted on it, a back brake for preference. Front brakes, when applied suddenly, have a happy knack of pitching the cyclist over his handlebars if he is travelling at any speed.

NEXT WEDNESDAY'S PROGRAMME:

"LOOKING AFTER ANGELO!"

By Martin Clifford!

Here's another rattling fine story of St. Jim's, dealing with Angelo Lee. You'll enjoy every line of it, chums.

"WHITE EAGLE!"

By Arthur Patterson.

And there will be, of course, another topping long instalment of this serial. Tell your pals about Tom Holt and his dog, Hunks. They'll be pleased to strike up an acquaintance.

THE TUCK HAMPER!

Another page will be devoted to our Joke Competition, and a delicious Tuck Hamper will be awarded for every joke published. Mind you send your joke in this time. Look out, too, for another natty poem from the St. Jim's Rhymester. Chin, chin!

Your Editor.

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