

# GUSSY'S "TENNAH"!

by

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(of the St. Jim's Fourth Form).



*Gussy's weird diction has always been the cause of much laughter at St. Jim's, but in this short, humorous story it is the cause of a big disappointment!*

"I AM expectin' a tennah, deah boys!"  
"Oh, good!"

Blake and Dig and myself brightened up considerably as the one and only Arthur Augustus made that welcome announcement.

Funds were low in Study No. 6. Even Gussy, for once in a way, was reduced to the unpleasant condition of being stony-broke. The news that a tenner was in the offing came as music to our ears.

"A tenner, eh?" remarked Jack Blake, with satisfaction. "Well, that's something like!"

"Welcome as the flowers in May!" said Dig enthusiastically.

"Bai Jove! I'm glad you're pleased, deah boys!" beamed Gus. "I thought pewwaps you might object!"

"Did you, though?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The idea of objecting to Gussy's receiving a tenner struck us as funny. We roared.

"When's the tenner coming, anyway?" I asked anxiously. "Before tea-time, I hope!"

"Yaas, wathah! At thwee o'clock, as a mattah of fact, deah boy!"

"Good egg!"

Three o'clock, as we all knew, was the

time of the second postal delivery at St. Jim's. We concluded that Gussy had very good reason for believing that the cash would be forthcoming by that post.

"Well, it's half-past two now," said Blake, consulting his watch. "I suggest we go down to the gates and wait."

"What-ho!"

"Vewy well, deah boys! I must remark, it is a gweat pleasuah to me to see how you are backin' me up on this occasion."

We grinned amiably at what we took to be Gussy's facetiousness, and, linking arms with him, sallied forth into the Fourth passage, en route for the School gates.

On the way we were joined by quite a crowd of chaps with nothing better to do.

Tom Merry, and Manners, and Lowther met us in the Hall.

"Hallo! Hallo! Why the serene smiles?" asked Tom.

"Gussy's expecting a tenner," explained Blake. "We're going along to help him wait at the gates until the tenner arrives!"

"Oh!"

"Can't we all join in this good thing?" grinned Lowther. "I've never seen a real tenner yet!"

"Well, you can come along if you want

to. It's a free country!" replied Blake.

So the Terrible Three brought up the rear.

Hammond, Kerruish, and Julian were sunning themselves on the School House steps as we quitted the House.

"What's on? A rag?" asked Hammond, with interest.

"No fear! We're all going down to the gates to wait for Gussy's tenner to turn up!"

"Aha! I scent a Form feed!" said Hammond. "Coming along, chaps?"

"Rather!" responded Kerruish and Julian promptly.

And the trio from No. 5 cheerfully fell in.

Several more swelled the throng before we got down to the gates. By the time we had reached Taggles' lodge, we were quite a little army.

"Ten to three!" remarked Blake, again consulting his watch.

"He'll be along any minute now," I said, with satisfaction, referring, of course, to Bloggs, the postman.

"Yaas, wathah! We shan't have long to wait, deah boys. All the same, it is vewy decent of you to take such an intwest in the mattah. I hardly anticipated that you would support me in such a gwatifyin' mannah."

Blake and Dig and I looked at one another rather blankly. Considering the fact that we had all been suffering from an acute shortage of cash for several days, it didn't strike us as at all strange that we should support the member of our Co. who was expecting a tenner. For a moment we hardly knew what to make of Gussy's remark.

But the explanation soon followed.

While we wondered, two figures appeared round the corner of Rylcombe Lane. One was a young chap not much older than ourselves, whom we recognised as Throstle, an obscure member of Rylcombe Grammar School. The other was Bloggs, the postman.

"Here he comes!" murmured Dig.

"Bai Jove, he is pwompt to time. deah boys!"

In the usual way we should certainly have

been more keen on ragging the Grammar School merchant than on talking to Bloggs. But for once in a way we ignored the approach of one of our rivals, and concentrated on the postman instead.

"Trot it out, Bloggs!"

"Letter for D'Arcy, please!"

We fairly surrounded old Bloggs, and bombarded him with demands for Gussy's letter as he hobbled up to the gates.

Meanwhile, strange to say, Gussy, paying no heed to Bloggs, had advanced to meet Throstle, of the Grammar School, and was shaking him by the hand.

"Arf a minute, young gentlemen!" protested Bloggs. "Wot I say is——"

"No gassing, Bloggs! We want Gussy's letter!"

"Oh, rather!"

"That's all very well, young gents, but——"

"Don't argue, Bloggy! Shell out!"

"Hand it over, there's a good chap!"

Bloggs held up his hand to still the storm, and our chorus died down a little.

"Young gents," said Bloggs, "if you'll allow me to speak, I was goin' to tell you that there ain't a letter for Master D'Arcy!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Where's Gussy?"

In utter dismay, we turned round to our noble colleague.

"Heah I am, deah boys!" said Gussy serenely, leading by the arm the somewhat scared-looking Throstle. "What's wrong?"

"The tenner hasn't arrived!" breathed Digby, in anguished accents.

"Bai Jove! I assuah you, Dig, you are uttably mistaken. The tennah I was we-fewwin' to is heah."

"Here?" we all asked, in unison.

"Wight heah, deah boys! Allow me to intwoduce you to Mistah Thwostle, of the Gwammah School."

"But—but——"

We gazed in astonishment at the Grammarian.

"But you don't mean to tell us that this chap brought the tenner along with him?" roared Blake.

"Certainly not, Blake! Whatever put such a queeah ideah into your head? Mistah Thwostle *is* the tennah!"

We looked at each other helplessly.

"Are you potty, Gus, or are we?" asked Dig. "Let's get it quite clear now. You say Thwostle actually *is* the tenner. Is that it?"

"Pwecisely, deah boy. If you took any intwest in local musical affaihs, you would be awah that Mistah Thwostle is vewy well known locally as a pwomisin' tenah."

"M-m-musical circles?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Arm in arm with Gussy we marched down the School House steps towards the gates, eager to see the arrival of the "tennah."



"Of course!"

"He means tenor!"

"Tenor—not tenner!"

"Oh dear!"

We almost wept with disappointment.

Arthur Augustus fixed his monocle in his eye and regarded us in surprise.

"Gweat Scott! I twust you were not undah any misappwehension, deah boys! It certainly didn't occur to me that you would misintewpwet my wemark. Mistah Thwostle has vewy kindlay come to give me a singin' lesson this aftahnoon. He is the tenah I wefewwed to. Tenah, you know—not tennah!"

"Great pip!"

Blake and Dig and I felt quite limp. But Tom Merry and the others saw the funny side of it. They yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, deah boys, I twust you will do everythin' in your powah to make Mistah Thwostle feel at home," said Gus genially. "Pewwaps you would like to twot up to the music-woom and heah me pwactise!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

We did not reply to the invitation. We hadn't the heart even to bump the swell of the Fourth.

THE END