

**MEET TOM MERRY & CO. OF ST. JIM'S!**

*The*  
**GEM**  
2<sup>D</sup>





# Blake Answers Back!

Jack Blake's here to answer your letters and deal with your queries. Write to him c/o The GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.A. Be as candid as you like—Jack Blake likes a plain speaker, being by nature a John Blunt himself! But keep your letter **SHORT**, and enclose if possible a photo of yourself for reproduction on this page. No photos can be returned.

**Edward Whiting, of Kingsbury, N.W.9, writes:**

Here is a list of questions: How old is Knox? Which study does Grundy inhabit? Who is the tallest fellow at St. Jim's? I would like a list of the Second Form. Here's a question in code:  
18 38 40 30 26 26 10 36 36 48 14 30 30 8  
46 36 10 38 40 24 10 36?

**ANSWER:** Seventeen and five months, is Knox. Grundy is to be found in Study No. 3, Shell passage, probably talking, as usual! Kildare is over six feet, but Langton is also lengthy. The babes in the Second don't figure in St. Jim's stories. Now for your code!

**IS TOM MERRY A GOOD WRESTLER?**

You won't mind my pointing out that you omitted the figure 2, indicating "A," between "MERRY" and "GOOD," will you? You have numbered the alphabet 1 to 26, and then doubled each figure. One more error—you put 48 for "Y," when twice 25 is 50. Tom Merry is quite hot at wrestling, as a matter of fact, though Clifton Dane is our champ.

**"Star-Gazer," of Folkestone, writes:**

Will you please ask Skimpole if stars really twinkle, or if our eyes deceive us? Thank you! P.S.—Picture, if you can, a twinkle. (Joke!)

**ANSWER:** Now why pick on poor old Skimmy, when there are stars like Eddie Cantor, Max Miller, George Formby, Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, Gene Autry, and dozens more who ought to know a lot more about it than the most retiring member of the Shell? I suppose because Skimpole cast some horoscopes not long ago. Well, I asked Skimmy, and he said that with Mars "mooning" around with a "Saturnine" expression, it was difficult to see what a star even with a "Mercurial" nature could see to trinkle an eye at. Rather a "nebulous" answer, I admit—but right down to "earth"!

**"Curious," of Totley, Sheffield, writes:**

I want to know why you all have such nice curly hair, and why are you all so good looking? How do you like my photo?

**ANSWER:** Blushing to the roots of my curly hair, madam, I make bold to reply that we simply didn't know we were so appallingly good looking. We'll see if we can get our faces "lowered" instead of "lifted"—probably during  
THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

the next House rag! I liked your photo, but unfortunately it was not suitable for reproduction on this page—the print, that is, not your face!

**Pat O'Donnell, of Southgate, N.14, writes:**

Hallo, Smart-Alec Drake!

You're not so bright as I thought you were. Didn't you notice the lyric by Evelyn Barlow, of Leeds, will not fit in to "Goody, Goody," but it will fit "I'm Gonna Lock My Heart"?

Would you answer these, please:

1. Where was my hero, Kit Wildrake, born, and is he a good boxer?
2. Who is your champion swimmer?
3. Is Vere Beauclero living in England or Canada, and is he still a great friend of Frank Richards? I hope Kit isn't annoyed when he discovers he's a hero!

**ANSWER:** Matter of fact, I didn't notice it. I thought it was a rattling good parody on a topical subject, and I still think so. Don't you?

Replies to questions:

1. Wildrake is a Canadian, and he's extremely handy with his mits!
2. Not much to choose between Lumley-Lumley and Tom Merry.
3. In Canada; yes, still a great friend. Wildrake grinned when I told him; he's bearing up well, Pat!

P.S.—My name is Blake, not Drake. You're not so bright yourself!

**Roy C. Hawkins, of Plymouth, Devon, writes:**

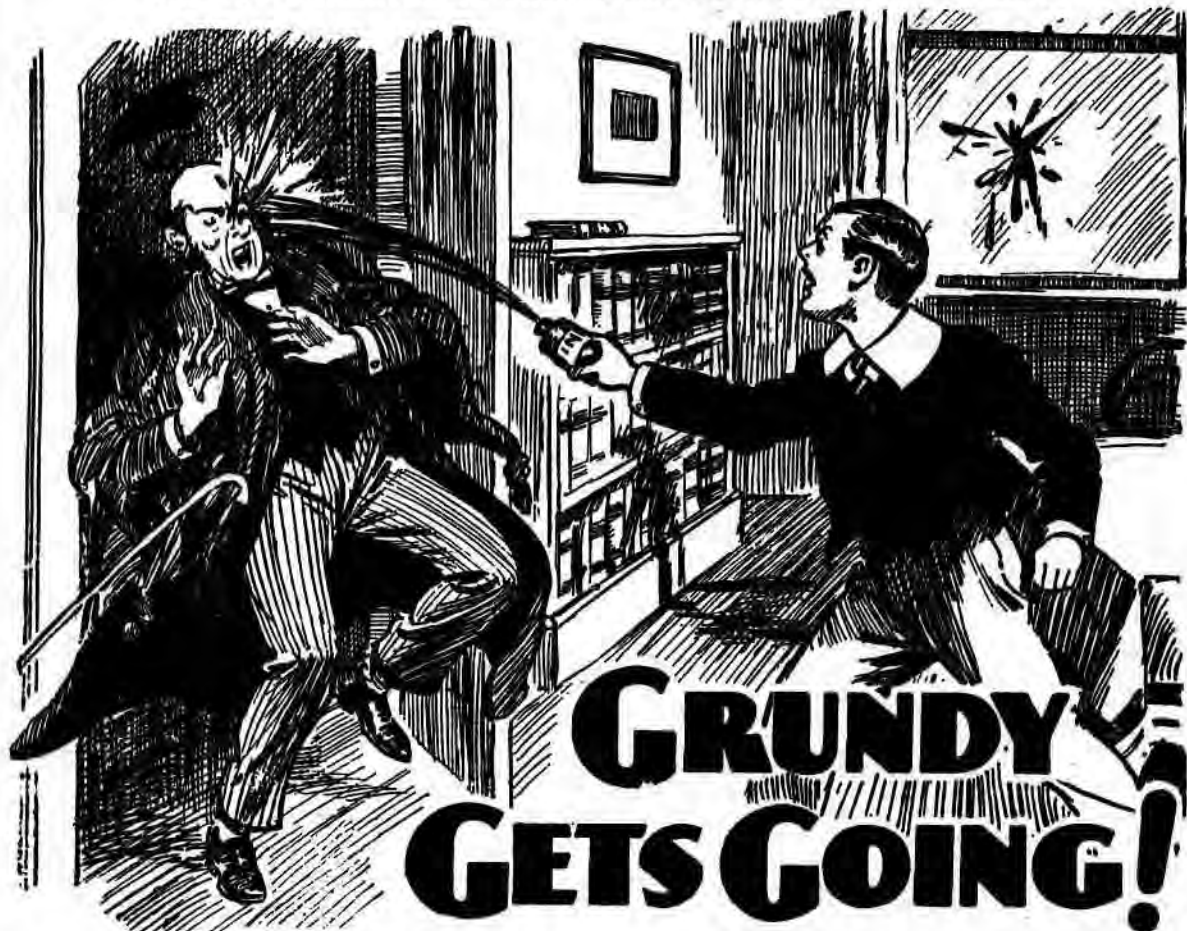
Why is Monty Lowthor always seeing the funny side of things?

**ANSWER:** Simply by trying to see things "in the round," "by and large," and not looking at them "backwards frontwards," he tells me. Monty has no "side"!

## BRIEF REPLIES.

N.H.P., of Reading, Berks.—I'm still waiting for Gussy to explain why he is so long-winded. Let you know later, perhaps. Patrick R. Frost, of Codsall, Staffs.—Gussy neither could nor would put me down for the count. Glad he's your idea of a fine fellow, too. The look of horror on Manners' face when I mentioned you wanted to borrow his camera was worth a guinea a box! But the idea didn't "click"!

**GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY, ST. JIM'S CHAMPION CHUMP, WILL KEEP YOU IN FITS OF LAUGHTER IN THIS LIVELY EXTRA-LONG NEW YARN!**



*By* **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

**CHAPTER 1.**  
**Wet Paint!**

**“W**ET paint!”  
“Ha, ha, ha!”  
“Jolly wet!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”  
“Sounds as if there's a joke on!” remarked Monty Lowther. “What the dickens is up?”

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther stared as they came into the Shell passage from the study landing. Class was due in ten minutes, and they had come up to their study for books. There were a dozen Shell fellows in the passage—collected round the door of Study No. 10. All of them were laughing. It certainly seemed as if there was some joke on! And the joke seemed to be located at Tom Merry's study.

“What's up?” called out Tom Merry as he came along the passage.

“Ha, ha, ha!”  
“Here they come!” roared Grundy of the Shell. “Let 'em look! We paint! Ha, ha, ha! This is Figgins' latest!”

“Those New House sweeps have been here again!” chuckled Gore. “They've left their trade mark!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

The crowd of hilarious juniors in the passage made room for the Terrible Three as they came up at a run.

“Oh!” gasped the three together as they arrived.

The study door stood half-open. On the outside of it was daubed, in large capital letters:

**“WET PAINT!”**

That warning was rather needed by any fellow who entered the study. Within, wet paint gleamed in the July sunshine from the study window. It was a bright summer morning. The paint in Study No. 10 reflected the brightness of the morning. It shone! It glowed! It leaped to the eye!

Tom Merry & Co. stared in.

The top of the study table had been painted a bright blue. The seat of the armchair, by way of variety, had been painted a bright green. The fender shone a dazzling yellow.

On the looking-glass over the fireplace was another inscription, in bright red letters:

**“KIND REGARDS FROM THE NEW HOUSE.”**

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Figgins——" hissed Lowther.

"Those New House ticks!" hooted Manners.

"How long are you going to let this go on, Tom Merry?" roared Grundy. "You call yourself junior captain of the House—and you let those New House toads raid the School House just as much and as often as they like!"

"You silly owl!" roared Tom. "How can I stop them, when they get into the House some way I know nothing of——"

"You ought to know!" said Grundy. "You ought to find out! Why, Figgins & Co. have been ragging this House for weeks—and what have you done to stop them? Think I wouldn't stop them if they had the cheek to paint my study like this!"

"Fathead!" said Tom.

"Cheeky ass!" said Monty Lowther.

"Dry up, dummy!" grunted Manners.

The Terrible Three gazed into the newly decorated study. Undoubtedly, it was the handiwork of Figgins & Co., their rivals and foes of the other House at St. Jim's. It was the climax of a succession of raids and rags, and it was fearfully exasperating.

But what was to be done, Tom Merry could not see. In some mysterious and unknown way, Figgins & Co. were able to get in and out of the School House after lock-up, just as they pleased. How they did it, nobody knew. But they did it. Two or three nights a week there was a rag—only discovered in the morning. Fellows could not, evidently, sit up all night and every night on the watch. Figgins & Co. were able to choose their own time for paying those nocturnal visits. And, so far, Figgins & Co. had had it all their own way.

Only once had they met with disaster—and that was when D'Arcy of the Fourth had mopped a bucket of mixture over them in the dark—by mistake. That mistake was all the School House had to their credit so far.

"Well, this is the limit!" said Lowther.

"The jolly old limit, and no mistake!" grinned Grundy. "I'd like to see them treat my study like that! I'd just like to see it!"

"How would you stop them, fathead, when they come here after lights out, when we're all fast asleep in the dorm?" roared Tom.

"I'd stop them fast enough! They know better than to play their tricks on me!" said Grundy loftily. "Yah! You fellows are back numbers—you can't handle the New House—best thing you can do is to step down, and make room for better men! I'd just like to see them treat my study like that—that's all!"

And George Alfred Grundy, with a contemptuous snort, strode down the passage to his own study, to get his books for class.

"This is really rather thick, you fellows," said Talbot of the Shell. He was sympathetic, but he could not help smiling. "How the thump do those New House men get into the House at night?"

"Goodness knows!" said Tom.

"Bai Jove! What's up, you fellows?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth came up the passage. "What—— Oh, bai Jove! Wet paint! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Think it's funny?" hooted Manners.

"Yaas, wathah! It's weally wathah funnay, you know!" grinned Arthur Augustus. "It's feahfully cheekay of those New House swabs, but it's wathah funnay——"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

"Barge him into the wet paint!" said Lowther.

"Oh, bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus hastily retreated.

"What's up there?" called out Jack Blake from the study landing. The yells of laughter round Study No. 10 were drawing attention.

Snort, from Grundy.

"Oh, only the New House ticks scoring over the School House again!" he snorted. "They rag this House just as they please! Tom Merry can't stop them! I'd just like to see them rag my study like that—only just!"

And Grundy threw open the door of Study No. 3 in the Shell, which was his study, to go in for his books.

The next moment there was a roar that might have done credit to the Bull of Bashan of ancient times.

It emanated from George Alfred Grundy. He stood in his doorway, gazing into his study. His rugged face was crimson with wrath. He fairly bellowed with fury.

"Paint!"

"What?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

There was a rush down the passage to Grundy's study. A crowd of fellows stared in. There was a yell:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy's table-top was painted in alternate streaks of blue, green, and yellow! It looked more like a zebra's skin than a study table. Apparently the New House raiders had had a little paint left after decorating Study No. 10, and they had used it up in Grundy's study.

"Well, your wish is soon granted, Grundy!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "You said you'd like to see them rag your study like that!"

"And now you see it!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Like it?" asked Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I——" gasped Grundy. "Why, I'll smash 'em! My study! Cheeking me! Think I'm standing for this! No fear! I'll pulverise the lot of them! By gum! Look at it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Shell fellows roared. After Grundy's remarks, it seemed to strike them as entertaining to see his study decorated by the New House painters. Grundy did not laugh. Grundy spluttered with fury.

"Hallo, there's the bell!" exclaimed Blake. And there was a rush for books, and then down to the Form-rooms. That wet paint had to be left to take care of itself till break.

## CHAPTER 2.

### Grundy Hitting Back!

"**B**AI Jove! What is Gwunday up to?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy asked that question in surprise.

Blake, Herries, and Digby could not answer it. They really did not know what Grundy of the Shell was up to.

The powerful brain of George Alfred Grundy moved in mysterious ways its wonders to perform. No doubt Grundy himself knew what he was up to. But it was not easy for any other fellow to guess.

The chums of Study No. 6, after class that day, were coming away from the French master's study. They had had to take some French exercises in to Monsieur Morny. Several other fellows had to do the same—among them

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn of the New House. Figgins & Co. were still with Mossoo when Blake and his friends came away.

Coming round the corner of the passage they came quite suddenly on Grundy of the Shell. Grundy's arm went up as if he intended to hurl something. But he lowered it again and grunted:

"Oh, you!"

"What's that game, Grundy?" asked Blake.

"Mad?" inquired Herries.

"Potty?" Dig wanted to know.

"You fags clear off!" said Grundy darkly. "I don't want any jaw from you! You're in the way! Clear off! I say, that New House swab Figgins is still with Froggy, isn't he?"

"Figgins? Yes, and Kerr and Wynn," answered Blake. "My dear chap, if you're thinking of kicking up a row just on the doorstep of the beaks' studies—"

"Never mind what I'm thinking of," said Grundy loftily. "Don't you barge in! You out—see?"

There were footsteps in the passage again. Up went Grundy's arm once more as if in preparation to hurl. This time Study No. 6 spotted something in Grundy's hand. It was a large, ripe red tomato!

But the hand gripping the tomato dropped again as Kerr and Wynn came round the corner.

They were not Grundy's game. It was their leader he wanted.

It dawned on Blake & Co. now what Grundy's game was. He knew that Figgins was with the French master; and he was waiting for him to come round the corner, with the tomato ready for him when he came.

House rags and rows were sometimes carried to a rather reckless extent by the rival juniors of St. Jim's. But hurling tomatoes at a fellow's head, almost within sight of the masters' studies, was rather the limit.

Kerr and Wynn smiled at Grundy.

"Seen any wet paint about your House, Grundy?" asked Kerr, as he passed.

And Fatty Wynn chuckled.

Grundy gave them a dark look. But he kept his temper—and his tomato! He had only one tomato, and that was booked for Figgins.

The two New House juniors passed on, grinning, and went out of the House. Grundy peered cautiously round the corner, and then glanced at Blake & Co.

"Only Figgins with old Froggy now?" he asked.

"That's all," said Blake. "You'll have to wait, fathead! Mossoo isn't satisfied with Figgy. He's not good at French. Mossoo was saying something about making him sit down in his study and write out his French exercise over again. Better forget all about it, Grundy."

Grundy snorted.

Blake's advice was really kindly meant. Chucking over-ripe tomatoes about near the masters' studies was really a very dangerous game. Blake would not have objected to getting George Figgins with a tomato. But he would most certainly have preferred to select a safer spot for the exploit.

"When I want a tip from a fag, I'll ask for it, Blake!" snorted Grundy. "Pack it up till then!"

"Bai Jove! You are a cheeky ass, Gwunday!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus warmly.

"Don't jaw!" said Grundy. "I don't want

that New House sweep to hear a crowd here when he comes along. Look here, mizzle!"

Two Shell fellows came along and joined Grundy. They were Wilkins and Gunn, who had the honour and distinction of sharing Study No. 3 in the Shell with the great George Alfred.

"Oh, here you are, Grundy!" said Wilkins. "Looking for you!"

"Go and look for somebody else!" grunted Grundy. "I'm staying here till that New House worm Figgins comes out of Froggy's study."

"What are you going to do with that tomato?" ejaculated Gunn.

"Land it in the middle of that New House slug's chivvy! I'll give him painting my study table!" said Grundy. "You fellows can stay and watch him get it if you like."

Wilkins and Gunn looked at him. Then they looked at one another. Then they retired rather hastily from the spot. They did not seem to want to get mixed up in Grundy's performances with that ripe tomato.

Blake & Co. decided that their example was a good one to be followed. But as they were about to move off a door was heard to open round the corner.

It was the door of the French master's study, evidenced by the fact that the French master's voice floated into hearing now that that door was open.

"Zat is verree bad, Feegins! Je vous dis, Feegins, zat it is verree bad, and I zink zat you take not ze care."

Grundy's eyes gleamed.

He had not long to wait now.

Any second now Figgins might appear round the corner. As he was the last junior in Mossoo's study, there could be no mistake. Up went Grundy's arm once more, and he watched that corner, ready to hurl.

There was a step in the adjoining passage approaching the corner. Blake & Co. watched in breathless silence. The footsteps reached the corner, and as they came round it Grundy's arm swept, and the tomato was hurled.

Whiz!

The tomato flew.

It was whizzing before Grundy perceived the interesting circumstance that it was not Figgins coming round the corner.

It was Monsieur Morny.

Apparently the French master had, after all, bidden Figgy sit down in the study and write that exercise out again. It was not the New House junior who was coming away from the study. It was the French master.

It was a sallow face with a little, pointed black beard that came round the corner as the tomato whizzed.

Too late Grundy saw what he had done.

He stood horrified.

So did Study No. 6.

But a whizzing tomato could not be recalled.

Squash!

It landed fairly in Monsieur Morny's features. It burst over his nose; it spread over his face and his black beard. It lathered him and plastered him. There was a startled shriek from Monsieur Morny.

"Oooogh! Mon Dieu! Vat is zat? Oooogh!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Blake.

"Gweat Scott!" snattered Arthur Augustus.

"It's the French mastah. You feahful ass, Gwunday!"

"Oh gum!" gasped Grundy.

"Ciel! Vat it zat?" shrieked Monsieur Morny. He clawed frantically at squashed tomato. "Who do zis zing? I am smozzer viz somezing. Grundy, it is you zat smozzer me ze face viz somezing!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Grundy. "I—I never meant—I mean—I meant— Oh crikey! Oh scissors!"

"Mauvais, garcon! Verree bad boy!" howled Monsieur Morny. "You fling me one tomato in ze face, isn't it?"

"I—I—I—"

"Venez avec moi!" roared Monsieur Morny grabbing the horrified Grundy by the collar. "I take you to ze Housemaster! Ve sall see vezzer ze tomato sall be fling in ze face! Allons! Venez!"

"I—I say—" stuttered Grundy. "I—I—"

"Venez done!"

"Oh gum!"

Grundy, with the enraged French master's grip on his collar, went spinning away to Mr. Railton's study. Blake & Co. looked at one another.

"Bai Jove, Grundy's for it!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"Just a few!" grinned Blake.

Gripping Grundy's collar with one hand, Monsieur Morny hurled open the Housemaster's study door with the other. Mr. Railton fairly bounded at the sight of the French master, with his face streaming ripe tomato.

"What—" Blake & Co. heard him gasp.

"Allons! Regardez moi!" shrieked Monsieur Morny. "Zis boy—is Grundy—zis mauvais garcon—he fling ze tomato in ze face—"

"Upon my word! Grundy, you nave dared to—"

"Oh crikey! I never meant it for Mossoo. I—I—I thought it was Figgins of the Fourth coming round the corner. I—I—I—" babbled Grundy.

"Grundy, you utterly stupid boy, bend over that chair!"

Study No. 6 walked away. A rhythmic sound of swiping floated to their ears from Mr. Railton's study as they went, accompanied by a succession of roars from George Alfred Grundy.

Perhaps Grundy's explanation that he had meant that tomato for a Fourth Former caused Mr. Railton to let him off more lightly than he would otherwise have done. But it did not sound as if he was letting him off very lightly.

"Bai Jove! Jevvah see such a howlin' ass, you fellows?" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

"Hardly ever!" grinned Blake.

Grundy passed them a few minutes later. He seemed to be limping. He was gasping for breath. His expression indicated that he found life a delusion and a snare, and scarcely worth the trouble of living. The smiles of Blake & Co. as he passed did not seem to comfort him to any great extent.

Figgins, when he emerged later from Monsieur Morny's study, did not find George Alfred waiting for him. Grundy of the Shell seemed to have tired of waiting with tomatoes for fellows.

### CHAPTER 3.

#### On the Warpath!

"HOW—" said Tom Merry.

"How—" said Jack Blake.

"Bai Jove!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "We keep on saying 'how,'

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,658.

but we nevah get any fowardah! We don't know how!"

Seven juniors at tea in Study No. 6 had to admit it.

Somehow Figgins & Co. of the New House were able to come and go as they pleased in the School House. But "how" was a mystery.

Once the School House men discovered how, the rest was easy. It was only necessary to catch Figgins & Co. in the act, and it would be easy to make them tired of night-raids on the School House. But how?

"They get in somehow!" said Herries.

"Did you work that out in your head?" asked Monty Lowther admiringly. "By gum, they can think things out in the Fourth!"

"Look here, you Shell fathead—"

"We've got to put the stopper on," said Manners. "One night they hid my camera. Well, there's a limit."

"Oh, blow your camera!" said Digby. "Last night they painted your study. They may paint ours next time! We've got to stop them."

"That landing window," said Blake. "A fellow could get in there by pushing back the catch with a penknife. You can get up to that window by the porch outside. I know Racke's been out of bounds that way. Look here, what about keeping a watch on that window?"

"But how shall we know what time they're coming?" asked Herries.

"Easy enough—if we keep a watch on the window," suggested Monty Lowther. "Just look at the watch—see?"

"Bai Jove! This is not a time for makin' wotten puns, Lowthah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus warmly. "Those wottahs are givin' us the kybosh all wound, and the mattah is sewious."

"We can't keep watch every night," said Dig.

"Take it in turns," said Blake. "They may come any night, and we don't know which. Well, suppose this study watches one night, and those Shell fatheads the next night, and Levison and his gang the next night. One lot will catch them at it."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"That's a good idea!" agreed Tom Merry. "I don't see how they can get in, unless it's by that landing window. Grundy thinks so, too, if that's worth anything."

"Bai Jove! If Gwunday thinks so, it is pprobably a mistake! Gwunday is a howlin' ass."

"Yes, but he's been nosing out of that window, and he says he found some of the ivy over the porch looking as if it had been scrambled over."

"If he did, it might have been some shady sweep did it, getting out of bounds," said Manners. "Not much of a clue."

"Well, it's that window or nothing," said Blake. "We'll begin to-night on the watch, and see if anything happens. We can come down from the dorm after the beaks have gone to roost, and watch for an hour or so. Now what about a spot of cricket?"

And the discussion ending with tea, the juniors left Study No. 6. On the landing they came on Grundy of the Shell. Grundy was talking to Wilkins and Gunn, who seemed to be listening rather uneasily.

He glanced round at Tom Merry & Co.

"Done anything yet, you duds?" asked Grundy scornfully.



"Bai Jove! Look!" gasped Arthur Augustus, as a dark figure blotted the starlight at the window. "Quiet!" hissed Blake. The New House raiders were coming, and the four Fourth Formers waited for them tensely.

"Nothing so far," said Tom Merry. "Not even chucked a tomato at the French master."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy snorted.

"I should have got Figgins with that tomato if it had been Figgins," he yapped. "How was I to know Froggy was leaving him in his study and coming out himself? If it had been Figgins—"

"If ifs and ands were pots and pans," remarked Monty Lowther thoughtfully, "the tinkers would be on the dole."

"Well, if you duds can't do anything, leave it to me," said Grundy. "I've just been telling these chaps how I'm going to do it."

"But—" said Wilkins.

"But—" murmured Gunn.

They did not seem enthusiastic.

"Don't you fellows jaw," said Grundy. "I've got it cut and dried. Going down to the nets now, Tom Merry? Well, those New House sweeps will be there. I've spotted that. I can do things, you know—not all jaw, like some fellows I could name! Figgins & Co. are going down to cricket."

"Anything surprising in that?" asked Tom Merry. "I didn't know—but I could really have guessed."

"When they're on Little Side they won't be in their study," said Grundy.

"By gum! How does Grundy think out these

things?" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "Sheer intellect, I suppose!"

"Well, they can't be in two places at once," said Grundy, who was never known to see a joke, and was deaf and blind to sarcasm. "And while they're out of their House, something's going to happen in their study. They aren't the only fellows who can walk into another fellow's House and rag a study."

"But—" repeated Wilkins.

"But—" repeated Gunn.

It seemed that Grundy's pals were not keen on walking into the enemy's stronghold in broad daylight, under the noses of beaks and prefects. Night raids by a secret entrance were one thing—daylight raids on the rival House quite another.

"You needn't jaw!" said Grundy. "That's the idea—and that's what I'm going to do! I can't let you two come—"

"Oh!" said Wilkins.

"Oh!" said Gunn.

They brightened up.

"Sorry," said Grundy. "But you'd be in the way. This sort of thing needs a spot of caution, of course. You're rather fatheads, you know! Besides, three of us might draw attention. You two must keep clear."

Wilkins favoured Gunn with a wink, with the eye that was farthest from Grundy. They had been wondering how to get out of following

Grundy on that daylight raid. Grundy had kindly got them out!

"Well, good luck, old chap!" said Wilkins heartily. "If you don't want us, we may as well go down to the cricket with these chaps."

"Yes, let's!" said Gunn. "If—if you're sure you don't want us, Grundy——"

"I've told you you'd be in the way," said Grundy. "The same applies to all you fellows. I can't let you take a hand in this, Tom Merry. You can call yourself junior captain of the House—but I don't think much of you!"

"That's only to be expected," said Tom gravely.

"Oh, you can see that, can you?" asked Grundy.

"Quite! You can't think much of me—or of anybody or anything! You see, you can't think much at all," explained Tom. "You've nothing to do it with."

"Wathah not! Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy frowned.

"I don't want any cheek!" he said. "Any more of that and somebody will get chucked across this landing! You'd better shut up, Tom Merry. I don't want to hear any more from you."

"What a coincidence!"

"Eh? What's a coincidence?"

"I don't want to hear any more from you, either," explained Tom. "It seems to be a case of two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I said shut up!" roared Grundy, "or somebody will go across this landing on his neck! I'm going to the New House——"

"Taking any tomatoes with you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That does it!" roared Grundy. "You let the New House rag this House, and all you can do is to cackle at a man who keeps our end up. I said somebody would go across this landing on his neck! Now, then——"

Grundy jumped at the captain of the Shell. He grasped him. He whirled him. There was quite a terrific tussle for a few moments.

Then somebody flew across the landing on his neck. Grundy had said that somebody would. And somebody did!

But it was not Tom Merry. It was George Alfred Grundy! He flew, and landed with a bump.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Grundy, as he landed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry & Co., chuckling, went down the staircase. Grundy sat up and gasped for breath. He was still gasping when Tom Merry & Co. were getting busy at the nets.

## CHAPTER 4.

### The Daylight Raider!

MR. RATCLIFF, Housemaster of the New House, stared and frowned.

Horace Ratcliff was coming out of his study in the New House.

That House was almost deserted on that bright, sunny July afternoon. Few fellows were indoors. Even Mr. Ratcliff, who did not care much for fresh air or open spaces, was going to take a walk in the quadrangle.

Now, however, he did not walk down to the big doorway that stood open, letting in the sun—

light. His sharp eyes fixed on a figure that was going up the staircase.

That was why he stared, and why he frowned. Ratty scented mischief at the sight of that School House junior.

School House fellows, of course, sometimes dropped in at the New House to see New House fellows. But no visitor ever went up the stairs in that quiet, stealthy, surreptitious way Grundy was creeping!

A fellow carrying out a raid on the rival House had to be cautious, as Grundy had told his pals. Grundy was frightfully cautious.

He had strolled across the quad in a casual way—so very casual that any fellow who had been at hand would have noticed it at once. But New House men seemed to be right off the scene; and Grundy had strolled into the New House unnoticed. Nobody was in sight in that House when he entered—the coast seemed absolutely clear. So up the staircase for the studies went Grundy—still frightfully cautious.

Figgins & Co., he knew, were at cricket. A whole crowd of New House fellows were with them. Still, there might be fellows in some of the studies, and a fellow in a study might pop out. So Grundy ascended that staircase on tiptoe, his eyes watchful for foes ahead.

No foes were to be seen ahead. And Grundy was unaware that a pair of very sharp eyes had fixed on him from the rear.

Grundy disappeared round the bend of the staircase. Mr. Ratcliff smiled grimly. Ratty knew what Grundy was up to as clearly as if Grundy had stopped to tell him.

Ratty disapproved of these House rows and rags. Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, could make allowance for the exuberance of happy youth. Ratty couldn't—and didn't! Ratty was down on such things, with a very heavy down. And here, under his very eyes, was a School House junior, obviously bound on some prank in his house.

Ratty did not call to Grundy to come down. Ratty stepped into his study for a cane.

Putting the cane under his arm, he stepped to the staircase. He ascended that staircase as quietly as Grundy had done—Ratty being a gentleman of somewhat stealthy ways.

Grundy, in spite of appearances, might only be going to pay a friendly call. In that case Ratty's cane was not wanted. And if he spotted Ratty, it was fairly certain that he would turn that hostile raid into a friendly call on the spot. So he was not going to spot Ratty. Not till Ratty had caught him fairly in the act.

Happily unaware of Ratty, Grundy crept on. Not a man was to be seen about the Fourth Form studies. The coast could not have been clearer.

Grundy grinned as he pushed open the door of the study that belonged to Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn.

Nobody was there. Grundy stepped in and shut the door—still happily unaware of a pair of sharp, greenish eyes that spotted his action from the stairs.

He grinned more broadly as he found himself safe in Figgins' study.

It was, after all, easy enough. Here he was, right in the enemy's quarters, with those quarters at his mercy. Figgins & Co. had to sneak into the rival House under cover of night—Grundy was the man for broad daylight. They had painted his study while the House slept. Grundy was going to decorate their study while the bright July sun was still shining in the blue sky. Tom



Merry & Co. could do nothing—absolutely nothing. Grundy was the man to do things!

He began with the study inkbottle.

Taking up that inkbottle, Grundy cheerfully cast a jet of ink across the looking-glass. He cast another across the bookshelf. He cast another over the window. Then he cast another at the door, by way of decorating the study all round.

At that moment the door opened.

The jet of ink did not land on the door. It shot into the doorway, and as there was a sharp, bony face in that doorway, it naturally landed on a sharp, bony face!

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Ratcliff as he got it.

"Oh!" gasped Grundy, petrified.

"Oooooogh!" spluttered Mr. Ratcliff.

"Oh crikey!"

The New House master clawed at streaming ink.

Grundy gazed at him in horror. He had come there to rag Figgins & Co. He had been going to drench their study with ink, tit for tat for the paint in his study. He had hardly started on the study—but he had drenched Mr. Ratcliff quite effectively. Smears and streaks of ink covered the bony countenance of the New House master. Ratty clawed at it—he dabbed at it—the cane dropping from under his arm to the floor.

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Grundy.

He seemed to have no more luck with ink than with tomatoes.

"Urrgh!" spluttered Mr. Ratcliff. "Wurrgh! Upon my word! Grundy, you—you—you dare you have dared—urrghh!"

"I—I never meant—" gasped Grundy. "I—I had no idea you were coming here, sir! Oh crikey! I—I just looked in to—to call on—on Figgins—"

Mr. Ratcliff stooped and clutched up the cane. Then he swept into the study. Grundy had been caught fairly in the act—just as Ratty had been caught fairly in the features. That cane was going to get some exercise.

Grundy jumped back.

"Look here, sir, you can't cane me!" he exclaimed. "I'm not a New House man. You can't cane School House men. I say— Yaroooooop!"

It was true that the New House master was not entitled to cane School House men. But as that School House man was in his House, perhaps Ratty felt entitled to stretch a point. Anyhow, he stretched one. He grabbed Grundy by the collar with his left hand. He wielded the cane with his right.

He had intended to give that School House junior six if he caught him ragging in a New House study. But that stream of ink from Figg's inkbottle had changed his intentions. He did not stop at six. Indeed, he might not have stopped at sixteen, or even sixty, had not Grundy, roaring with anguish, wrenched himself loose and jumped away.

"Stop!" thundered Mr. Ratcliff, jumping after him.

Grundy did not stop.

He had arrived at the New House in a casual, leisurely way. He left it in a way that was far from leisurely. He did the stairs three at a time, and shot out of the House doorway like a bullet from a rifle. He did the quad at about 50 m.p.h.

When Wilkins and Gunn came into tea, they found Grundy in his study, leaning over the table and moaning. They stared at him.

"Got through all right?" asked Wilkins.

"Done the trick?" asked Gunn.

Grundy did not answer.

He only moaned.

CHAPTER 5.

Caught!

"DON'T make a wov, deah boys!" "Who's making a row?" inquired

Herries.

"Only Gussy, with his chin!" sighed Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"We ought to have brought a gag for him!" said Blake. "My mistake."

"You uttah ass—"

"Shut up, Gussy!"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Will you be quiet?"

"Weally, Dig—"

"Oh, let him run on!" said Blake. "We'll have the whole House up soon, and they can all help us watch for Figgins & Co."

"I was only warnin' you not to make a wov, Blake!" said Arthur Augustus mildly. "It would be wathah weckless to make a wov at this time of night! It would be vevy much bettah to pwoceed in absolute silence, without uttahn' a single word. I twust you fellows can see that?"

Jack Blake, with noble self-restraint, refrained from booting Arthur Augustus. It was necessary to be very cautious when fellows were out of their dormitory at eleven o'clock at night.

They proceeded—though not in absolute silence.

Study No. 6 had turned out to keep watch.

As Figgins & Co. had paid one of their mysterious visits the previous night, it was improbable that they would come again so soon. On the other hand, they might. The heroes of the School House had agreed that watch was to be kept, night after night, till the night raiders were snaffed.

Study No. 6 were taking the first watch. The Terrible Three were to take the second. Levi-son, Clive, and Cardew had agreed to take the third. Sooner or later, the enemy were certain to be snaffed—if, indeed, they came by that landing window—and nobody could guess how else they could possibly come. Nobody in the School House knew anything of the secret passage from the old tower, so happily discovered by Figgins & Co.

From the dormitory, Blake & Co. crept down to the study landing. They left the rest of the Fourth asleep. The whole House was sleeping—except Blake & Co. Half-dressed, with slippers on their feet, and pillows in their hands, they crept down to take up their watch.

All was silent and still. Masters and prefects, seniors and juniors, were all safe in the embrace of Morpheus. There was hardly a sound in the great, silent building.

Jack Blake pressed his features to the glass at the little window over the porch. Outside, the bright stars of July glittered. Under the window was the old porch, clustered with ivy.

Any fellow could have climbed that porch. Standing on it, he could have burgled that little window. The sashes were ancient; a penknife could have been slipped between them, to force back the catch.

Outside, Blake could see nothing but glimmering starlight. There was nobody on the porch yet, at all events. He stepped back from the window.

"Ow!" came from Arthur Augustus D'Arcy suddenly.

"Will you be quiet?" hissed Blake.

"Stop tweadin' on my toe, you sillay ass! You are cwushin' my toe undah your hoof! Ow!"

"Blow your silly toe!" grunted Blake. However, he stepped off Gussey's toe. "Now keep quiet! They're not here yet, if they're coming. They'd hardly come before this—but goodness knows how long we've got to wait. Very likely till near midnight."

"I shan't mind waiting if they do come," murmured Herries. "I'd like to get Figgins with this pillow!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Mind, not a sound till they're inside!" cautioned Blake. "We don't want them to take the alarm and bunk. We want to give them a jolly good whipping. Let them get right in and then mop them up."

"What-ho!"

The four settled down to wait. There was a settee on the landing, and they were able to sit down to it. But it was rather weary work.

Planning that watch in the study was quite different from actually doing it. Over tea in the study it had seemed a very good idea. Late at night, it lost a lot of its attractions. Blake & Co. were sleepy. They found it difficult to keep from nodding off. And very likely the enemy would not come, after all, and they had that weary watch for nothing. Study No. 6 could not help thinking, with longing, of the comfortable beds they had left in the Fourth Form dormitory.

But they were determined. They were going to keep it up. They rubbed their eyes and yawned, and wondered how minutes could possibly be so long—but they kept it up.

And in about half an hour—which seemed to them like a good hour and a half—they had their reward.

"Listen!" breathed Blake suddenly.

Four pairs of ears listened intently. From outside came a sound of brushing, rustling ivy.

"Bai Jove! Is that the wind?" whispered Arthur Augustus.

"No, ass! It's somebody on the ivy!"

"Figgins & Co.!" breathed Digby.

"Listen!"

They listened. It was not the wind. There had been no wind, so far, that still July night. It was a climber on the old ivy on the porch.

Four hearts beat fast with excitement. Blake & Co. were glad that they had sat up to watch. The enemy was coming. Four hands gripped pillows—soon to be laid round New House raiders. Doubts were over now—that landing window was the way the enemy came, for here came the enemy.

"Bai Jove! Look!" gasped Arthur Augustus, as a dark shadow blotted the starlight at the window.

"Quiet!" hissed Blake.

"Only one of them—" whispered Dig. "Only one of the gang's come this time! It's Figgins—he's as tall as a senior!"

"Figgins is the one we specially want! Quiet!"

From the darkness within the four watched breathlessly. That shadow at the window was nothing but a black shadow to their eyes, but from its height they had no doubt that it was the long-legged Figgy. Shadowy hands groped over the window from outside.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638

The lower sash was pushed up.

Blake gave a little jump. He had expected to hear a click as the catch was forced back. There was no click. The sash moved as if it had been left unfastened. Perhaps it had. Anyhow, it was lifting, and a head and shoulders came through.

The four juniors hardly breathed.

There was still time for the enemy to pop back, slither down the ivy and escape, if he took the alarm. He was not going to be alarmed till he was fairly inside and at the mercy of the swiping pillows. They waited and watched, stilling their breathing.

The dark figure clambered in and dropped lightly, with hardly a sound.

Rather to the surprise of the watchers it turned and closed down the sash. They would have expected Figgins to leave the way open for retreat. Instead of which they saw the window close and heard the faint click of the fastening catch. It was all the better—there was no escape for him now. Figgins of the Fourth was going to get the pillowing of his life before he escaped from the School House.

The dark figure stepped away from the window. The time had come to act. Blake jumped up.

"Go for him!" he breathed.

And four fellows, as if moved by the same spring, leaped at that dark figure, and four pillows swiped. They crashed together, and the dark figure rolled over on the landing, with a startled howl of surprise and rage.

## CHAPTER 6.

### Catching Cutts!

"GOT him!"

"Wallop him!"

"Pillow him!"

"Give him jip!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe, swipe!

The dark figure sprawled under the swiping pillows. He sprawled and howled and spluttered wildly.

He had no chance of getting up. As fast as he made an effort to do so, a swiping pillow bowled him over again. Twice he got on his knees, once on his feet, and each time swipes sent him sprawling again.

Blake & Co. chuckled as they swiped. This was worth sitting up for. This was worth breaking dorm bounds for. This was the goods! They were putting paid to the venturesome raiders at last. Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Bai Jove! Give him a few more!" chuckled Arthur Augustus. "This will do the New House wottah good."

"Have a few more, Figgy?" chortled Blake.

"Give him toco! Give him jip!"

Swipe, swipe!

In the excitement of the moment, giving the raider toco and jip, Blake & Co. rather forgot the lateness of the hour and the necessity for caution. There was some noise as they swiped that rolling, gasping figure. In the silence of the night that noise travelled.

They were apprised of the fact that it had reached other ears, by a sudden glare of light from the lower staircase.

Somebody downstairs had switched on the electric light.

"Oh cwumbs!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Somebody's up!"

"Some dashed prefect turned out—" breathed Herries.

"Hook it!" muttered Dig.

The pillows ceased to swipe. Footsteps were heard below—whoever had switched on the light was coming up the stairs.

Blake bent over the gasping, spluttering victim.

"Hook it!" he whispered. "There's a prefect up—yaroooooh!" Blake staggered back as a fist shot out, catching him on the chin.

It was the first opportunity the victim had had; the swiping pillows had fairly flattened him down on the landing till then.

But it was rather a surprise to Blake—his warning was a friendly one to the enemy, and he did not expect a punch in return. Pillowing Figgins was all in the game—but nobody wanted to be caught in the wrong House by beaks or prefects. But he certainly did not seem grateful for the tip.

"Why, you rotter—" gasped Blake.

"Come on!" breathed Dig. "I believe that's Kildare coming up. He's heard something. Hook it, for goodness' sake!"

Blake rubbed his chin and followed his comrades. After that jolt, he was not bothering any more about the midnight visitor.

The four juniors bolted up the dormitory staircase, only anxious now to get back to bed before a prefect investigated.

To their surprise, pattering footsteps followed them up.

The awakened prefect was still on the lower staircase. He had not reached the study landing yet. It was the raider who was following them.

"By gum!" gasped Blake in astonishment.

Figgins' cue was to get out of the School House just as fast as he possibly could. Instead of which, it seemed that he was pursuing the four up to their dormitory.

"Bai Jove! He's aftah us!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

"Buck up!" breathed Dig.

They reached the dormitory landing above. Hardly two or three yards behind them came that pursuing figure.

The light shot on on the study landing. The voice of Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, was heard:

"Who's that? Who's up?"

Nobody was likely to tell him.

"Bai Jove! Heah he is!" panted Arthur Augustus, as the shadowy figure behind, with a desperate rush, came across the dormitory landing. Evidently he was anxious to escape the light from the study landing below, and the eyes of Kildare of the Sixth.

He bumped into the fleeing Fourth Formers!

"Collar him!" hissed Blake.

How a New House raider could have the nerve to pursue them, one against four, with a School House prefect up and on the prowl, was really beyond comprehension. But there he was, bumping into the juniors in the dark, and they collared him and brought him down on the floor with a heavy bump.

He howled breathlessly as he bumped!

Leaving him for dead, as it were, the four cut up the passage to the door of their dormitory.

They pushed that door open and crowded in, but did not immediately bolt for bed. They wanted to know what was going to happen to Figgins. He had fairly asked for it, chasing them up the stairs, instead of making his escape, and it looked now as if he was bound to receive that for

which he had asked—for Kildare was coming up the second flight of stairs at a run. Blake & Co. had barely escaped in time; there was no escape for the fellow they had left gasping on the landing.

"Oh! Look!" breathed Blake.

The light shot on on the dormitory landing. Looking down the dark passage towards the lighted landing, they could now see the fellow they had left sprawling.

Their eyes popped as they saw him.

It was not Figgins!

Not for a moment, up till then, had they doubted that they had spotted and pillowed the chief of the New House crowd. From his height, they had taken it for granted that he was the long-legged Figgy.

But no wasn't!

It was not Figgins. It was not a New House man, at all. It was a School House senior! It was Cutts of the Fifth!

"That's Cutts!" gurgled Herries.

"Bai Jove! Cutts!"

"Oh, my only hat!" gasped Blake.

There he was—at a distance, but full in view in the light.

Then the truth dawned on Blake & Co.

It was not a New House raid! Figgins & Co., who had come the previous night, had not repeated their visit—not even one of them! It was not a raider who had clambered in at the landing window. It was a black sheep of the School House returning from breaking bounds!

That was why the catch hadn't clicked when he had entered. That catch had been unfastened for Cutts' return. It was all clear now.

"Oh, holy smoke!" breathed Blake.

"Cutts of the Fifth!" stuttered Dig. "We've been swiping Cutts of the Fifth, thinking it was Figgins!"

Blake gurgled.

"That's why he followed us up. He was heading for the Fifth Form dorm. He wasn't after us—he was heading for home! Oh crikey!"

"Kildare's got him now!" breathed Herries.

The breathless Fifth Former was scrambling to his feet as Kildare appeared in the juniors' sight. The prefect's voice reached the juniors at the dormitory door.

"Cutts! I'd like to know what this means."

"I—I—" Cutts of the Fifth stammered. "Is—is—is that you, Kildare?"

"Yes; I heard a row and turned out. I'd like to know where you've been, Cutts, at this time of night."

Blake & Co. hardly breathed.

It looked like a fair catch for the sportsman of the Fifth. He was caught—fairly caught—coming in after half-past eleven. If any man at St. Jim's deserved to be sacked, Cutts of the Fifth did. But Study No. 6 did not want to have a hand in it, and they listened anxiously.

"You—you heard a row, Kildare!" so—so did I, and—and I turned out to see what it was. I—I thought it might be burglars!"

"And you dressed to your shoes and necktie to turn out?" asked Kildare, with a sarcastic note in his voice. "You must have taken your time about it, Cutts."

"There's some juniors out of bed, I—I think," stammered Cutts. "I was collared in the dark and—and knocked over—"

"That was the row I heard, I suppose. Have you been out of the House?"

"At this hour?" Cutts was recovering his

nerve. "My dear chap, what are you thinking of?"

"Well, as I haven't spotted you getting in, I shall have to let it go at that," said the prefect, "but I advise you to stick to your dormitory after lights out, Cutts; you'll have to explain to Railton next time."

"I merely turned out to—"

"Leave it at that and go back to bed!" said Kildare curtly.

"I believe some of the Fourth were out—they went off towards the Fourth Form dorm, I believe—"

"You can leave that to me."

"Quick!" breathed Blake.

The dormitory door closed without a sound, and four juniors shot into bed like rabbits into their burrows.

A minute later the door reopened and Kildare of the Sixth looked in. Only a sleeping Form met his searching eyes. All were—or, at least, appeared to be—fast asleep. Blake was even snoring a little!

The door closed again.

"Bai Jove! That was wathah a nawwow escape, deah boys!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"And we never got Figgins, after all!" murmured Dig.

"Never mind," said Blake, "we got Cutts! We didn't stay up for nothing. We got Cutts!"

Which was some consolation to Study No. 6!

## CHAPTER 7.

### Kerr on the Spot!

**G**EORGE FRANCIS KERR of the Fourth grinned.

For a quarter of an hour Kerr had been frowning.

It was enough to make a fellow frown, and even scowl. After dinner that day Mr. Ratcliff had sent Kerr over to the School House with a note for Mr. Railton. Mr. Ratcliff had directed Kerr to hand that note to the School House master, and bring a reply, and if Mr. Railton was not in his study, to wait for him.

Ratty wanted an answer to that note of his, and Ratty was absolutely indifferent to the waste of a junior's time—which probably, in Ratty's estimation, had no value.

Kerr, naturally, took a different view. He had lots and lots of things to fill up his time till class. And waiting in Mr. Railton's study was tiresome and boring.

Railton was not there. Kerr had to wait till he came in. So he waited, frowning. It was fearfully irritating to stick in that study, just waiting, with every other fellow out in the golden July sunshine.

But a Housemaster's word was law.

Not that Ratty's note was of any importance, as Kerr could easily guess. Ratty was always sending notes to his colleague over in the other House, complaining about some trifle or other. Kerr had no doubt that this was some more of Ratty's rot, which made it all the more irritating to wait there, kicking his heels till Railton came in.

But Kerr's frown changed to a grin as a voice floated in at the study window, which was partly open.

It was a voice with good carrying powers—the bull voice of Grundy of the Shell.

Grundy was almost under the window, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

apparently aware that Railton was not in the study, and naturally, not at all aware that a New House junior was.

"What I want you to do, Tom Merry, is to give me a bunk up to Railton's window—not to jaw!" was what Grundy was saying. "I've got a jape on—right up against those swabs over in the New House, and if it doesn't make that sweep Figgins sit up you can use my head for a football!"

Which naturally caused Kerr to grin. He could not help thinking that it was obliging of Grundy to put him on his guard in this way.

"My dear chap," came Tom Merry's voice, "I've no use for your head as a football. In the first place, it's cricket now, not football: and in the second place, the laws of the game do not allow the use of a wooden ball at footer."

"I suppose you think that's funny!" said Grundy scornfully. "As funny as those young asses in Study No. 6, watching for Figgins & Co. last night, and getting Cutts of the Fifth and pillowing him all over the shop. I don't want to be personal, but if there's a bigger fool in the wide world than you I'd like to know his name."

"George Alfred Grundy," said Tom, supplying the information at once.

Kerr suppressed a chuckle.

Other fellows outside the study window did not trouble to suppress their chuckles. Sounds of hilarity floated in.

"You can cackle!" said Grundy. "That's all you fellows can do—cackle! Lucky there's a man in this House who can do things. Now Railton's in the Head's house, there's a chance to use his phone—and I don't want to be seen going into his study. Give us a bunk up to the window."

"But what's the big idea?" came Monty Lowther's voice.

"How the thump are you going to jape the New House on Railton's phone?" asked Manners.

"Guess!" said Grundy scornfully. "It's a wheeze that you fellows wouldn't have thought of in whole terms. I can jolly well tell you that after I've got through on Railton's phone, Figgins & Co. are going to find out that there's one man in the School House who can make them sit up and howl. Will you give me a bunk?"

"Oh, all right!" said Tom. "Lend a hand, you fellows!"

Kerr glanced at the inkpot on Mr. Railton's study table.

His first idea was to greet Grundy's face, when it appeared, with a stream of ink from that inkpot, which was likely to have a deterrent effect on Grundy and his japes.

But second thoughts—proverbially the best—supervened. Instead of whipping up the inkpot and greeting Grundy with the contents thereof, the New House junior backed behind the Housemaster's desk and ducked.

From what Grundy had said, he understood that there was no danger of Mr. Railton coming to his study just then. He had to wait, and it was possibly going to be amusing to let Grundy carry on while he waited. He was rather curious to know what this tremendous jape could be which Grundy was going to carry out with the aid of his Housemaster's telephone.

A fat head and a burly pair of shoulders appeared in the window. Grundy scrambled in.

He saw nothing of Kerr.

The telephone was near the window, and Grundy had no occasion to go round the desk, and, naturally, it never occurred to him that a



"Speaking from St. Jim's," said Grundy. "I want a dozen guinea bats. Send the bill with them, and tell the man to wait to be paid. Take down the name for delivery—G. Figgins, New House." Kerr, behind Mr. Ralton's desk, suppressed a gasp of astonishment.

New House junior had ducked out of sight on the farther side of the same

Grundy stepped to the telephone. Tom Merry & Co., outside, were heard to clear off. They did not seem interested to hear anything further of Grundy's jape. Kerr, however, was!

The Shell fellow picked up the receiver. Kerr heard a crumpling sound; Grundy was taking a paper from his pocket, no doubt with telephone numbers on it.

"Wayland 101," said Grundy "Is that Marker's?"

Kerr could only wonder. Marker's was the sports outfitters at Wayland. They supplied cricket bats and balls and nets and so on, and did a fairly good business with St. Jim's men. How Grundy was going to jape the New House by ringing up suppliers of games' requisites was a great mystery.

"Speaking from St. Jim's," went on Grundy. "I want a dozen of those guinea bats—those special guinea bats. Have you got a dozen in stock?"

"Certainly, sir; as many as you desire," came back from Marker's.

"Can you deliver them at St. Jim's to-morrow—Wednesday—afternoon?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"I want you to send the bill with them, and tell the man to wait to be paid. We're not allowed to run accounts."

"Quite so, sir!"

"Take down the name for delivery—G. Figgins, New House."

"Yes, sir."

Kerr, behind the desk, suppressed a gasp of astonishment.

This was the jape.

The name of Figgins on the lips of George Alfred Grundy enlightened him.

This howling, unspeakable ass was ordering a dozen guinea bats to be delivered to Figgins at the New House—with twelve pounds twelve shillings to pay for them on delivery.

Figgins, possibly, might have raised the twelve shillings. The twelve pounds would have been far beyond his financial resources. He was likely to be faced with quite a painful situation when the man came from Marker's with those bats and waited to be paid. This was Grundy's idea of a jape.

"Can you deliver them at three o'clock to-morrow afternoon?" George Alfred was going cheerily on.

"Three o'clock? Yes, sir."

"Very good. But remember that the man is to wait for the money; no fellow here is allowed to run up accounts."

"We shall make a note of that, sir." It was probable that the man at Marker's would have made a note of it in any case, with twelve guineas worth of goods in the deal.

"Right-ho, then!" said Grundy; and he rang off.

Kerr heard a chuckle.

"I wonder how long it would have taken Tom Merry to think of a jape like this?" He heard Grundy's voice. "About a month of Sundays, I suppose!"

Kerr was considering whether to rise into view and get busy with the inkpot, when he heard Grundy at the telephone again.

"Wayland 202!"

Grundy was not finished yet. What he had done already was really enough to make a fellow's hair stand on end. But there was more to come.

## CHAPTER 8.

### Kerr Takes a Hand!

GRUNDY chuckled over the telephone. Grundy's rugged features were irradiated by a broad grin. Grundy, at the telephone, was fearfully amused by this. So was Kerr, behind the desk.

"Wayland 202? Right! That Cookson's? Speaking from St. Jim's," rattled off Grundy into the transmitter.

Kerr was acquainted with Cookson's. Cookson's were the big pastrycook's at Wayland. Fellows with money to burn sometimes got tuck from Cookson's instead of patronising the school shop. You could get magnificent things at Cookson's—if you could pay for them. Most St. Jim's fellows couldn't.

"A birthday cake—for delivery to-morrow afternoon. Can I depend on delivery to-morrow afternoon?" inquired Grundy.

"Certainly, sir!"

"Half-past three. Can you manage delivery at St. Jim's at half-past three on Wednesday?"

"Without fail, sir. Exactly what kind of cake—"

"Well, I want something good," said Grundy. "Best quality stuff, you know, with marzipan on top. Big—must be big; quite a party. Say about ten pounds—"

"Ten pounds—"

"Perhaps twelve would be better, or a bit more. The point is, to have plenty of it. The price is absolutely no object."

"Very good, sir! About fifty shillings—"

"Yes, that's about right. Only make a note of this—tell the man to wait for the money. We're not allowed to run accounts. Cash on delivery, and the man waits for the money. Take down the name—Kerr, New House, St. Jim's. Your man will ask for Kerr, and wait to be paid."

"I will make a special note of it, sir. Is there anything else?"

Grundy paused a moment. But no doubt he realised that a birthday cake at two pounds ten shillings was enough for one fellow to face.

"No, that's the lot. The name is Kerr—spelt K-c-r-r, but pronounced C-a-r-r." Grundy wanted to make it quite clear.

"Yes, sir! Master Kerr, sir! Very good, sir!"

Grundy rang off.

Kerr, sitting down now for more comfort, waited patiently behind the desk. He was frightfully interested by this time.

He wondered whether Grundy, having dealt

with Figgins and Kerr, was going to add something for the third member of the New House Co. He soon learned that Grundy was. Grundy clearly intended to be impartial.

"Wayland 11!" chirped Grundy.

Kerr knew that number. It was that of the Wayland Grocery Stores, Ltd. Groceries, it seemed, were to come for Fatty Wynn.

"Is that the stores? Speaking from St. Jim's. Can you deliver some goods here to-morrow afternoon at four o'clock? Treacle—"

"I am afraid we do not keep treacle, sir. Golden syrup—"

"Eh—that's what I mean!" grunted Grundy. "You have it in four-pound tins, I think?"

"Yes, sir; two-and-six per tin."

"Can you deliver ten tins to-morrow afternoon?"

"Ten four-pound tins, sir?"

"That's it! That will come to twenty-three-and-six, I think." Grundy was as good at arithmetic as at cricket!

"Twenty-five shillings, sir."

"Oh, that's all right! But the point is, can you deliver them at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon, as it's specially wanted."

"Certainly, sir!"

"Send the bill with the goods, and instruct the man to collect the money. We're not allowed to run accounts."

"Quite, so, sir! And the name?"

"Wynn, New House, St. Jim's."

"Very good, sir!"

Grundy chuckled again as he rang off. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn had now been dealt with. Grundy evidently felt that he was getting on fine.

"Ha, ha, ha! Fancy their faces to-morrow—one after the other! Ha, ha! Cricket bats—birthday cake—treacle! Ha, ha! Those New House worms think they can jape! Ha, ha!" Grundy chortled. "They'll like this—I don't think! Ha, ha!"

There was a rustling sound as Grundy clambered from the window. Grundy, it seemed, was finished at last.

Grundy was gone.

Kerr emerged from behind the desk. Grundy had chuckled as he went; Kerr was chuckling now. He seemed quite as amused as Grundy by that stupendous jape on the New House Co.

He glanced from the window, and spotted Grundy in the distance talking to Wilkins and Gunn. Grundy was grinning with enjoyment; Wilkins and Gunn were staring at him. No doubt Grundy was detailing that tremendous jape on the New House enemy.

But Kerr did not waste time watching Grundy. Grundy had finished with the telephone, and now Kerr had some phoning to do on his own account.

Kerr sat down to Mr. Railton's telephone and rang up Wayland 101. He was soon through to Marker's.

"That Marker's?" asked Kerr. "Speaking from St. Jim's. An order was given about ten minutes ago for a dozen guinea hats—"

"Yes, sir; I took the order."

"There was a slight mistake in giving the order—the wrong name was given, for delivery. The name should have been Grundy!"

"Grundy? Yes, sir!"

"G. A. Grundy, School House, St. Jim's. Is that clear?"

"Perfectly so, sir—the bats are to be delivered not to Master Figgins, as first stated, but to G. A. Grundy."

"That is correct. Please deliver them at the time arranged, and instruct the man to wait for payment. We are not allowed to run accounts here."

"Very good, sir!"

Kerr rang off Marker's. But he was not finished yet. Like Grundy, he had three calls to make!

He proceeded to ring up Wayland 202.

"That Cookson's? About the birthday cake, ordered about ten minutes ago," said Kerr.

"Ordered from St. Jim's—"

"Yes, sir! Anything further—"

"There was an error in the name given with the order. The name of Kerr was given by mistake. It should have been Grundy."

"Grundy? Yes, sir!"

"You will please deliver at half-past three, as arranged, and please do not fail to instruct your man to wait for payment, as we are not allowed to run accounts here. You have the name—Grundy?"

"Yes, sir—Grundy. Very good, sir!"

Kerr rang off Cookson's. His next ring was to Wayland 11.

"That the Wayland Grocery Stores? I have rung you up about an order for treacle that was given about ten minutes ago. I am speaking from St. Jim's."

"Yes, sir! Ten four-pound tins of golden syrup—"

"Yes, that is the order. There was an error in the name given—it should have been Grundy, not Wynn! I have rung up to rectify the mistake," said Kerr cheerfully. "Grundy, School House, St. Jim's."

"Grundy, sir? Yes, sir? Very good, sir!"

"Please deliver at four o'clock, as arranged, and do not fail to instruct your messenger to wait for payment, as we are not allowed to run accounts here."

"Certainly, sir!"

Kerr rang off the Wayland Grocery Stores! Having set Grundy's three "mistakes" right at the three different places of business in Wayland, Kerr had finished with Mr. Railton's telephone.

He sat down cheerfully to wait for the School House master.

He had a quarter of an hour yet to wait before Mr. Railton came in. But really he did not mind. He was rather glad that he had been waiting in that study.

What would have happened had a man from Marker's brought Figgins a dozen guinea bats, and a man from Cookson's brought Kerr a fifty-shilling birthday cake, and a man from the Grocery Stores brought Fatty Wynn ten four-pound tins of golden syrup, Kerr really did not know.

Neither did he know what would happen when all three brought all three lots to Grundy of the Shell!

But that did not worry him. That was something for Grundy to worry about. If Grundy gave these wild and reckless orders over the telephone, it was up to Grundy to deal with the result.

Mr. Railton came in at last, and Ratty's note was duly delivered, and Kerr departed with an answer to the same. The School House master certainly had no idea how busy his telephone had been during his absence.

Kerr passed Grundy in the quad as he went back to his House. Grundy grinned at him as he passed, evidently in happy anticipation of developments on the morrow. Kerr grinned, too,

as he went on his way. He also had some entertaining anticipations of the morrow!

## CHAPTER 9.

### Watchers Watched!

"NOBODY yet!" murmured Tom Merry. He was looking out of the study-landing window, in the glimmer of the July stars, as Blake had looked the previous night.

Eleven o'clock had boomed from the clock tower. The Terrible Three were taking their turn on the watch.

Like Blake & Co. the previous night, they found it rather weary work. The minutes seemed unusually long. After the clock had chimed, it seemed an endless space of time before it chimed again.

But the Fourth Formers had stuck it out, and the Shell fellows were sticking it out in their turn.

"More likely to-night than last night, really," remarked Manners. "And if we make a catch, it won't be Cutts this time. I expect that Fifth Form sweep is tired of breaking out by this window."

"Well, if they come, we'll get them," said Monty Lowther. "But if they've got wind of our keeping watch, they jolly well won't come."

"They don't know anything about that in the New House," answered Tom, happily unaware of what Kerr had heard at the window of Mr. Railton's study that day. "They don't know we keep watch. If Figgins & Co. come along they'll walk right into us, and never know what's happening till we snaffle them."

"Ha, ha!" came a laugh in the darkness. The Terrible Three jumped, and spun round from the window. That sudden laugh was startling, and it sounded quite eerie in the silence of the night.

"What—" gasped Tom Merry. "Did you hear that?" breathed Lowther.

"It—it was somebody laughing!" stammered Manners. "Has some silly ass come down from the dorm?"

"That clump Grundy, perhaps—"

"We'll jolly well boot him if he butts in! Can't be the New House rotters!" muttered Lowther.

"Ha, ha!"

That weird laugh came again from somewhere in the darkness. It echoed eerily across the wide landing. It was evident that whoever it was that laughed could hear the voices of the Shell fellows.

"Who the deuce—" exclaimed Tom. "Can't be a prefect up—he wouldn't laugh; he would jolly well bag us for being out of dorm."

"Can't be Figgins & Co.!"

"Ha, ha!"

It came again, eerily. The Terrible Three stared round them. Save for the glimmer of starlight at the windows, all was dark and shadowy. At that hour the last light had long been out.

"Who are you, you laughing hyena?" demanded Tom Merry. "Show yourself, you gurgling gollywog and I'll jolly well punch your silly head."

"Ha, ha!"

The unseen laughter laughed again. He seemed amused by the surprise and bewilderment of the Shell fellows.

"By gum, if I get near that fathead I'll give him something to snigger about!" breathed Manners. "I say, can those New House ticks have got in somewhere else while we've been watching this window?"

"Ha, ha!"

"I believe the blighter's in the Fourth Form study passage!" exclaimed Tom. "Come on, let's root him out!"

The three rushed across towards the Fourth Form studies. Judging by the sound, the mocking laugh came from that direction.

Swishhhh! Swooooosh!

"Oooooogh!" gasped the three together, as a jet of water from a large squirt met them in a shower.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ooooch!"

Swissssh! It was another squirt, discharging its contents. The jet of water swept the Terrible Three fore and aft.

"Oh crickey! They've got squirts!" spluttered Tom Merry. "Must be the New House cads, and they jolly well knew— Oooogh!"

"Come on and mop them up!" howled Lowther. Swissssh! came a third squirt, and another sudden flood smote the Terrible Three.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a gurgle of laughter from the gloom. It was followed by the rapid patter of retreating footsteps.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tom Merry. "I'm drenched—"

"I'm soaked!" spluttered Lowther.

"I'm dripping!" hissed Manners. "Come on, after them!"

Three unseen foes had retreated down the Fourth Form passage. Three drenched juniors rushed furiously in pursuit. Tom Merry grabbed a pocket torch from his pocket and flashed it on.

"Oh!" he gasped as he circled the light.

No one was to be seen in the passage. The Terrible Three had it to themselves and gazed round them in amazement.

"They—they—they're gone!" stammered Monty Lowther. "How the thump did they get away so quick? They were in this passage—"

"Vanished like blessed spectres!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Must have been the New House cads!"

"Ha, ha!" came the mocking laugh again.

"They're still here!" gasped Lowther. "Where—"

"Hiding in one of the studies!" exclaimed Tom. "By gum, we'll root them out! Look through the studies!"

"Ha, ha!"

"There it is again!" hissed Lowther. "Which study—"

"Ha, ha!"

"By gum, if I get hold of that laughing hyena—"

"Ha, ha!"

"Look through the studies!" panted Tom. "They must be in one of the studies. We've got them, if they are."

"Ha, ha!" came the mocking laugh again. "Good-night, you School House frumps! We're going home!"

"That was Figgins!" gasped Manners. "But where the thump—"

"Look in the studies!"

In a state of intense exasperation, the Terrible Three rooted through the Fourth Form studies. But no one was found there.

Figgins & Co. evidently had been in the House, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

and they had brought a squirt each. They had not entered by that well-watched landing window; but they had entered, and now they were gone as mysteriously as they had come.

The Terrible Three gathered in the passage again, exasperated and bewildered.

"They're gone!" said Tom.

"Time we were gone, too," said Manners. "I want a towel more than anything else."

Evidently the vigil had been in vain. Three drenched juniors trailed away to the Shell dormitory. They towelled themselves dry before they turned in. A sleepy voice came from Grundy's bed.

"Made a catch?"

"No!" grunted Tom.

"You're no good, you know," said Grundy. "What did you expect? Leave it to me. You'll see something happen to-morrow."

"You'll see something happen to-night, if you don't shut up!" growled Manners. "You'll get a jug of water! That's a tip!"

Grundy took that tip, and contented himself with a scornful snort. And the Terrible Three, having towelled themselves dry, went to bed—not at all satisfied with the result of having stayed up to hear the chimes at midnight.

## CHAPTER 10.

### A Surprise—Not for Figgins!

**A**FTER dinner the following day, George Alfred Grundy of the Shell wore a grin that extended from one ear to the other.

Other things, of course, Grundy wore, but nothing so conspicuous as his grin. That grin of Grundy's might have been seen across the quad. It leaped to the eye. It showed to everybody within a wide radius that Grundy of the Shell was in a merry mood.

In a merry mood, indeed, Grundy was. That afternoon a series of surprises was scheduled to occur to Figgins & Co. of the New House. Grundy was going to enjoy every one of those surprises.

He was going to roar with laughter when Figgins was presented with a dozen guinea bats, with a request to pay for the same on the nail. He was going to roar again when Kerr received a big, whopping birthday cake, with two-pounds-ten to pay on it. For a third time he was going to roar, when David Llewellyn Wynn was faced with ten four-pound jars of golden syrup, and a bill for twenty-five shillings. Grundy was, in fact, going to have a roaring time.

But Grundy was not selfish. He was not going to keep this hilarious treat to himself. He was going to let other fellows into the enjoyment thereof, incidentally proving, to all and sundry, that he was the man to stand up for the House, and Tom Merry merely an also ran.

So after dinner Grundy let a lot of School House fellows into the secret, so that as three o'clock drew near there was much interest and some excitement on the subject of Grundy's tremendous jape.

Many fellows thought it funny, many thought it idiotic! Many thought that, like all Grundy's wonderful wheezes, it would go wonky somewhere, and fail to come off. But quite large numbers of fellows were interested.

When Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn strolled over towards the New House to witness the arrival of the first consignment of goods, quite



an army marched after them to see what would happen—if anything did.

"This is what Gwunday calls a jape, you fellows," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It does not seem feahfully bwight to me. Any silly ass could wing up a spoof ordah on a telephone. Wathah fatheaded, I considah."

"Well, it will be a surprise for Figgins & Co. if it comes off!" remarked Blake.

"It will be a surprise for all St. Jim's, as well as Figgins & Co. if it comes off," observed Monty Lowther. "Do Grundy's stunts ever come off?"

"Hardly ever," grinned Blake.

"Well, this was an easy one," remarked Levison of the Fourth. "Even Grundy knows how to give an order on the telephone, and to mention another name instead of his own. Grundy's intelligence is equal to that."

"There's Figgins," said Tom Merry. "What is he grinning at? He seems as amused as Grundy."

Figgins & Co. were adorning the doorway of the New House. They smiled as they saw the School House crowd in the offing.

They might have been surprised to see so many School House fellows gathering near their House. But they did not seem surprised. They only seemed amused.

"Manners ought to have brought his camera," said Grundy. "Figgins' face would be worth snapping when he's asked to pay for those bats. Hallo! It's striking three! Now look out for the fun, you men!"

The School House men looked out for the fun. But the fun did not seem in a hurry to materialise.

No man from Marker's, laden with cricket bats, was seen approaching the New House.

Five minutes passed—ten minutes. Still no man from Marker's popped up with a dozen guinea bats.

Monty Lowther gave a prolonged yawn.

"Show unavoidably postponed," he remarked. "What about bumping Grundy for bringing us over here for nothing?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Grundy looked puzzled and annoyed. He had stipulated three o'clock for the delivery of those bats. It was now ten minutes past three, and there was no man from Marker's, and no bats. It was annoying.

"The man's late, of course," he said. "After all, it's a good step from Wayland to here. He's coming all right."

"Oh, my hat! Here he is!" exclaimed Glyn of the Shell.

All heads turned.

From the direction of the School House came Toby, the School House page, followed by a man in uniform, with the name "Marker & Co." in gilt letters on his cap. The man was carrying no burden, but he had a paper in his hand.

Grundy gave a snort.

"Here he is!" he exclaimed. "He went to the wrong House by mistake, that's all. It's all right."

"Master Grundy here?" asked Toby, as he came up. "This man wants to see him. He's got an account to pay."

"Grundy!" repeated Tom Merry.

"Grundy!" ejaculated a dozen fellows.

"Bai Jove! The man wants to see Gwunday, not Figgins!"

"There's Grundy, Toby!"

"Hop over here, Grundy—you're wanted!"

Grundy came up in angry astonishment. He could not begin to imagine why the man from Marker's wanted to see him. It was Figgins of the New House that the man from Marker's should have wanted to see.

"What's wanted?" he snapped. "What—"

"Here he is," said Toby, and he went off, leaving the man from Marker's to deal with George Alfred.

The man from Marker's touched his cap.

"You Master Grundy, sir?" he asked.

"I'm Grundy. What—"

"The bats have been delivered in your study, sir. The lad showed me the way. Here's the account, sir—twelve pounds twelve."

The man from Marker's held out the paper he had in his hand. Grundy stared at it. He goggled at it. Then he goggled at the man from Marker's.

The School House crowd gazed on, breathless. So did a crowd of New House fellows, seemingly just as interested.

Something, it was clear, had gone wrong somehow. The dozen guinea bats had come. But they had not come to Figgins. They had come to Grundy. Grundy's tremendous jape was coming home to roost, as it were.

"Look here," gasped Grundy, finding his voice at last, "wharrer you mean? You've got the name wrong! Those bats are not for me!"

The man blinked at him.

"Some other young gentleman named Grundy at this school?" he asked.

"No fear!" grinned Monty Lowther. "This is the one and only!"

"Yaas, wathah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus

"Sure the name's Grundy?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Here it is on the account, sir!" said the man, looking puzzled. "G. A. Grundy, School House, St. Jim's. Ain't that right?"

"Wight as wain! It's you that's wanted, Gwunday!"

"Tisn't!" roared Grundy excitedly. "I tell you the bats aren't for me. They're for a chap named Figgins, in the other House!"

"That ain't the name here, sir. The name's Grundy. I'm instructed to wait for payment, sir. Twelve pounds twelve shillings, please!"

Grundy gasped.

"Oh crumbs!" gurgled Monty Lowther. "Grundy's the fellow to do things, you fellows! He's told us so. This is how he does 'em! He's given his own name with the order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh cwikey! Of course, that's it. He meant to say Figgins, and he said Gwunday! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I never did!" yelled Grundy. "Look here, my man, those bats are not for me. Take them to Figgins! There's Figgins! Take them to him."

The puzzled man from Marker's looked at Figgins.

"You know anything about this, sir?" he asked.

"I know I never ordered any bats from Marker's," answered Figgins. "If I did I shouldn't order a dozen. I'm not a whole cricket eleven and twelfth man thrown in! One bat's enough for me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, look here, Master Grundy, I've got to go on my round," said the man from Marker's. "If you'll kindly pay this account—"

"Shan't!" roared Grundy. "The bats aren't for me. Catch me paying."

The man from Marker's scratched his nose. He was perplexed by this unexpected difficulty in collecting payment on a dozen guinea bats.

"This order is marked 'ordered by telephone,'" he said. "The bats were ordered from this school. If you say you never ordered them, sir, I'd better ask to see the 'eadmaster."

"I—I never said that. I said they're not for me. They're for Figgins—"

"That's nonsense, sir, with your name on the bill!" The man was showing some signs of impatience now. "I can't take them bats back—I've got orders to deliver, and wait for payment. Now, you answer me plain, sir—did you order them bats, or didn't you? If you didn't your headmaster will have to find out who did, and make him pay for them!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Grundy. He could not deny that he had ordered the bats. True, he had ordered them in the name of Figgins, expecting them to be delivered to Figgins. How Marker's had guessed his name, and put it on the bill, was an utter mystery to him. But he had ordered the bats! Grundy was a truthful fellow, and even if he hadn't been, he would hardly have had the nerve to stand before Dr. Holmes and deny his own action. Grundy was fairly caught!

"I'm wasting time, sir!" said the man from Marker's. "I want to know whether you ordered them bats or not—yes or no?"

"I—I—I—" stuttered Grundy. "You did?" grunted the man from Marker's. "I—I—I—"

The man from Marker's held out the bill again.

"I don't understand all this 'ere," he said. "But the bats is in your study, and they got to be paid for. Twelve pounds twelve, please."

Grundy gasped for breath. Grundy had lots of money in tips from his Uncle Grundy. But his resources did not run to twelve pounds twelve. Far from it. And the man was waiting for his money.

How Figgins would have got out of such a predicament, had the bats been delivered as per programme, Grundy did not know. He did not know how he was going to get out of it himself.

The man from Marker's was getting angry now. He had a round to work through that afternoon, and he was losing time. Unless this was an attempt at getting goods without paying for them, he did not know what to make of it. His jaw jutted unpleasantly at Grundy.

"I've waited long enough!" he barked. "You paying or not? If you ain't, I got to see your 'eadmaster about it! You ain't making a fool of a man like this 'ere. Now then, yes or no, young feller-me-lad?"

"Pay up and look pleasant, old bean!" said Tom Merry. "You've jolly well asked for this, and you've got it."

"Yaas, wathah!" "Look here—" gasped Grundy. "The silly fools have made a mistake! Those bats ought to have been delivered to Figgins, as I've told you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Did you order them or not?" hooted the angry man from Marker's.

"It was—was—a—a joke—" stammered Grundy.

"A joke was it?" grunted the man from

Marker's. "I see! You'll find that Marker & Co. ain't in business for jokes! Will one of you young gentlemen tell me where to see the 'eadmaster?"

"Oh gum!" gasped Grundy. Grundy did not want to see his headmaster about this, if the man from Marker's did. "I—I—I say, I—I—I'll pay for the blessed things—I'll ask my uncle to send a cheque—he'll do it if I ask him—I—I haven't got more than three or four pounds—Oh crikey!"

"I got to collect this 'ere account!" answered the man from Marker's. "There ain't nothing on this 'ere account about no cheque! I've 'eard that sort of thing before, young feller-me-lad!"

"It's all right, my man!" gasped Tom Merry. "We all know Grundy's uncle—he will see him through."

"You may know him, sir, but I don't!" answered the man from Marker's. "I got to leave them bats and collect the money! You tell me where to see the 'eadmaster—"

"Oh gum!" gasped Wilkins. "We shall have the headmaster coming along to see what's up if this goes on much longer. You ass, Grundy!"

"You chump!" said Gunn.

"I—I—I say," stuttered the hapless Grundy. "I—I—I say, lend me some money, some of you—you know I'll square! I can sell the bats afterwards, too—lots of fellows would like a new bat! Lend me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"



All eyes in the Shell dormitory were fixed on the figure in the doorway. It was Kildare—but he was hardly recognisable as the captain of St. Jim's. Green pawmothered his head, his face, and his clothes!

"Don't cackle!" roared Grundy. "If you can see anything to cackle at in this, I can't! Will you lend me some tin, blow you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors persisted in cackling—they could not help it. This extraordinary outcome of Grundy's deep plotting seemed funny to them, if not to Grundy. But they made a collection of loans for the hapless plotter, and the man from Marker's was satisfied at last. He departed paid, and the bats remained in Grundy's study in the School House—Grundy's property.

And by the time the matter was settled, and the man from Marker's gone, half-past three was striking.

Grundy recovered his spirits. "It's all the fault of those fools at Marker's," he said. "Cookson's won't make fool mistakes like that! Look out for the man from Cookson's—you'll see that that will be all right!"

And the grinning crowd looked out for the man from Cookson's—not at all so sure as George Alfred Grundy that it would be all right!

## CHAPTER 11.

### Another Surprise—Not for Kerr!

"GRUNDY!" "Bai Jove! Heah's Wailton!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Mr. Railton came over from the School House with a slight frown on his brow. He was glancing

about him, and as he spotted Grundy of the Shell he beckoned to him, and rapped out his name.

"Here, sir!" answered Grundy, wondering what his Housemaster wanted him for.

He did not want interruptions from Housemasters now—with the man from Cookson's due to arrive with that big birthday cake for Kerr of the New House.

The man from Cookson's was, in fact, overdue, and it looked as if he was delayed, or else that he had, like the man from Marker's, called at the wrong House.

Grundy did not connect his Housemaster's arrival with the man from Cookson's. But he soon saw the connection.

"What does this mean, Grundy?" asked Mr. Railton, while a whole mob of fellows listened breathlessly. "A man has arrived from the pastrycook's at Wayland with an enormous—a gigantic cake—"

"Has he, sir?" exclaimed Grundy. "Has he gone to the School House by mistake?"

"I do not understand you, Grundy! He has called at the School House—but there is no mistake in the matter, as the cake was ordered by you—"

Grundy almost fell down! "Bob—bib—by me, sir?" he stuttered.

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Arthur Augustus. Evidently Cookson's, like Marker's, were delivering to Grundy instead of his intended victim in the New House.

The surprise for Figgins had turned out to be a surprise for Grundy. It looked as if the surprise for Kerr was going to turn out to be another surprise for Grundy! Life is full of surprises, but Grundy had never found it so surprising as this before.

"There is no objection, generally speaking, to a junior boy ordering a cake to be delivered at the school on some special occasion," said Mr. Railton. "But there is a limit in such matters, Grundy! So enormous a cake—"

"Oh crikey!" "So enormous a cake can hardly be permitted to be delivered to a junior boy!" said Mr. Railton. "The cake must weigh fifteen pounds, and the man informs me that the price is two pounds ten shillings! This is very reckless and very extravagant for a junior boy, Grundy."

"But—but—but the cake isn't for me, sir!" gasped Grundy, feeling as if his hapless head was turning round.

"Not for you, Grundy!" exclaimed Mr. Railton. "Nunno, sir! Isn't—isn't it for a New House man?"

"It is addressed and delivered to you, Grundy. The account is made out to you. The cake being so far in excess of what is permitted by the rules of the House, Mrs. Mimms directed the man to speak to me before delivering it. I have seen the account, Grundy, which certainly is made out to you."

"Oh crumbs!" "If there is some mistake in the matter it must be looked into at once," said the Housemaster. "Is to-day your birthday, Grundy?"

"Nunno!" gasped Grundy. "Then no doubt there is a mistake, as it is a birthday cake," said Mr. Railton. He glanced round at the breathless crowd. "Has any other boy ordered a large birthday cake from Cookson's in Wayland which has been delivered in error to Grundy?"

There was no answer. THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

No other boy, it seemed, had.

"It appears," said Mr. Railton, after waiting in vain for a reply, "that the order was given by telephone. Are you sure, Grundy, that you did not telephone the order for this cake?"

"I—I—I——"

"If it were your birthday, Grundy, and you ordered this enormous cake for that reason, I should be disposed to make some concession," said Mr. Railton. "But as you say that that is not the case——"

"Nunno!"

"It is not your birthday, and you did not order this gigantic cake, intending to ask a number of friends——"

"Oh! No!"

"Then, as the allowance in such matters has been so far exceeded, I shall direct the cake to be confiscated and it will be handed over to the House dame and served at the junior tea-table," said Mr. Railton. "But as the man from Cookson's is waiting in my study and cannot leave until he has been paid, it is necessary to discover at once who ordered the cake. It must, of course, be paid for by the boy who ordered it."

"Oh scissors!"

"Now, Grundy, it is very singular indeed for this cake to be delivered to you, and the bill to be made out in your name, if you did not order it!" said the Housemaster. "Kindly answer me frankly, Grundy. There is no question of punishment, beyond the confiscation of the cake. Did you, or did you not, telephone an order to Cookson's for the cake to be delivered at the school?"

Grundy gasped.

He almost groaned.

After one inexplicable fizzle, he had expected better luck at the second shot. But he was getting no better luck. The dozen guinea bats had come home to roost. Now the birthday cake had followed them home! Grundy was cornered.

"I—I—I——" he stuttered.

"Answer me at once, Grundy!" exclaimed Mr. Railton. "If you ordered the cake, come back to the House with me and pay the man and let him go."

"I—I—I——"

"Grundy!"

"I—I—I—yes, sir!" gasped Grundy. "You see, I—I didn't—I mean, I wasn't—that is, I never expected—mean to say— Oh crikey!"

"Follow me, Grundy! The man must be paid at once——"

"I—I—I haven't any money, sir!" babbled Grundy.

Grundy's three or four pounds had gone towards making up twelve pounds twelve shillings for the man from Marker's. Grundy was stony!

"What?" exclaimed Mr. Railton. "Upon my word! You have ordered a cake priced at two pounds ten shillings, to be paid for on delivery, and you have no money to pay for it! Grundy!"

"You—you see, sir, I—I—I——" Grundy fairly gabbled.

"This is a serious matter, Grundy! Such thoughtlessness—such reckless extravagance, combined with such utter thoughtlessness——"

"I—I—I——"

"Grundy! I shall pay the man from Cookson's, and the account will be sent to your father. You will take two hundred lines, Grundy. If anything of the kind should occur again, you will

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

be caned! Bring me the lines before preparation to-night, Grundy!"

Mr. Railton, frowning, turned and walked back to the School House. Grundy's eyes followed him, almost dizzily. Grundy's brain was in a whirl.

"How—how—how the thump did Cookson's get my name?" he gurgled. "I tell you I ordered that cake for Kerr——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You howling ass, you must have forgotten, and given your own name!" chuckled Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I didn't!" roared Grundy. "Nothing of the kind! They must have found out somehow that it was I who ordered it—goodness knows how!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, cackle!" howled Grundy. "It was a jolly good jape on those New House ticks, and I can't understand how it's gone wrong——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy, snorting, walked away towards the House.

He did not feel disposed to wait for the third arrival—the man from the Wayland Grocery Stores. He had a misgiving that the man, too, might fail to turn up at the New House with his consignment of treacle. How this masterly scheme had gone wrong Grundy could not begin to guess; but it was only too clear that somehow it had. Leaving the crowd of juniors yelling, Grundy stalked away to the School House—to begin on two hundred lines.

"Isn't he a cough drop?" chuckled Blake.

"Isn't he the giddy limit?" gurgled Monty Lowther.

"Isn't he the world's prize boob?" chortled Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's up, you fellows?" asked Figgins. "What's this tremendous joke? What's Grundy been up to?"

"Not to snuff!" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, Grundy's been japing!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "Grundy's no end of a japer. His japes are rather like boomerangs—they come home to him."

"Anything up against our House?" asked Kerr innocently.

"Sort of!" grinned Blake. "But don't you worry, Grundy never gets away with pulling any leg but his own!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him a message from me!" called out Fatty Wynn. "I hear he's going to sell cricket bats—well, if he sells tins of golden syrup cheap any time, I'll take some of them off his hands. I like golden syrup!"

There was a general jump.

"You know——" yelled Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Figgins & Co., and they went into their House, laughing.

Evidently they knew. The man from the grocery stores had not arrived yet with the treacle, so Fatty Wynn's offer was evidence that Figgins & Co. were wise to Grundy's great scheme.

"Oh cwumbs!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Those boundahs knew all the time—and they've landed it on Gwunday himself, somehow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grundy's the man to beat the New House—I don't think!" grinned Monty Lowther. "No good staying here. Bet you that treacle man, when he blows in, won't blow into the New

House! Bet you there's going to be treacle for Grundy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the School House crowd roared as they marched off to their own House, quite interested to see whether there was going to be treacle for Grundy!

CHAPTER 12.

Treacle—Not for Fatty Wynn!

**T**HERE was a scratch of a pen in Study No. 3 in the Shell in the School House. Grundy sat writing lines.

Every now and then his eyes turned on a stack of cricket bats. They were quite nice bats, and good value for a guinea each; and Grundy was keen on cricket. But the expression on his rugged face indicated that the view of those bats gave him no pleasure.

Scratch, scratch, scratch went his pen. He had two hundred lines to deliver to his Housemaster before prep, and he was no longer interested in the progress of his tremendous jape on the New House. He was tired of that jape, and would gladly have heard no more about it.

But more was to be heard about it! There was a tramp of feet in the Shell passage, and Grundy's door was pitched open. An eyeglass gleamed into the study.

"Heah he is, deah boys!" trilled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Gwunday, you're wanted again, old bean."

"Oh, get out!" hooted Grundy.

"Wanted, Grundy!" called Tom Merry from the passage

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Anybody been ordering treacle?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grundy——"

"Man from the grocery stores——"

"Opening a shop, Grundy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy rose to his feet, breathing hard and deep.

Evidently the treacle had come. Why it had come to him was as deep a mystery to Grundy as why the cricket bats had come and the birthday cake had come. Distinctly, he had given the name of Fatty Wynn in telephoning that order to the grocery stores at Wayland—as distinctly as he had given the name of Figgins to Marker and Kerr to Cookson's. Yet the treacle had come—for Grundy!

How all these tradespeople at Wayland had guessed the real name of the fellow who had telephoned those orders, Grundy could not understand. It seemed that they had, somehow.

"Here's the man, Grundy!" chortled Monty Lowther.

"Blow him!" hissed Grundy.

"We've kept you out of another row with Railton, Grundy!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "We caught the man and steered him away from the House dame's room."

"Blow him!"

"Here he is—with the treacle!"

"Blow him!"

"Get shut of him before Railton spots your tons of treacle."

"Blow him!"

"You don't want this lot confiscated as well as the cake, old bean!"

"Blow him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blow him!" roared Grundy.

Grundy's remarks concerning the man from the grocery stores lacked variety, but they did not lack emphasis. Grundy fairly hooted.

A hefty carman with an enormous bundle appeared in the study doorway, encircled by a happy crowd.

He needed to be hefty to carry forty pounds of treacle upstairs to Grundy's study!

Grundy glared at the bundle. He glared at the carman.

There was no doubt that Tom Merry & Co., by capturing that carman and steering him direct to Grundy's study, had saved Grundy from a row with his Housemaster. Railton, it was certain, would have been exceedingly wrathful had he seen the treacle, after the cake! Fortunately for Grundy, this delivery was being made in private. Mr. Railton's eye was not going to fall on that consignment of forty pounds of treacle for a junior study. Grundy really ought to have been grateful for this kind concern for his welfare. But he did not look grateful. He looked infuriated.

The carman set down that gigantic bundle and mopped a perspiring brow.

"'Eavy work, sir!" he said. "'Ard and 'eavy, carrying that there up from the van, sir! You Master Grundy?"

"Take that rubbish away!" roared the infuriated Grundy. "I don't want it."

The carman stared at him.

"Take it away!" he repeated. "I don't think I've carried that there up, and I can tell you that I ain't carrying that there down agin, so don't you think it! If you're Master Grundy, that there golden syrup is for you, and there's

IN ANOTHER'S NAME!

As like two peas in a pod are Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of the Greyfriars Remove, and his cousin and rival, Herbert Vernon, who has come to the school to take his relation's name, place, and inheritance when the time comes. Vernon-Smith has played the part of Vernon with success. Now comes the time for Vernon to play the part of the Bounder—a very unthankful task. Read all about it in

"A DOUBLE IN TROUBLE!"

Frank Richards' super 35,000-word story of Harry Wharton & Co., the famous chums of Greyfriars, now appearing in

The MAGNET

At all Newsagents. Every Saturday 2d

twenty-five bob to pay. If you ain't Master Grundy, where's the bloke to be found?"

"I don't want it!" hooted Grundy. "Take it back!"

"Sez you!" snorted the carman. "If anybody shifts that there treacle out of this 'ere room, it won't be me, Bill Hodges! No! Carrying it up is enough for me. You can get some other covey to carry it down, if you don't want it! 'Ere's your bill—twenty-five bob!"

"Pay and look pleasant, Grundy!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Grundy almost foamed.

"Look here, that's not for me!" he yelled. "It's for a chap named Wynn in the other House."

"Name of Grundy on the order!" said the carman. "You Grundy or not?"

"Yes; but—"

"Then you're the bloke! Twenty-five bob, please! I got to wait for the money."

"Wait and be blowed!" roared Grundy. "I won't take the muck and I won't pay a penny! If they make mistakes at your rotten stores, they can take their rubbish back and be blowed to them! Now, get out!"

"Don't be an ass, Grundy!" gasped Tom Merry. "You've got to pay the man—"

"I won't!" roared Grundy.

"Do you want Railton up here?" howled Blake.

"Blow Railton!"

"Look here, Grundy—"

"Shut up, the lot of you! I won't pay a penny, and if that silly idiot doesn't take his ugly mug out of my doorway, I'll shove him out!" bellowed Grundy.

The carman blinked at him.

"Silly idjit!" he repeated. "Ugly mug! My eye! Look here, young covey, I ain't 'ere to teach you manners, or I'd fetch you a clip! I'm waiting to be paid."

"Get out!"

"Grundy, you ass!" shrieked Tom Merry. "If Railton gets on to this—"

"Shut up!"

"Gwunday, you fathead!"

"Shut up! Now, you, get out!" roared Grundy, advancing on the astounded carman.

"Get out, before you're pushed out, see?"

And Grundy pushed.

He pushed hard. The carman staggered, but the man who had carried forty pounds of treacle upstairs was not to be pushed over by Grundy, hefty as Grundy was. He staggered—and then he grasped Grundy.

Grundy crumpled up in a mighty grasp.

Smack! Smack! Smack!

A hand that seemed as large and heavy as a ham smote Grundy's trousers as he crumpled.

Smack! Smack! Smack!

"Yaroooooo!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Smack! Smack!

"Yoo-hoop!" roared Grundy. "Leggo! Drag-gimoff! I—I'll pay him! I—I only want to see the last of him! Yarooop! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Push a man out, will you?" roared the carman, justly incensed. "Why, you young swindler you, a-ordering of forty pounds of treacle, and pushing a man out what's ordered to wait for the money—"

Smack! Smack!

"Yowwwwwp!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The man from the grocery stores released Grundy at last, dropping him on the study carpet. Then he glared at him.

"Now you push me out!" he roared.

But Grundy was tired of pushing that carman out!

"I—I—I say, lend me some money, you fellows!" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Once more loans were raised among the School House juniors to tide George Alfred over his financial stringency. The carman was paid—with a half-crown over and above from Arthur Augustus. He gave Grundy a final glare, and departed.

Tom Merry & Co., howling with laughter, departed also. Grundy was left to finish his lines—with ten four-pound tins of treacle, as well as a dozen guinea bats, to keep him company! And, judging by his looks, he derived no more satisfaction from the treacle than from the cricket bats!

## CHAPTER 13.

### Grundy Still Going Strong!

"ALL right!" said Grundy darkly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All right!" repeated Grundy, still more darkly, glaring at a crowd of grinning faces in the Shell dormitory.

Tom Merry & Co. laughed—really, they could not help it. Figgins & Co., in the New House, chortled and chortled over the outcome of Grundy's tremendous jape on that House. Tom Merry & Co., in the School House, did the same! They, perhaps, had not had a lot of luck so far in dealing with the New House enemy. But Grundy on the warpath was the limit. Grundy was a real shriek!

Grundy with a bill sent home for a cake that had been confiscated—Grundy trying to sell guinea bats at reduced prices up and down the House—Grundy offering fellows tins of treacle at any price they liked—Grundy really was enough to make a stone image smile.

His friends, Wilkins and Gunn, smiled as broadly as anybody! Everybody smiled. Grundy was the centre of hilarity. And when the Shell went up to dorm the hilarity broke out again. The mere sight of Grundy seemed to be enough to set his Form in a roar.

"All right!" said Grundy for the third time, bitterly and sarcastically. His tone implied that it was all wrong and far from right. "Wait for the next time—that's all!"

"Oh scissors!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Is there going to be a next time, Grundy?"

"Better wash it out, old man!" chortled Monty Lowther. "Keep off the telephone, at any rate!"

"Stick to tomatoes, old bean!" said Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Just wait," said Grundy. "I think I've said that I'm the man to handle those New House swabs! They came again last night. And what did you fellows do—except get drenched with squirts? Well, if they come again to-night, they'll find a man up who can handle them!"

"My dear chap—" urged Wilkins.

"You can shut up, Wilkins! Just wait!" said Grundy. "They painted my study. Well, they ain't the only fellows that can lay in a can of paint. Look here!"

The Shell fellows looked Grundy held up a can of green paint.

"What on earth," asked Tom Merry, "are you going to do with that?"

"Figgins painted my study," said Grundy. "I'm going to paint Figgins. When he gets this on his nut, he will be tired of fooling around with paint."

"When?" murmured Lowther.

"And how are you going to snaffle Figgins' nut?" asked Tom. "We've found out that they don't get in at that landing window. Levison's crowd were going to keep watch to-night, but that's washed out now."

"All the better," said Grundy. "I don't want Fourth Form fags butting in. I'm going to keep watch. They get in at that landing window. I've found signs in the ivy outside."

"They don't! It was Cutts of the Fifth left the sign."

"You may think so," answered Grundy, with the contempt of a fellow who knew better, and knew it. "I don't! I shall keep watch on that landing, anyhow. And if Figgins shows up, he gets this can of paint. Leave it to me! You duds can't handle the New House ticks; I can. Leave it at that."

And as Kildare of the Sixth looked in just then to turn the lights out, it was left at that.

Nobody in the Shell seemed disposed to remain awake and ascertain how Grundy got on with his new programme. The Shell were soon fast asleep, with the exception of George Alfred, who was far too grimly determined to think of closing his eyes.

He nodded off several times, in spite of his determination not to think of closing his eyes, but he woke again. And when eleven boomed out, Grundy got out of bed.

"You fellows awake?" he asked, in a voice that woke up six or seven fellows in the nearest beds.

"Hallo! What's the row?" mumbled Lowther.

"Is that that ass Grundy?" asked Tom Merry.

"Can't you play the giddy ox without waking up the whole dorm?" inquired Manners.

"Let a fellow go to sleep!" growled Gore.

"Go to sleep, if you like," sneered Grundy.

"Stick in bed while I'm mopping up the New House! There'll be three of them. I'm willing to take a couple of fellows with me. You coming, Wilkins?"

Snore!

"You coming, Gunn?"

Snore!

"My hat! How those fellows sleep!" grunted Grundy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Anything to cackle at in that?" snorted Grundy. "Look here, Tom Merry, you can come if you like—on the understanding, of course, that you do exactly as I tell you, and don't start thinking for yourself, or any rot of that kind."

"You'll do the thinking for me?" asked Tom.

"That's it!" agreed Grundy.

"But what will you do it with?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy did not answer that question, save by a snort. He tramped away to the dormitory door, can of paint in hand. Tom Merry sat up in bed as Grundy closed the door, cautiously, but, as it slipped from his hand, with an unintended bang!

"That howling ass will wake the House!" he said. "Ten to one the New House ticks won't

come to-night, after coming last night. They can't lose their beauty sleep every night. That fathhead—"

"Hark!" exclaimed Kangaroo.

There was a sudden sound from outside the dormitory. It sounded like a wild and startled yell.

"Grundy's run into somebody!" exclaimed Talbot.

"Figgins—"

"What—"

"Here he comes!" gasped Tom Merry.

There was a patter of running feet in the passage. The dormitory door flew open, and a shadowy figure flew in—heralded by a distinct smell of paint.

"Is that Grundy?" exclaimed Tom, peering in the shadows.

"Ha, ha!" came Grundy's triumphant laugh.

"Got him!"

"Got Figgins!" gasped Manners.

"What do you think?" trilled Grundy.

He closed the door, and came towards the beds, the smell of paint becoming more pronounced as he came. All that can of paint, it was clear, had not gone over the victim—Grundy had spilled a considerable quantity of it on Grundy.

He plunged, chuckling, into bed.

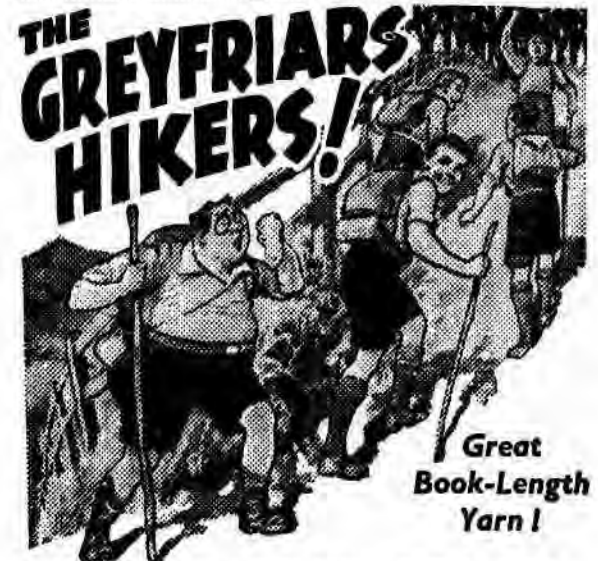
"Got him!" he chortled. "I ran into him in the dark on the landing, and let him have it, right on the nut. I think I spilled some—"

"I think you did," ejaculated Tom Merry.

"I think you spilled some, and some over, and then some, to judge by the niff."

"Figgins got most of it," chuckled Grundy.

"I don't mind a spot of paint. Figgins has got more than a spot. Ha, ha!"



"We're happy when we're hiking—" With never a care in the world, Harry Wharton & Co., the cheery chums of Greyfriars, are on holiday, tramping the peaceful countryside. Ahead of them are adventures of an unusual kind. Join up with the happy-go-lucky hikers in this lively yarn, introducing the famous fat schoolboy—Billy Bunter.

**This Grand Holiday Yarn is No. 376 of the SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY**

On Sale Thursday, July 6th 4d

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

"Sure it was Figgins?"

"Who else could it be coming across the study landing in the dark? Think Railton or Kildare would be walking about at night like cats?" asked Grundy sarcastically.

"Kildare might be, after that row last night and the night before. He came up the night before last when Blake—"

"It was Figgins. I couldn't see him, of course, in the dark, but I could make out that he was tall. Figgins is as tall as a senior."

"Cutts again?" asked Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Figgins!" said Grundy. "I say, he'll be caught. He yelled like a wild Indian when I got him—enough to wake all the school. I say—"

"Hush!" gasped Tom. "Somebody's coming!" Footsteps were coming up the dormitory passage.

"That's all right; I'm back in bed all right. They may have got Figgins—"

"Quiet!"

The dormitory door opened. The light flashed on. It shone on peaceful faces with eyes closed. Then came a voice. It was the voice of Kildare of the Sixth, gasping with fury.

"You young rascals needn't pretend to be asleep! I've followed spots of green paint to this dormitory door! There's some more inside! The young villain who chucked that paint at my head is here!"

#### CHAPTER 14.

##### Grundy's Latest—and Last!

**T**OM MERRY & Co. fairly bounded. Every fellow in the Shell dormitory jumped at those unexpected words!

Grundy leaped as if he had been electrified.

All eyes came open—all at once. And all eyes, wide open, fixed on the figure in the doorway.

It was Kildare of the Sixth—the captain of St. Jim's. But he was hardly recognisable as Eric Kildare. Green paint smothered his head and his face and his clothes. He was green as grass! He blinked at the staring Shell fellows through a mask of green.

"Oh!" gasped Grundy.

He had not got Figgins! That was tragically clear now. He had not even got Cutts of the Fifth as Study No. 6 had done. He had got Kildare. He had got the captain of the school. There stood Kildare, glowing green in the light—the small sections of his face that were not gleaming with green paint glowing red with rage!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Tom Merry faintly.

Kildare stepped into the dormitory—bringing with him a stronger scent of paint than Grundy had brought. The Sixth Former evidently had had most of that can of paint. Grundy had had a lot, but Kildare had had more than Grundy! The juniors gazed at him.

"Which of you," hooted Kildare, "has been out of this dormitory? I'm going to find the young rascal! I know he's here!"

"Oh!" moaned Grundy.

"The last two nights," went on Kildare, "there has been some row in the House, and I stayed up to-night to see if juniors came out of their dormitories. I suppose that young villain guessed as much, and came out with that pot of paint for me—"

"Oh crumbs!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

"Who was it?" roared Kildare. "I know he's here—he spilled a lot of the paint, and must have a good bit on him—"

Nobody answered. But the St. Jim's captain did not need an answer. He needed only to use his eyes—and his nose!

"Grundy!" he thundered.

"Oh!" gasped Grundy. "Ye-e-es, Kildare! Oh crikey!"

"You've got paint smothered all over you! Why, you're reeking with it! Get out of that bed at once."

"Oh lor'!"

Grundy crawled out of bed.

Now that the light was on, the paint on Grundy was only too evident. He was streaked and spotted with green paint from head to foot—his sheets had been smudged with green paint—he was of the paint, painty.

Kildare gripped his ash.

"It was you, Grundy!"

"You—you—you see—" stammered Grundy.

"It was you!" roared Kildare.

"I—I never knew it was you, Kildare!" groaned Grundy. "I—I thought it was—a junior man larking— How was I to know it was you, in the dark— Oh crikey!"

"Oh!" said Kildare. "You did not know—"

"No fear!" gasped Grundy. "Think I'd have come out of my dorm if I'd known you were up!"

"Very well! I'll take that as true, and won't report you to the Housemaster," said Kildare. "I'll give you six myself! Bend over that bed!"

Grundy bent over the bed.

Whop, whop, whop!

"Oh! Wow! Oh crumbs!"

Whop, whop!

"Yow! Wow!"

Whop!

"Yarroooooooooop!"

Kildare tucked the ash under his arm again.

Grundy roared. Grundy wriggled. Grundy squirmed.

"Now get back to bed!" snapped Kildare. "And if you leave this dormitory again after lights out, look out for a Housemaster's whopping!"

"Ow! Wow! Ow!"

Kildare shut off the light and went—doubtless in search of hot water and soap. Grundy could have done with some of the same—but he was not thinking of that. He squirmed in his bed.

"Ow! Wow! Oh crikey! Ow! I say, what rotten luck! Wow! Kildare, you know—and I thought—ow! Wow! I thought he was Fuf-Figgins! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can snigger!" roared Grundy.

"Thanks!" chuckled Monty Lowther. "We will! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Snigger!" howled Grundy. "But take this from me, Tom Merry—I'm through! You can let the New House walk all over this House as much as you jolly well like—I'm not going to do your job for you! Wow! Mind, I mean it, every word! I'm chucking it, see? I'm not going to give Figgins & Co. the kybosh! They can raid this House—wow!—and they can crow—yow-ow!—and I jolly well won't give 'em the kybosh, so there!"

And Grundy never did!

**Next Wednesday: "THE MAN IN THE NIGHT!"**

# The MENACE of the MOUNTAINS!

By **MARTIN CLIFFORD**



*In the Cascade Mountains lurks Handsome Alf, menacing Frank Richards & Co. on their holiday trip—awaiting his chance to "get" the Cedar Creek schoolboys who have crossed his path!*

## A Narrow Escape!

"**L** O O K E E out!"

Yen Chin, the Chinese of Cedar Creek School, yelled out the warning suddenly. Frank Richards started and looked round. He could see no danger.

Frank and Yen Chin had left the schoolboy camp on the plateau in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains to look for game. Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc had gone in another direction, while Chunky Todgers remained in charge of the camp.

Frank Richards and the Chinese were clambering up a steep track on the hillside, picking their way amid great boulders and stunted trees that cropped out here and there among the rocks. Yen Chin was following the English schoolboy, and he was perhaps a little sharper on the lookout than Frank Richards.

Frank stopped on the rugged ascent and looked back, half-suspecting that the Chinese was playing one of his many tricks upon him.

"What's the matter, Yen Chin?" he demanded.

"Lookee out!"

Yen Chin was staring past Frank Richards, at a spot higher up the steep ascent. Suddenly he sprang at Frank, grasped him by the arm, and dragged him over to one side.

Taken by surprise, Frank Richards went reeling and stumbling on the rocks with a yell. He landed in a thicket, five or six feet from the spot where he had been standing. The thicket caught him and the Chinese, who was clinging to him, and they sprawled into it together.

Frank scrambled dazedly into a sitting posture. He was considerably knocked about by that sudden plunge into the thicket, and almost out of breath—and quite out of temper.

"You young idiot!" he panted.

"Lookee!"

Crash, crash, crash!

Frank Richards stared out of the thicket. Down the hillside, on the very spot where he had been standing a few moments before, a huge boulder was rolling. It crashed from rock to rock with a sound like thunder.

Frank turned pale. But for Yen Chin's prompt action in dragging him away, he would have stood in the path of the rolling rock, and would have been dashed to instant death.

"Great Scott!" he muttered.

He was almost stunned, for a moment, at the sight of the terrible peril he had so narrowly escaped.

"Lookee out!" yelled Yen Chin, and he grasped Frank Richards by the arm and dragged him to one side. The next moment, down the hillside, on the very spot where Frank had been standing, a huge boulder was rolling!



Crash, crash!

A hundred yards lower down the steep slope the crashing boulder came to a stop, splintering hard rocks.

"Flanky killee if no huller away," gasped Yen Chin. "Gettee gun—quickee! Bad man lollee down 'nother lock."

"What?"

For the moment Frank Richards had supposed that it was a loose rock that had rolled down the declivity, unlodged by wind or rain. But as his eyes followed the direction of Yen Chin's pointing finger he saw that that was not the case. A dozen yards above, a dark face looked down, and Frank saw the flash of black eyes and a swarthy face.

"Handsome Alf!" he gasped.

"Shootee! Shootee!" panted Yen Chin.

Frank scrambled to his knees, dragging up his rifle.

Handsome Alf, the sport of Last Chance, was staring down, watching the effect of the rock he had hurled downwards at the schoolboy of Cedar Creek. Frank and Yen Chin had vanished from sight in the thicket, but the ruffian could see that he had failed in his purpose.

Frank Richards' eyes gleamed over his rifle. He thrust out the muzzle from the thicket, taking careful aim at the enemy. At that moment there was no mercy in Frank's heart.

Only a few days before he and his chums had saved the life of Alf Carson, when the man was treed by a grizzly bear, but that service had not wiped out the ruffian's old grudge against them.

Crack!

Frank's intention was to send the bullet through the ruffian's shoulder as he looked over the rocks. His aim was good, but even as he pulled the trigger Handsome Alf caught the glimmer of the rifle-barrel from the thicket, and sprang back to cover. The bullet struck a rock and glanced off into space.

Frank, standing up now, thrust in a fresh cartridge, and waited and watched for the rascal to appear again. But the dusky face of the enemy did not emerge. There was a sound of scrambling over rock and stone as Carson retreated, keeping in cover among the great boulders and stunted trees that patched the rugged hillside.

In a few minutes the sound died away. Handsome Alf was gone.

"No hittee?" asked Yen Chin.

"No."

"Bad luckee!"

"You've saved my life, anyhow, old chap," said Frank. "I'm jolly glad you joined our party, after all, kid."

"Me glad. Velly fond of silly old Flanky," said Yen Chin.

Frank climbed on a rock and scanned the hillside, that rose abruptly above. Handsome Alf was gone, but how far he had gone Frank could not tell. He might have been lurking in cover, waiting for an opportunity of making another attempt.

"I think we'll try another quarter, Yen Chin," said Frank. "The next time we mayn't be so lucky. We've got no chance with that rascal above us."

"Vamoose," agreed Yen Chin.

The two schoolboys descended the hill, keeping a good look out over their shoulders for Carson. But Handsome Alf did not show up again.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

There was a shout from the distance.

"This way, Frank!"

They joined Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc, who were returning to camp with an antelope that had fallen to Bob's rifle.

"Any luck?" asked Beauclerc.

"Well, yes, lots," answered Frank.

"You've brought nothing back," said Bob.

"Only my skin," answered Frank, laughing. "But I was lucky to be able to do that."

He explained what had happened as they walked back to the camp. Bob Lawless knitted his brows.

"So that bulldozer is still hanging about, looking for a chance at us!" he exclaimed. "We were a set of jays not to let the grizzly chaw him. Lucky we took away his rifle, or he would have potted you, sure."

"He would have got me with the rock, but for Yen Chin."

"Good old Yen Chin!" said Bob. "I guess, Franky, that the popper would have put his foot down on this summer holiday in the North-West if he had known the snags we were going to run up against. But we're going to settle with Carson, I guess. After dinner we'll take the trail and rope him in!"

"Good idea!" said Beauclerc.

Frank Richards nodded. His own narrow escape was a warning of what was to be expected from the malice of Carson if he were allowed to go free.

The chums arrived at the camp, where the antelope was handed over to Chunky Todgers, the chef of the party. Chunky was soon hard at work.

And when the dinner was prepared the chums of Cedar Creek School discussed, over the meal, their plans for the afternoon—plans which, if they succeeded, would have the result of putting Handsome Alf Carson where he could do no further mischief.

### On the Trail.

CHUNKY TODGERS rolled in the grass under the shade of a tree after he had finished his dinner. It was Chunky's custom to do more than justice to the excellent meals he cooked, and on this occasion he had fed not wisely but too well. His eyes closed at once, his fat face looking very shiny, and his deep and resonant snore mingled with the voices of his comrades as they chatted.

Bob Lawless rose from the log he was seated on and examined his rifle carefully. It was very probable that there would be shooting if they succeeded in tracking down Alf Carson. Frank Richards and Beauclerc followed his example.

Bob stirred Chunky Todgers with the toe of his boot.

"Wake up, Chunky!"

"Yaw-aw! Wharrer marrer?"

Chunky reluctantly sat up and rubbed his eyes. "Look here, I'm going to have a nap!" he exclaimed warmly. "I've done all the cooking, haven't I? I'm not trailing down any blessed bulldozer—not if I know it! I'm going to sleep!"

Bob Lawless chuckled. The fat youth of Cedar Creek was not wanted on the mountain trail. Chunky had too much weight to carry to be of much use in that.

"You're going to stop in the camp, Chunky," answered Frank.

"Oh, good!"

"And look after the horses and the mule."

"All right."

"You can keep the shotgun as we've got a rifle each," said Bob Lawless. "If Handsome Alf should happen to show up, blaze away without stopping to talk."

"Rely on me," said Chunky, with dignity.

And Chunky set himself to march up and down, with the shotgun under his arm, as Frank Richards & Co. started. From a distance the four looked back, and saw Chunky still marching to and fro close by the horses and mule that were staked out near the stream.

But when they were out of sight the fat schoolboy ceased his sentry-go. He stood and blinked after them for some time after they had disappeared, lest they should come in sight again. Then he gave a yawn.

"Rot!" murmured Chunky. "That ruffian won't come back here. The hosses are all right—right as rain. A galoot wants a nap after he's worked hard. I'm jolly well going to sleep."

The chance was remote that he would see anything more of Alf Carson; but there was at least a chance, and even for the sake of a comfortable nap in the grass he did not want to run the risk of being knocked on the head.

After some thought he took a waterproof coat and rug, and a stetson hat, and set them up with an arrangement of sticks and rocks inside, so that the effect was that of a fellow sitting by the fire. Having completed his handiwork, he surveyed it with great satisfaction.

From a distance the figure looked exactly like that of a fellow seated on a log, leaning forward, wrapped in a coat, with the hat drawn down over his face to keep off the sun.

"I guess that fills the bill," murmured Chunky.

Leaving the dummy on guard, as it were, Chunky retired into a thicket a dozen yards away, and vanished from view. In the heart of the thicket, completely screened from sight, the fat schoolboy settled down to sleep, with the loaded shotgun by his side. Feeling quite secure now, Chunky closed his eyes, and in a few seconds he was deep in the land of dreams.

Meanwhile, Frank Richards & Co. were pursuing their way. They reached the place where Frank and Yen Chin had encountered Handsome Alf, keeping their eyes well about them and their rifles ready.

Higher up among the rocks Bob Lawless soon discovered traces of the ruffian. Bob had a skill in scoutcraft that was a standing marvel to his chums.

There were faint traces where Carson's boots had scraped on the rocky soil, and plainer traces where he had broken through thickets, or pushed his way among the stunted growths.

"I guess we'll run him down," said Bob Lawless confidently.

A little later they came on the bones of a bird, by the dead embers of a fire in a shadowy ravine. It was where the outcast had camped.

Bob Lawless felt over the ashes.

"Not quite cold yet," he said.

"Then we're not far behind him," said Frank.

"I guess he's not making tracks," said Bob. "He's hanging about the place, I reckon, looking for a chance at us. He reckons he will wipe out the crowd, the pesky coyote, and rope in our hosses and lumber. Hark!"

It was the clink of a falling stone among the rocks at a little distance.

"He's not far away," said Beauclerc.

"I guess not."

The trackers pursued their way, keen and watchful. From the ravine they gained the hillside, and Bob Lawless gave a sudden shout at the sight of a figure in buckskins clambering up the deep bank of a torrent that leaped and foamed down into the ravine below. His rifle fairly leaped to his shoulder.

"Carson! Stop or you're a dead man!"

Handsome Alf was running for cover, and on the open hillside he was at the mercy of the trackers. He did not stop, only casting back one savage look over his shoulder as he ran.

Crack!

The bullet splintered the stones at his feet as he ran, as a warning.

"The next bullet goes into your back!" roared Bob Lawless.

Handsome Alf stopped. He spun round, his face furious and his black eyes gleaming with rage. Three rifles were bearing on him.

"Surrender, Handsome Alf!" called out Bob Lawless. "You're a prisoner, my pippin, and if you don't put up your hands you'll get a dose of lead through your carcass!"

The ruffian cast a wild glance round him. He was standing close by the mountain torrent, that cut off his retreat farther, and he had backed to the very edge of the water. Before him were the Cedar Creek party, with three rifles levelled; behind him the torrent.

"I guess you pass, my pippin!" said Bob Lawless, advancing steadily towards him. "You're my antelope, Handsome Alf."

Carson panted.

"Get a rope for him, Franky!"

"Right-ho!"

Frank Richards, with a noosed cord in his hands, strode towards the ruffian, while Bob and Beauclerc kept him covered. Frank had nearly reached the ruffian when he stepped back a pace.

"Look out!" shouted Bob.

Whether by accident, or whether he was taking a desperate chance, the schoolboys did not know, but a moment before Frank Richards could reach him Handsome Alf went backwards into the torrent. In a flash he was whirled away under the eyes of the trailers.

### Handsome Alf's Luck!

"JERUSALEM!"

"Great Scott!"

Frank Richards & Co. stood rooted to the rocky bank of the torrent, staring into the foaming waters.

The waters raced through the rocky channel, foaming and splashing on the jagged rocks in their course, and it seemed impossible that the ruffian could escape being dashed to pieces as he was borne away. They caught a glimpse of his dark head above the waters as he went whirling over a cascade, where the stream plunged abruptly into the ravine below.

Bob Lawless drew a quick breath.

"He's a gone coon!" he said.

No cry reached their ears, nothing but the boom of the falling waters.

Frank Richards' face was pale.

"Let's go down," he muttered.

Bob Lawless nodded, and they scrambled hastily down the hillside into the ravine they had left. In a few minutes the chums were down in the ravine, and, standing beside the stream, they looked up at the masses of water falling from

above. Then their eyes sought the lower stream for a trace of Carson. He was not to be seen.

Below the waterfall the stream followed the bottom of the ravine, broader and calmer, though still swift. Frank Richards & Co. hurried along the bank. They expected to find the body of Handsome Alf tossed ashore, or floating in the water. But when they had covered two or three hundred yards without seeing any trace of him, Bob Lawless halted.

The ravine narrowed here, and the stream filled it from side to side, leaving only a precarious footing on rocks if they wished to follow it farther. Standing on a high rock, Bob Lawless gazed along the farther course of the stream, searching the water and the steep banks for a sign of their enemy.

He uttered a sudden exclamation.

"By gum! Look!"

He pointed with his rifle. Far away down the stream a man was clinging to a floating log that drifted with the current. It was Handsome Alf. Almost by a miracle he had escaped destruction in the wild plunge over the falls, and in the stream below he had caught the drifting log, and held on for his life.

"I guess we're after him!" said Bob grimly.

"How?" asked Frank, with a glance along the channel, where only mountain goats could have found secure footing above the water's level.

"I reckon there's plenty of drift," answered Bob.

"Oh!"

"Lend a hand!"

Close by were a good many drift logs that had been dashed ashore among the rocks, some of them lying half in the water, and stirring to the motion of the stream.

Bob Lawless slung his rifle and grasped the largest of the trunks, and with his comrade's help pushed it out into the stream. He scrambled astride of it as it floated, and his comrades followed his lead, Yen Chin bringing up the rear.

The four sat astride of the trunk as it floated downstream, Bob paddling with a loose branch to keep its head to the current.

Handsome Alf had climbed on his log by this time, and he was still in sight, drenched and dripping. His hat was gone, and his long black hair clustered about his dusky face. The rascal was a good distance ahead, but the pursuers, all of them now paddling with branches, were gaining on him.

Handsome Alf looked back and became aware that he was still being pursued. He released one hand to shake a clenched fist at the schoolboys.

"I guess I could wing him from here!" muttered Bob.

The same thought had evidently occurred to Carson's mind, for he steered the log to the edge of the stream. It bumped on the rocks, and the man plunged ashore. For a moment or two he was visible as he clambered away, and then he vanished into the thick pines above the bank.

Bob Lawless steered the driftwood to the same spot, and the trailers landed a few yards from the abandoned log. They plunged to the bank, taking care to keep the rifles out of contact with the water.

Handsome Alf's trampled trail lay before them, and Bob Lawless took up the pursuit without a moment's pause. Carson was not more than five minutes ahead of the pursuers.

For some distance the wet trail was easy to follow, but after that Bob had to depend on

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

"sign" among the thick trees, and progress was slower. Beyond the pine forest the trailers emerged upon a rocky waste of basalt, and there even Bob Lawless had to confess himself beaten.

It was possible that the fugitive was lurking within a hundred yards of them, crouching in some cranny of the rocks, but the hard surface of the basalt retained no trace of him.

Bob knitted his brows.

"I guess he's given us the slip, after all," he said ruefully. "If we come on him now it'll be sheer luck. But we'll try."

For an hour or more the chums of Cedar Creek hunted for a sign of the fugitive, but if Handsome Alf was near he was lying very low. They gave it up at last.

The sun was sinking in the west, and shadows were lengthening in the rocky wastes of the foothills.

"I reckon we may as well get back to camp," said Bob, at last. "He's dodged us this time, sure. But we'll try again to-morrow."

"What-ho!" answered Frank Richards.

With this intention firmly fixed in their minds, the chums started on the tramp homewards.

### Face to Face!

CRASH!

"Ah-h-h!"

Chunky Todgers awoke suddenly. That sudden crash had awakened him, and the fat schoolboy sat up, blinking and rubbing his eyes. He rose to his knees and peered out of the thicket in which he had been fast asleep. His fat face paled as he looked.

A dozen yards from him, by the embers of the dead fire, a man was standing, whose dusky face Chunky well remembered. He had a full view of the profile of Handsome Alf. But even his dread at the sight of the ruffian could not prevent a fat grin overspreading his face as he saw what had been the cause of his awakening.

The dummy he had left seated on the log was lying on the ground, crumpled up. The hat beaten in at the top by a jagged rock, lay close by. Chunky knew what had happened as he observed that.

There was no sign of Frank Richards & Co. They were far away in the foothills, hunting for Carson, and while they were so engaged Handsome Alf had eluded them and made for the schoolboy camp. He had seen the dummy on guard, and had crept up to the camp with the rock in his hand. At a safe distance he had hurled the missile at the figure by the camp-fire. The dummy had collapsed under the attack, and Handsome Alf, rushing on, had found a coat, a hat, and a bundle of sticks spread out before him.

He was standing staring down at the scattered dummy, with astonishment and rage in his dusky face.

Todgers drew back into cover of the thicket. The ruffian had no knowledge of his presence there, and Chunky was glad of the caution which had led him to conceal himself before taking his nap.

He grasped the shotgun, his fat heart throbbing. The charge of shot was heavy enough to stop the man, if planted in the right place at close quarters; but Chunky had a very cold feeling down his back at the idea of getting at close quarters with the ruffian, and without his comrades at hand.

Gun in hand, he peered through the foliage

again, anxiously intent upon what Carson would do. The man was looking round him now, cautiously and keenly, evidently in doubt as to whether the camp was watched or not. He knew the number of the Cedar Creek party; and he was, of course, aware that Chunky Todgers had not been with his pursuers in the hills.

Handsome Alf moved at last across towards the stream, where the horses and the pack-mule were staked out, resting in the grass at the end of their trail-ropes.

Chunky's jaw squared. The camp had been entrusted to him, and Carson's intention was plain enough—to run off with the animals and leave the Cedar Creek party dismounted. But to step out of the thicket and face the ruffian was more than Chunky felt equal to. But as he heard a movement among the animals he stirred. He could not let the ruffian steal the horses under his nose.

"I've got it!" murmured Chunky suddenly.

In the thicket he had slept under a big tree and now he slung the shotgun over his shoulder and started clambering up the gnarled trunk. Fat as he was, Chunky Todgers was active, and in a few seconds he had reached the lower branches. He heard a subdued exclamation, and knew that the sounds he made in climbing had reached the ears of the ruffian. Higher he clambered, in all haste.

On a branch twenty feet from the ground he was above the height of the screening thicket and could look over the underwoods to the stream, where the horses were staked within reach of the water.

Handsome Alf was close by them, but he was looking intently towards the thicket, his hands clenched and his black eyes glittering.

Chunky Todgers sat astride the thick bough, his fat back supported by a forking branch, and unslung his shotgun. The noise he made was a guide to Carson, who looked up suddenly and saw the fat schoolboy in the tree.

Chunky Todgers grinned down at him. He knew that Carson had no firearms, and he felt secure now. Chunky was a fair shot, and from the height of twenty feet it was easy enough to pepper the horse-thief; and if the first charge did not lay him out, the second or third would. He put the gun to his shoulder and took aim. On the open bank of the stream Carson was an easy target.

"I guess this is a cinch!" grinned Chunky.

Bang!

Handsome Alf made a spring back as Chunky pulled the trigger—so desperate a spring that it took him five or six feet from the line of fire, and the small shot smashed into the ground where he had been standing. Then he dashed forward with glittering eyes, and plunged through the thicket. He reached the tree and clambered desperately up the trunk.

### Chunky's Great Fight!

CHUNKY hastily shoved in a fresh charge. Handsome Alf's hope was to reach him before he reloaded; but he had plenty of time to reload, and he was ready. He squirmed round on the branch to have his face to the trunk, which was about eight feet distant from the spot where he was ensconced on the almost horizontal branch.

Handsome Alf was climbing the other side of the trunk and was as yet out of sight

Sitting firmly on the thick branch, his feet jammed in two forking boughs, Chunky waited for Alf Carson to appear in view, ready to fire point-blank as he did so. He could hear the man swarming up the trunk, keeping it between himself and Chunky; but Carson did not attempt to reach the branch where Todgers sat. He knew that the shotgun must be ready by this time. He climbed higher into the tree, from bough to bough, till he was ten feet over Todgers' level.

Chunky heard him, and watched upward for the evil face to come peering through the foliage. Overhead, the foliage was thicker than below, and it was rustling and swaying as the branches moved under the man's weight.

"Hang him!" murmured Todgers uneasily. "I wish he'd show himself. If I got one fair chance at him—"

His reflections were interrupted as an evil, swarthy face appeared for a moment through the parting leaves.

Bang!

Chunky fired instantly. The shot swept through the branches, tearing away a shower of leaves that fluttered on the wind.

Chunky's heart throbbed as he listened for a cry or a fall. But neither came to his ears. Carson had been too quick for him, and, lying at full length on the thick branch overhead, he had escaped the shot.

Chunky heard him moving again, with an activity which showed that he had not been hit. The fat schoolboy's heart almost died within him as the lithe form of Handsome Alf swung down from the higher branch to the lower. There was no time to reload.

Carson dropped on the branch, only three feet from Chunky, catching it actively, and dragged himself into a posture astride of it, facing the schoolboy.

Chunky clubbed the shotgun. Carson was panting with his exertions, and for a few minutes he made no movement, only staring at the boy with a deadly look. Chunky dared not attempt to reload the gun; he had to hold it clubbed, ready to beat off the enemy as he came on.

Watching him like a panther, Handsome Alf rested on the branch, to recover his strength before attacking, but ready to spring forward in a second if Chunky lowered the clubbed gun.

"K-k-keep off, you villain!" stuttered Chunky breathlessly. "I'll brain you if you come an inch nearer!"

Carson grinned evilly.

"My game, I guess," he said, and he drew his hunting-knife.

The gleam of bare steel so close at hand sent a chill to Chunky Todgers' heart. But he dared not give way to the fear that was rising within him. His life was at stake. Like an animal fascinated by the eyes of a serpent, Chunky watched the ruffian in breathless silence.

Handsome Alf made a movement at last. Keeping astride of the branch, he worked his way a few inches nearer to the fat schoolboy, who held the clubbed gun ready to strike as soon as he was near enough.

Then suddenly Carson threw his body forward along the branch, reaching out with the knife to thrust. Down swept the clubbed gun in a flash.

But the cunning rascal was only drawing poor Chunky. His legs, astride the branch and gripping it, had not moved, and his lithe body

swung back as the butt descended. The blow missed him, falling two or three inches short.

The butt crashed on the branch instead of upon Handsome Alf's head, and Chunky nearly fell with the swing of the blow. Then the ruffian flung himself forward in real earnest, before Chunky could draw up his weapon.

Hardly knowing what he did, Chunky Todgers released one foot from the fork of the branch and kicked frantically at the ruffian as he came on.

The thrust of the knife missed his knee by an inch, and his heavy boot crashed under Handsome Alf's chin, nearly knocking him from the branch. The ruffian swayed sideways, overbalancing, and in his frantic effort to regain his balance, the knife slipped from his hand and dropped into the grass twenty feet below, the shotgun whizzing after it.

Chunky was holding on with both hands and legs as the branch rocked, for the kick had overbalanced him, too, and had Carson been able to attack him at that moment, the fat schoolboy's fate would have been sealed.

But Carson had no chance of attacking him then; all his strength was being exerted to save himself. With all his efforts he could not avoid swinging over the branch, and for a moment it looked as if he would follow his knife downwards. But he managed to catch the branch with both hands, and hang underneath it, embracing it with both arms and legs, and frantically striving to climb on it again.

Chunky Todgers panted breathlessly as he righted himself. For a second he thought that the ruffian had fallen, and then he discerned Carson's hands and legs gripping the branch a few feet from him, and looking down, he saw the ruffian hanging.

"By gum!" gasped Chunky. He was master of the situation now.

In a few minutes the enemy would have succeeded in dragging himself upon the branch, but Todgers did not give him a chance. He drew his hunting-knife quickly and scrambled forward, and slashed at the hands gripping the branch from below.

There was a frantic cry from Handsome Alf. He released the branch and swung head downwards by his legs. For a moment he hung thus, but his hands, clutching at space, came in contact with a lower branch, out of Chunky Todgers' reach. Exhausted by his effort, he lay across the lower branch, panting and dizzy.

Chunky clambered along the branch towards the trunk, to get to the lower branch and deal with the ruffian before he could descend and recover his weapon.

But Carson realised his danger, and he roused himself to effort. He swung himself to a branch lower down, and then to another, and from the lowest dropped lightly to the ground. He reeled there, panting, but the shotgun was in his grasp.

He glared up at the schoolboy in the tree, not in a hurry to move now, for he knew he held the trump card. The gun was unloaded, but there was ammunition in the camp—plenty of it—and Carson had only to look for it.

A savage grin was on the ruffian's dusky face now. As poor Chunky stared down at him from the tree, Handsome Alf rose to his feet at last, the shotgun in his hands.

"I guess it's my game, after all," he grinned.

Chunky did not answer. From the high branch he scanned his surroundings, in the faint hope of

seeing Frank Richards & Co. on their homeward way.

Handsome Alf ran into the camp, and was not long in finding a box of ammunition, taken from the mule-pack.

Chunky Todgers clambered desperately higher into the tree, seeking safety in the topmost branches.

Bang!

A charge of shot came whistling up through the tree, scattering leaves on all sides. Chunky was not hit, but some of the shot passed very close to him. He clambered higher while Handsome Alf was reloading, the more slender branches at the top of the tree rocking under his weight.

But as his head emerged from the foliage he saw a sight that gladdened his very heart. Four figures were in view, running towards the camp, Bob Lawless in the lead. Frank Richards & Co. were returning at last, and they had heard the shot from the distance. They were running now as if for their lives—though it was Chunky's life they were running for.

Bang!

The ruffian below had reloaded, and he emptied the shotgun into the tree again, with a fresh scattering of leaves. The foliage hid Chunky from his sight, but some of the shot came very close.

A few minutes more of the fusillade would have brought Chunky Todgers to the ground like a very fat bird, but the chums of Cedar Creek were at hand now.

Handsome Alf was reloading again when a rifle cracked at two hundred yards, and a bullet whistled past his head. With an oath the ruffian spun round, the shotgun dropping from his hand.

Crack, crack!

Frank Richards and Vere Beauclerc fired together, and Carson threw himself on the ground. For a moment it seemed as if he had been shot down, but the next he leaped to his feet and dashed for the timber.

Bob Lawless pulled the trigger again as he ran, but Carson plunged into the trees just in time.

"After him!" panted Bob.

They dashed into the timber, reloading as they ran. But the thick trees had swallowed up Handsome Alf, and they returned disappointed to the camp. Pursuit in the forest was impossible with darkness coming on.

Chunky Todgers slithered down the tree and joined his chums, shaking in every limb.

"Not hurt?" asked Frank Richards.

"N-no; I—I don't think so," stammered Chunky, hardly sure whether he was hurt or not. "Oh dear! That villain! Ow!"

"Is this the way you look after the camp?" demanded Bob Lawless severely. "Catch me leaving you alone after this!"

"I guess I'll take jolly good care that you don't!" gasped Chunky.

Two of the party remained the next day at the camp when the trail of Handsome Alf was taken up. But Carson was not seen again.

"I guess he's let up on us and lit out," was Bob Lawless' conclusion. "The rotter hangs out at Last Chance Camp and most likely he's scooted for home. But I guess we're not letting up on him. We'll take the trail for Last Chance, and round up Mr. Handsome Alf Carson there, I reckon."

Next Week: "ROUNDED UP!"



### Left Behind!

"THERE goes the sun!" remarked Dick Rodney.

The red rim of the sun disappeared with tropical suddenness, and the brief twilight of Trinidad deepened into darkness.

"Better get a move on," said Daubeny of the Shell. "We're a long way behind the rest now."

"And Packe will be waxy if we don't turn up at the landing-place with the other fellows," said Jack Drake, with a smile. "Let's trot!"

The three juniors broke into a run on the slanting path. Far ahead of them the mule-carts bearing the rest of the Benbow party had rumbled down the hillside towards the shore.

Drake, Rodney, and Daubeny had preferred to walk down, intending to keep pace with the slow-moving mule-carts; but they had taken it rather too easily, and the carts were far out of sight.

Mr. Packe, who had personally conducted the trip to the Great Pitch Lake, had arranged to have his flock back at the landing-place at La Brea by sunset. Probably the Form-master was not aware that three members of the flock had dropped behind to walk.

If they did not turn up in good time there was certain trouble in store for them. For the return steamer to Port of Spain assuredly would not wait for laggards, and if Mr. Packe had to leave any of his flock behind at La Brea when he took the steamer, his wrath was certain to equal the "destructive wrath" of Achilles of old.

"We'll catch them up before they get to the shore," said Jack Drake confidently, as the three juniors trotted down the path that ran in a gentle slope from the Pitch Lake on the hill-top to the sea. "Packe won't even know—Hallo, what's the matter, Daub?"

Daubeny of the Shell gave a sudden cry and stumbled over.

The two Fourth Formers halted at once. In the deep gloom they could just make out Vernon Daubeny rising painfully on his knees.

# THE HURRICANE!

By Owen Conquest.

"Oh! Ow!" mumbled Daub. "I—I caught my foot in a gully. I—I've hurt my dashed ankle."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Drake, in dismay. "You can walk?"

"I—I don't know. Give me a hand up."

Drake and Rodney took an arm each of the Shell fellow, and helped him to his feet.

"Let's see it," said Rodney concisely. "Sit down, Daub. Make a knee for him, Drake!"

"Right-ho!"

Drake made a knee, and Vernon Daubeny sat down. Dick Rodney knelt on the pitchy path and examined his ankle, Daub wincing painfully as he touched it.

"Nothing out of gear," said Rodney. "You've twisted it a bit, that's all."

"Can you walk on it?" asked Drake.

"I'm afraid not."

"We may catch the steamer yet," said Drake hopefully. "We shall have to carry you, Daub."

"Leave me here," answered Daubeny. "You can tell Packe, and he can send back for me. No need for you fellows to get into a row."

"Rot!" answered Drake. "We're certainly not leaving you alone here in the dark."

"I don't mind—"

"Rats!" said Rodney. "We mind! If there's a row, we'll get it together. Join hands, Drake!"

Drake and Rodney joined hands to make a carriage for the Shell fellow. With Daubeny carried between them, they resumed their way. But progress was very slow now.

From the distant darkness came the sound of a steam-whistle.

Drake gave a start.

"Is that the steamer?"

"I fancy so," said Rodney.

"Then we're done!"

In the darkness of the distance, where the sea rolled unseen, a dancing light glimmered. The juniors knew that it was the light of the steamer returning from La Brea to Port of Spain, where the old Benbow was at anchor.

The Benbow party must certainly be on board, and Drake & Co. were left behind! There was no possibility now of avoiding a terrific row when they should reach the school ship once more. But it was no use thinking of that now. Their present business was to get down to the shore and see what was to be done there.

They pressed on. Near the foot of the hill they came upon a negro jogging along slowly in a cart. Drake called to him, and the black man willingly gave them a lift. But the Port of Spain steamer was far out of sight when they arrived at Point La Brea.

They dismounted from the cart, Drake giving the negro half a dollar for his service. The stars were coming out in the velvety sky, glimmering on the wide waters of the Gulf of Paria. There

were several craft anchored outside the surf, and boats drawn up on the pitchy beach. Daubeny sat on an upturned boat to rest.

"Hallo, here's Wellington!" exclaimed Rodney. Solomon Wellington, the black gentleman who had acted as guide to the Benbow party at the Pitch Lake, loomed up in the starlight with a grin on his dusky face.

"You late, gentlemen," he remarked.

"I suppose Mr. Packe has gone?" asked Drake.

Solomon waved a black hand towards the sea.

"All gone," he answered. "No can wait. Mass' Packe miss you; him berry angry. Leabe me to wait for you. Me take care of you and put you on next steamer to-morrow. Savvy?"

Drake and Rodney exchanged glances.

"Look here, we can get back to the Benbow before to-morrow," said Drake. "If we turn up to-night old Packe won't be quite so awfully waxy. What's the matter with hiring a boat? How far is it to Port of Spain, across the gulf, Solomon?"

"Thirty—forty mile."

"Thirty or forty miles," said Drake. "Well, in this breeze a sail-boat wouldn't make much of that. We want to get back soon and let Dr. Pankey see Daub's ankle."

"Good idea," said Rodney. "It will cost money, though."

"I've got plenty of tin. You like the idea, Daub?"

"Yes, rather!"

Drake turned to Solomon Wellington.

"Can we get a boat and boatman here—a sail-boat, of course—to make the run across to Port of Spain?"

Mr. Wellington nodded eagerly.

"Me got good boat," he said. "Fust-class boat; take visitors 'bout—sometimes take across to mainland. 'Spose you pay, me take you."

"How much?"

"Me do him cheap for buccra gen'clmen," said Mr. Wellington. "'S'pose you pay me hundred dollar, me take you."

"I'm not offering to buy your boat, with yourself thrown in!" grinned Drake.

Mr. Wellington grinned.

"Me make small mistake—me mean fifty dollar," he amended.

"I think that's another mistake," said Drake sarcastically. "Try again."

"Forty dollar," said Mr. Wellington, unabashed.

"Keep it up!" grinned Rodney. "At this rate he'll soon be offering to take us for nothing! Try again, Wellington!"

"Thirty-five dollar," said Mr. Wellington.

"Have another try!"

But at thirty-five dollars Mr. Wellington stuck. That apparently was the minimum.

"That will do," said Daubeny. "I wouldn't mind standing it, Drake, as it's my fault."

"Halves," said Drake cheerily. "We can stand that. You're dead in this act, Rodney; you're going to be a passenger. We'll take the boat, Wellington. Get a move on!"

"One minute an' narf!" said Mr. Wellington briskly.

But it was considerably more than a minute and a "narf" before the boat plunged out through the surf. In fact, it was quite half an hour before the little mast was stepped, and the sail spread to the night breeze, and the chums of the Benbow were speeding away across the wide waters of the Gulf of Paria.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

### Caught in the Hurricane!

"THIS is topping!" Dick Rodney remarked. "Ripping!" said Drake heartily. "Blessed if I'm sorry we were left behind, after all. How do you feel now, Daub?"

"Right as rain—or nearly," said Daubeny.

Daubeny of the Shell was reclining in comfort on the boat's cushions. Drake and Rodney sat for'ard. Solomon Wellington, with one black hand on the tiller, and the other holding the sheet, steered and sailed the boat quite handily.

"We shall reach Port of Spain long before dawn," Drake remarked.

"I should think so, at this rate. What a lovely night—but it seems to be getting darker," said Rodney, glancing round.

Jack Drake looked at the sky.

Solomon Wellington was also glancing at the sky every minute or two, with a shade of anxiety on his black face. It was an hour since they had left La Brea behind, and the hill of the Pitch Lake had long since vanished from sight astern.

The blackness from the west spread over the sky like a dark blanket, covering the stars.

Eastward, over Trinidad, the stars still glittered like points of fire in deepest blue; westward, all was pitchy black. And the black was spreading farther and farther—a deep, dense cloud that blotted out sky and stars as it advanced from the mainland over the gulf. The wind had fallen a little, and it blew more chill.

"Dash it all, I don't like the look of that!" murmured Daubeny, with an anxious eye on the sky. "We haven't been through a West Indian hurricane yet, and it looks—"

"Is there going to be a storm, Wellington?" asked Drake.

Solomon looked worried.

"Me tink so," he answered.

His eyes were on the creeping cloud. The boat swerved to starboard, heading for the dim shore of Trinidad that was visible to the right.

"Hallo, what's the game?" exclaimed Drake. "What are you running shoreward for, Wellington?"

"Beach de boat, quick!" answered Solomon briefly.

"Do you mean to say there's danger?"

"If de hurricane come!"

"Oh!"

The wind was falling still more, and what there was of it blew off shore. Solomon had to make wide tacks to approach the land. He tacked a fathom for every foot gained, and the Trinidad shore hardly seemed to draw nearer. The black cloud was over the boat now, and rolling on towards the island. The whole of the spacious Gulf of Paria was covered with blackness, though stars could still be seen glittering to the east. From the sky came a faint, rumbling sound, and a few heavy drops of rain fell.

The juniors were silent and anxious now, sharing the deep anxiety that was only too visible in Solomon Wellington's face.

The last stars were gone now; the black cloud was over Trinidad as well as over the sea, and rolling farther towards the outer Atlantic. The Montserrat hills had disappeared from view. Trinidad, swallowed up in blackness, was gone from their sight. They might have been in the middle of a vast ocean for anything their eyes could tell them to the contrary.

The low rumble was increasing in volume, like the growl of some giant beast seeking its prey. The calm waters had become agitated now; white

foam leaped out of the darkness and raced by the boat.

Solomon Wellington's black face could scarcely be seen in the darkness, but the whites of his eyes gleamed out. It was evident that their only hope lay in beaching the boat before the hurricane broke, and it was pretty clear now that there would not be time. The wind off shore had leaped into strength, and the boat was dancing out to sea. Solomon Wellington jumped up, and rapidly struck the sail.

He called to the juniors to help him, and the sail was tucked in and the mast unshipped. Even without the canvas it was doubtful if the boat would float when the hurricane struck her.

"By Jove, we've got into a scrape this time!" muttered Drake. "But while there's life there's hope."

A flash of forked lightning shot through the black mass over head. The roar that followed was deafening. In an instant, as it seemed, the sea leaped into fury, boiling like a cauldron. The wind struck the boat like a blow from a giant's fist.

"Hold on!" shouted Drake.

The boat heeled over under the shock till it was gunwale under, and the water swamping in. Instinctively the juniors threw themselves on the other side, holding on for their lives.

Half submerged in the swamping water, they clung on, while the boat drove helplessly before the wind, with towering waves soaring round her.

Luckily they were driving out into the wide waters of the open gulf. Had the boat driven towards the Trinidad shore she would have gone to fragments in the surf that boiled and roared along the beach, and nothing could have saved her occupants.

It was doubtful if anything could save them now. At every moment they expected their frail support to glide from under them and leave them at the mercy of the wild waters.

Solomon Wellington shouted something, but the roar of the wind drowned his voice. But by the light of a flash Drake saw the black boatman holding on with one hand, and working desperately with the other, using his hat to bale.

The juniors followed his example; the boat was almost flooded, and it seemed a miracle that she still floated. Round the boat raced giant waves, and at every moment the hapless voyagers expected a mass of water to strike them fair and square and send them to the bottom.

But the light craft danced on the waves like a cork, shooting down into valleys of water, and rising again on the crests, while the juniors and the boatmen baled desperately.

How long it lasted they never knew, but a lull in the wind told them that the fury of the hurricane was past. It was then that the catastrophe came. A swamping mass of water struck the little craft, and she heeled over; and in a moment more the boat was floating keel upwards, with four drenched and dazed figures clinging desperately to the wreck.

### The Castaways!

"**H**OLD on!" Drake panted out the words, but his voice was unheard. He was holding on to the capsized boat with the energy of desperation; but where were his comrades? He could not see them.

The sea still boiled and raved, but the wind had fallen almost as suddenly as it had arisen.

From the black sky a single star glimmered out. It was followed by another and another, till the sky over the tumbling waters was spangled with points of fire.

Drake stared round him dazedly.

Three figures bobbed in the water round him, holding on to the capsized boat, exhausted, almost insensible.

"Rodney, old chap!" he gasped.

"I'm here Drake!"

"It's over, thank goodness!" breathed Daubeny faintly. "If I hadn't got hold of this rope I should have gone."

The juniors said no more; they were utterly exhausted. They held on, and waited.

Overhead the sky was clear and starry, stretching far and wide in calm beauty. The sea still rolled angrily, but its fury was gone.

They drew themselves higher on the overturned boat, and sprawled over it, holding on. It still floated and supported them.

Long, weary hours followed. Gradually, as the night waned, the sea calmed down, and at last a rosy flush in the east heralded the dawn.

Desolate as the surroundings were, Jack Drake felt himself cheered up by the returning sunshine, which was soon strong and warm, and very welcome to the soaking, shipwrecked juniors.

"We've got to get out of this somehow," said Rodney. "Do you think we could manage to right the boat?"

"We'll manage it," said Drake cheerily. "It will be a change for the better to get our clothes dry, anyhow. How's your old ankle, Daub?"

"Blessed if I hadn't forgotten my ankle!" said Daubeny. "I think it's nearly all right now. I'm not worrying about that, anyhow. Where are we?"

"Somewhere in the Gulf of Paria, between Trinidad and Venezuela," said Drake. "Can't give our bearings any nearer than that. Let's see if we can handle the boat."

The juniors pulled themselves together and set to work.

They clambered on the boat on one side, hanging to the keel, and as soon as Solomon Wellington saw their object, he lent his aid, and his heavy weight to the task.

The boat swung over, but it slipped back several times, and the juniors were growing weary and exasperated before it righted at last. Then it was a long task to bale it out. Their hats had been torn away in the storm, and there was no baler on board; but Mr. Wellington produced a tobacco-tin, and the juniors took off their shoes for the work. With such implements the baling was a long and laborious task, but it was finished at last, and the boat was nearly free of water.

Under the climbing sun, already streaming heat upon them, the voyagers sat down to rest in the boat, binding their handkerchiefs over their heads for protection from the sun's rays.

They were high and dry now, and safe, so far as that went; the sea was sunny and smiling around them now. But their plight was still serious enough.

Mast and sail and tiller and oars had been swept away in the hurricane; the boat itself remained, and that was all. And even if there had been a sail there was scarcely a breath of wind.

The boat's crew became conscious of the troublesome fact that they were both hungry and thirsty; but there was neither food nor drink



in the boat. They sat and watched the sea hopefully.

On the Benbow, far off at Port of Spain, the fellows would be at lessons, and never before had Jack Drake longed so much to be in class with the rest of the Fourth Form. Mr. Packe, in his most exacting moments, was preferable to drifting in an open boat, hungry, under a blazing, tropical sun.

"Hallo, what's that?" exclaimed Rodney suddenly.

A black fin showed above the water beside the slowly drifting boat. The juniors looked quickly at Solomon.

"Shark!" said the black boatman laconically. "Oh!"

The shark half-turned close to the boat, and the startled juniors caught a glimpse of the white underside. Only the frail boat was between them and the tiger of the deep.

Solomon Wellington seemed unmoved; he was accustomed to the sight of sharks, but the juniors had never seen one at such close quarters before. They watched it in grim silence for some time. As if expectant of prey, the shark haunted the boat, drifting close by it, and never parting company.

The sun climbed higher; a haze of heat blurred the water. The juniors, like the boatman, draped their jackets over their heads. Sunstroke would probably have been fatal. They watched the shining sea with tired eyes. It was the boatman of La Brea who made a sudden movement at last, rising to his feet and shading his eyes with his black hand, to stare across the water.

"Sail!" he said.

### One Good Turn!

"THANK goodness!" breathed Drake.

A patchy, brown sail glimmered on the sunny waters. It came from the west—from an inlet in the Venezuelan shore. It danced on the waters, drawing nearer and nearer to the drifting boat, slight as the breeze was. The juniors stood up in the boat, ready to shout as soon as the stranger was within hearing.

"An Indian!" exclaimed Rodney suddenly.

A brown-skinned man sat in the skiff—clad in linen trousers and a huge grass hat—nothing more. It was really all he needed in the sweltering heat. His brown skin glistened in the sun; from his large ears and nose coral ornaments dangled. He had evidently seen the castaways and was bearing down upon them.

The juniors waved their hands and shouted. No answer came back as the skiff approached; but when it was alongside the brown-skinned man called to them in a tongue of which they did not understand one word.

"Arrowac," said Solomon Wellington.

"What the thump is that?" asked Drake.

"Arrowac Injun."

"It's a tribe of Indians on the Orinoco," said Daubeny. "I've heard my pater speak of them—he was here years ago."

"Can you speak Arrowac, Wellington?"

Mr. Wellington shook his head.

"Then we're in a precious pickle if we can't tell him what we want," said Drake.

"Most likely he speaks Spanish," said Daubeny. "Lots of the Venezuela Indians do."

"I wish I'd given Mr. Pankey's Spanish class a bit more attention," said Drake ruefully. "I can't pitch it to him in Spanish. Still, there's

one word that's useful—agua. Agua!" he called out to the Indian.

The Arrowac's eyes glistened with intelligence. Evidently he knew the Spanish word for water, at least.

He reached down and handed a gourd over to the boat alongside, and Drake received it thankfully. He took a deep draught of the lukewarm water it contained, and his comrades followed his example. Then Solomon Wellington finished what remained in the gourd.

"That's better," said Drake, taking the gourd from Solomon to hand it back to the Indian. "He seems a good-natured chap, at any rate. Fisherman, I suppose—he's got a pile of fish in his boat. Here's your gourd, old top."

The Arrowac did not understand the words, but he comprehended the action as Drake held out the empty gourd, and he reached out a coppery hand for it. At the same moment the wind suddenly caught the sail, and the skiff lurched, and the Indian, as he leaned over the gunwale, pitched head foremost into the water.

"Oh my hat!" ejaculated Drake.

The Arrowac rose at once, and caught his huge grass hat, which was floating by him, and threw it into the skiff. He grinned at the juniors, not at all disconcerted by his accident, and laid hold of the skiff to pull himself aboard.

There was a rush of a black fin, and a yell from Dick Rodney.

"The shark! Look out!"

The juniors had forgotten the shark that had haunted them for the past hour. The savage brute rushed in between the boats like an arrow as the Indian dragged himself from the water. The coppery face of the Arrowac suddenly blanched to a sickly hue of terror, and he clambered up fiercely. There was a gleam of white as the shark turned to bite.

Whiz!

The heavy gourd was still in Drake's hand, and, hardly knowing what he did, he hurled it at the gleaming teeth that showed as the shark turned over to bite.

The jaws closed on the gourd, crushing it to atoms, missing the bare leg of the Arrowac by a few inches.

The next second the Arrowac was in his skiff, gasping.

Drake panted for breath. But for his prompt action the Indian's leg would have been sheared off by the shark's teeth in sight of the horrified onlookers.

The disappointed brute swam beside the boat, his muzzle showing over the water.

The Arrowac was on his feet in a moment, grasping a long spear that lay in the bottom of the boat.

There was a tinge of red in the blue waters as he thrust over the side at the shark.

With a plunge the great brute disappeared, whether mortally wounded or not the juniors could not guess.

The Arrowac laid down his spear. He turned his black eyes towards Jack Drake, with an eloquent expression in them, and began to speak rapidly in the Arrowac dialect. He was fully aware of the service the junior had rendered him, and probably he was thanking him in his own language. But Drake had to shake his head: he did not understand.

The Indian ceased at last, and an expression of puzzled reflection came on his coppery face.

(Continued on page 36.)



A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging views on matters of mutual interest. If you wish to reply to a notice published here you must write to the Pen Pal direct. Notices for publication should be accompanied by the coupon on this page, and posted to The GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

J. Yost, 10, The Circle, Uplands, Stroud, Gloucestershire; age 14-16; films, reading, sports, stamps, cycling and general topics; India, South Africa, and Canada.

Miss E. Riches, 13, White Hart Lane, Tottenham, London, N.17; girl correspondents, age 11-14; autographs, swimming, reading; Africa.

Miss B. Keet, P.O. Box 31, Marnsburg, Transvaal, South Africa; girl correspondents, age 17-21; sports, dancing, films; anywhere except South Africa.

Miss D. Wood, 25, Wolverton Road, Leicester; girl correspondents, age 24-30; anything of interest; any country except England.

Miss K. Monk, 92, Alnsdale Road, Leicester; girl correspondents, age 24-30; anything of interest; any country except England.

Miss G. Rawlison, The Lodge, Mowacre Hill, Leicester; girl correspondents, age 18-24; anything of interest; any country except England.

L. C. Nam, 97, Barrack Road, Taiping, Perak, Malaya; age 12-16; stamps, cigarette cards.

S. Ekberg, 109, Abbey Road, Grimsby, Lincs; age 15-20; amateur radio, transmitting and receiving; anywhere; all letters answered.

D. Baker, 38, Hopefield Avenue, Antrim Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland; interested in everything; anywhere except British Isles; all letters answered.

Miss D. Welch, 112, Grove Street, Deptford, London, S.E.8; girl correspondents, age 16-21; any part of the world; all letters answered.

H. Cubitt, 28, Harton House Road, South Shields, Co. Durham; age 10-12; stamps, cigarette cards.

G. Nicholson, 13a, Windmill Street, London, W.1; age 18-24; anything of interest; London, France, U.S.A., and Canada.

W. Rostoker, 4563, Esplanade Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; stamps, autographs, books; Australia, New Zealand, Gibraltar, Cook Islands, Egypt, India, Malta; all letters answered.

J. Adams, 20, Oakfield Road, Newport, Monmouthshire; stamps, swimming, billiards, soccer and Rugby; all letters answered.

G. Planner, 3, Goodhart Way, West Wickham, Kent; age 15-17; out and indoor sports, motoring, films, and languages; anywhere in England.

Miss R. Nathan, 10, Garden Terrace, Buildings Street, Hucknall, Notts; girl correspondents, age 14-16; any subject; anywhere abroad.

D. Jordan, 9, Hilton Grove, Frizinghall, Bradford; age 13-14; topics of general interest and films; Canada preferably—not Quebec, Montreal, or Ottawa.

Miss B. M. Johnston, 150, Ackershall Avenue, Knotty Ash, Liverpool 14; girl correspondents, age 16-19; amateur dramatics, films, sports, and general topics; U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and British Isles; all letters answered.

A. Sanders, 234, London Road, Headington, Oxford; age 14-16; sport, films and film stars; British Dominions or U.S.A.

R. Bell, c/o P.O. Box 937, Durban, Natal, South Africa; age 16; stamps and snaps.

M. Hawksby, The Queen, 2, Broad Street, Teddington, Middlesex; age 14; model aeroplanes; U.S.A., Australia, Africa, British Dominions, and Hong Kong; all letters answered.

Miss G. Pullen, P.O. Herold, Dist. George, Cape Province, South Africa; girl correspondents, age 17; stamps, snaps, sport and music; all over the world.

International Stamp Club invites new members; write to D. Valentine, 43, Prince Street, Germiston West, Transvaal, South Africa, for particulars.

Miss B. Potter, 216, Dawes Road, Fulham, London, S.W.6; girl correspondents, age 17 upwards; cycling; U.S.A. or U.S.S.R.

R. Ebers, 23, Chatsworth Avenue, Merton Park, London, S.W.20; age 13-16; newspaper cuttings, picture postcards, sports and general topics.

D. Bateman, 15, Victorian Road, Stoke Newington, London, N.16; pen pals, age 11.

J. Brophy, Ballon, Co. Carlow, Ireland; age 20 upwards; snaps; everywhere.

Miss L. Lashley, 3, Westbury Lane, Belmont, Port of Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies; girl correspondents, age 15; stamps; anywhere.

H. Cubitt, 28, Harton House Road, South Shields, Co. Durham; age 10-12; stamps and cigarette cards.

R. Carter, The Maybush, Newbridge, near Standlake, Oxfordshire; age 12-15; stamps, coins and fretwork; all letters answered.

T. Franklin, Hut 226, "B" Squadron, No. 3 Wing, E. and W. School, R.A.F., Cranwell, Lincs; pen pal, age 16-19; anywhere.

Miss E. Pow, 15, Duke Street West, Port of Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies; girl correspondents, age 15 upwards; stamps, dancing, general topics, snaps.

Miss V. Pow, same address as above; girl correspondents, age 15 upwards; snaps, music, dancing, general topics.

S. Foley, 29, Free School Road, Penang, Malaya; pen pals, age 13-16; any part of world.



K. Lim, 67, Northam Road, Penang, Malaya; age 14-17; general topics; any part of world.

Miss M. Jones, 56, Winchester Street, Taunton, Somerset; girl correspondents, age 22-30.

Miss D. Oaten, 3, Blake Street, East Beach, Taunton, Somerset; girl correspondents, age 16-18.

Miss B. Brice, 99, Lambrook Road, Taunton, Somerset; girl correspondents, age 16 upwards.

Miss G. Gachet, 1868, Mount Royal Avenue, E. Montreal, Canada; girl correspondents, age 14-18; stamps, snaps, reading, sports; Egypt, Malaya, South Africa, and all European countries.

C. Robertson, 14, Stanley Street, Kinning Park, Glasgow, Scotland; age 14-16; any topic; anywhere; all letters answered.

Miss O. Golinski, Angliers, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; girl correspondents, age 14-17; sports and stamps; European countries, West Indies, Australia, and Africa.

G. Antonhoff, Wagenaarstraat 32 hs., Amsterdam, Holland; age 20-30; general topics; any part of world.

The International Affiliated Correspondence League desires members who are interested in corresponding; age 13-25; all languages; all countries; all hobbies and interests. Write to the Registrar of I.A.C.L., 283, Wright Avenue, Toronto, Canada, enclosing a reply coupon.

A. Ginsburg, 16, Lebanon Street, Tel-Aviv, Palestine; age 15-20; stamps and general topics; all letters answered.

R. Haigh, 11, Mount Avenue, Highroadwell Lane, Halifax, Yorks; stamps; anywhere except British Isles; all letters answered.

Miss M. Marshall, Lillian Rock, via Nimbin, New South Wales, Australia; girl correspondent, age 11; stamps, overseas.

D. Creaige, 692, Pacific Highway, Chatswood, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia; age 11-14; stamps; anywhere except Great Britain and Australia.

Miss D. Barnes, Lillian Rock, via Nimbin, New South Wales, Australia; girl correspondent, age 15-18; stamps, postcards and general topics; anywhere except Australia.

P. Murray, 321, Mair Street, Ballarat, Victoria, Australia; pen pal, age 16; interested in anything; British Empire.

Miss A. Tomich, 348, Hamman Street, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia; girl correspondent, age 15-16; general topics; overseas.

J. Allison, 5, Chez Nous Avenue, Foggy Furze, West Hartlepool, Durham; age 12-14; stamps; British Dominions.

E. Campbell, 10, Cambridge Street, Franklin Town, Kingston P.O., Jamaica, British West Indies; stamps, coins, postcards; any part of world except U.S.A.

L. Orange, 12, Barrett Street, Manchester 16, is secretary of the Newspaper Section of the Exchange Pen Pals Club. Write for particulars, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

W. Hampton, 32, Upper Court Road, Epsom, Surrey; pen pals, age 17-18; London and Surrey.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,638.

## THE HURRICANE!

(Continued from page 34.)

"Taro Niom!" he said abruptly, striking himself on the chest. "Taro Niom."

"What the thump—"

"His name," said Solomon Wellington.

The Indian drew his boat closer and tapped Drake on the chest. After a moment Drake guessed that the Arrowac was asking his name.

"Jack Drake," he said with a smile.

"Yak Dak!" repeated the Arrowac.

"That's near enough."

"If we could make him understand I dare say he would give us a tow to Port of Spain," said Rodney. "Very likely he knows the name of the place. Try him. You're in his good graces, Drake—you do the talking."

Drake tried it hopefully.

"Port of Spain," he said.

Taro Niom nodded; evidently he had heard of the capital of Trinidad.

Then Drake tapped himself on the chest and pointed to the north-east, striving to make the Indian understand that he wanted to be taken to the harbour.

The Arrowac looked perplexed for some moments, but a gleam of intelligence lighted up his black eyes at last. He picked up his spear, tapped the juniors' boat with it, and then pointed with it in the direction of the distant port, and looked interrogative.

"He understands!" exclaimed Rodney. "Yes—yes!"

Drake nodded; the Indian understood the language of signs. His brown face broke into a smile. He gave an emphatic nod of the head and laid down the spear. Then he picked up a thick coil of rope from the bottom of his skiff and uncoiled it. Drake caught the end as the Red man threw it into the boat.

"He's going to tow us!" he exclaimed.

"Good!"

The Indian was fastening his end of the long rope in the stern of his skiff. Jack Drake secured the rope to the bow of the boat; and then the Indian, waving his hand as a sign of reassurance, attended to the sail. The skiff drew ahead before the wind, and the rope lengthened out between the boats and became taut.

"All serene now!" said Drake, with great satisfaction. "This chap is a brick, and no mistake."

And in the wake of the fleet Indian skiff the castaways glided on through the water, heading for Port of Spain and the old Benbow.

"Well, Mr. Yak Dak," chuckled Daub, "your good deed certainly has got us somewhere. Here we are heading for the Port of Spain, when we thought we'd just go on floating across the ocean!"

Jack Drake smiled.

"Lucky that old shark got in the way of the gourd! It's put this chap under an obligation to us. But, all the same, it's jolly decent of the fellow to give us a tow!"

And on this point they all agreed.

Next Week:

"A SCHOOLBOY'S TEMPTATION."

# Milky Way 1<sup>st</sup>



## HEIGHT is IMPORTANT

Add Those Vital Inches

Many have already improved their height with the aid of Challoner's Famous Formula

### H.T.N. TABLETS

and safe, easy system. No strenuous exercises or old-fashioned appliances. If one box is insufficient we guarantee to supply another FREE. A.L. (Wilts) writes:—"Since I started your Treatment I have gained 3 inches in height." Full particulars 11d. Sample 7d. Book on height improvement 2d., stamps or P.O. only. Sent under plain sealed cover.

THE CHALLONER CO. Dept. W.86  
Hyde Heath, AMERSHAM, BUCKS.

**BLUSHING** Shyness, "Nerves," Self-Consciousness, Worry Habit, Unreasonable Fears, etc., cured or money back! Complete Course, 5/6. Details—L. A. STEBBING, 26, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

**ALBANIA PKT. FREE!** 50 diff. stamps, incl. King Zog, 10 Roumania, 10 Poland, Danzig, B. Cols., etc. Send 2d. postage, requesting approvals.—Lisburn & Townsend (U.S.), Liverpool 3.

**TALL** Your Height increased in 12 days or no cost. New discovery adds 2.5 ins. I gained 4 ins. Guaranteed safe. Full Course 5/-. Details: J. B. MORLEY, 17, Cheapside, London, E.C.2.

WHEN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS  
:: PLEASE MENTION THIS PAPER. ::

—made by MARS  
to make your  
mouth water

## FOOTBALL JERSEYS & SHORTS

Write for List



All Colours & designs  
**15/-**  
Dozen  
Postage 9d.



NAVY or WHITE  
**10/6**  
Dozen  
Pairs  
Postage 9d.



GEORGE GROSE LTD LUDGATE CIRCUS

NEW BRIDGE ST. LONDON, E.C.4

**BE MANLY** I promise you Robust Health, Double Strength, Stamina, and Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10-25 ins. to your muscular development (with 2 ins. on Chest and 1 in. on Arms). Brings Iron Will, Self-control, Virile Manhood. Complete Course, 5/-. Details—STEBBING INSTITUTE (Dept. A), 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

**RAILWAY, AEROPLANE AND SHIP PHOTOGRAPHY, GRAPHS.** Send 4d. for list and specimen card, stating section.—REAL PHOTOGRAPHS COMPANY, Dept. 6, Coopers Bldgs., Liverpool 1.

**ASTRID PKT. FREE.** Queen Astrid, 2d. Anniversary. Latvia, 57 different, Morocco Agencies, (K.E.), set Air, Roumania, Belgium Tin Hat, Postage 2d. Request approvals.—ROBINSON BROS. (A), Moreton, Wirral.