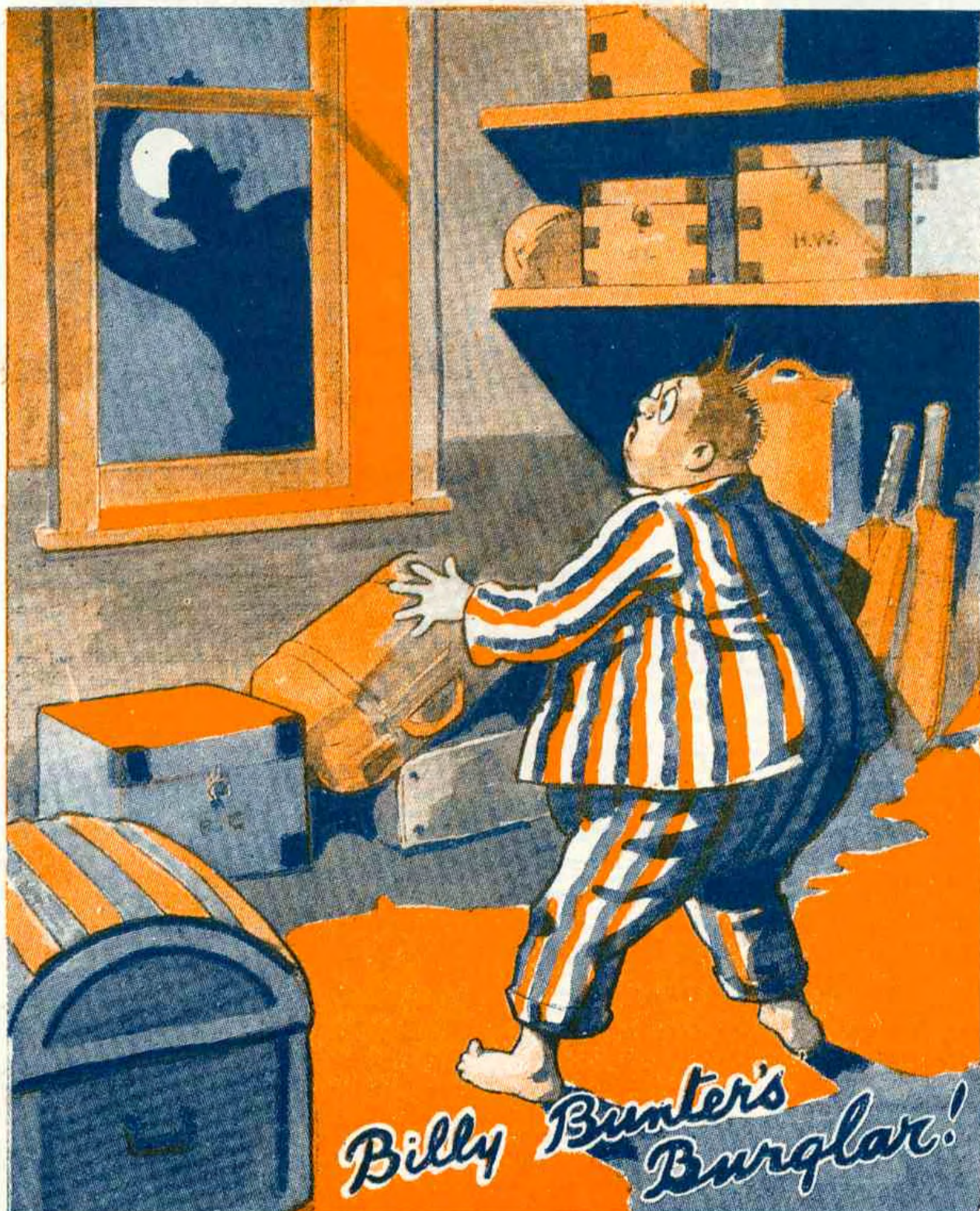


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Flying Adventure.

The MAGNET^{2D}



*Billy Bunter's
Burglar!*



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Slow Time!

"WHAT'S the time?"
"Eh?"
"What's the time?" repeated Billy Bunter.

Quite a number of Remove fellows in the Rag looked at Bunter.

The time, as a matter of fact, was twenty minutes past nine; ten minutes to the bed-time of the Remove.

Prep was over, and Harry Wharton & Co. and most of the Remove were gathered in the Rag.

Bunter had rolled in rather late; having, apparently, been occupied on his own since prep.

Bunter, as usual, looked for the most comfortable chair and parked his fat person in it.

But—not as usual—he soon rose from it again.

He moved about restlessly, he sat down again, and he rose once more. Bunter did not seem at ease.

And he seemed anxious—strangely anxious—about the time!

He had asked Bob Cherry the time, and Bob had told him. Three minutes later he had asked Frank Nugent, and Nugent had told him. Then he had asked Johnny Bull, and Johnny Bull had told him. Only a few more minutes and he asked Vernon-Smith, and the Bouncer told him. Then the fat Owl of the Remove was silent for nearly five minutes. In those five minutes he sat down and rose again, blinked uneasily at the door, and blinked at the clock over the mantel-piece. But the clock in the Rag had

ceased to give information since a rainy afternoon when the juniors had played football indoors, and the clock had been inadvertently used as a goal. And then Bunter asked Harry Wharton the time.

By that time Bunter's uneasy inquisitiveness on the subject had drawn attention to him. Instead of replying with the required information the captain of the Remove stared at the fat junior.

"You silly owl!" he said. "What's the matter with you?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You've asked half a dozen fellows the time already! Give us a rest!"

"Well, I think you might tell a fellow the time," said Bunter, with a reproachful blink through his big spectacles. "My watch has stopped, you know, and the clock doesn't go! And—"

"Twenty past nine, fathead!"

"Sure it isn't later?"

"Yes, ass!"

"Anxious for dorm, Bunt?" asked Bob Cherry. "Take a nap in the chair, old man, and I'll wake you up when Wingate comes along for us. I'll roll you out of the chair—honour bright!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I—I say, I fancy Wingate's late!" said Bunter. "A prefect ought not to be late when he's seeing lights out for juniors, you know. It's rather slack."

"He's not late, ass," said Nugent.

"Well, what's the time?" asked Bunter.

"Twenty-one minutes past nine!" hooted Wharton. "Now shut up!"

"Sure your watch isn't slow, Wharton?"

"Yes, ass; dry up!"

"I think it must be slow. What's the time, Smithy?"

"Time for you to shut up!" answered the Bouncer.

"Oh, really, Smithy—I say, Redwing, what's the time?"

Tom Redwing laughed.

"Twenty-one minutes and a half past nine!" he answered.

"Oh dear!" said Bunter.

He drifted back to his chair and sat down. He rose again almost immediately and moved about, unquiet and unresting. Almost every moment his eyes and his spectacles turned on the door of the Rag.

Really it was inexplicable.

Remove fellows were never anxious for bed-time. Even Bunter was never keen on going to bed, though he was keen on staying there as long as possible once he was in. But on this occasion it was evident that the moments were passing on leaden wings to the Owl of the Remove. He was not only anxious for dorm, he was longing for it; in fact, yearning for it.

"I say, you fellows—" Bunter began again.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What's the time, old chap?"

"You burbling ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "If you ask what's the time again I'll jolly well buzz a cushion at you!"

"Wingate must be late!" grunted Bunter. "It's rather rotten keeping fellows up like this. Losing our sleep, you know. Late hours are jolly bad for a fellow."

"The lateness is not terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, what's the time?" asked Bunter.

Whiz!

"Whoooooop!" roared Bunter.

Bob Cherry had stated that he would "buzz" a cushion if Bunter asked the time again. Now he suited the action to the word.

Whether this was some sort of a jape on Bunter's part, or whether he was wandering in his fat mind, or whatever might be his reason for incessantly inquiring the time, there was no doubt that the fellows in the Rag were fed-up. The buzzing cushion was a strong hint to that effect.

Billy Bunter caught the cushion with his well-filled waistcoat. He sat down with a bump that almost shook the Rag.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "Beast! Ow!"

"Goal!" chuckled Hazeldene.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter scrambled up. His little round eyes gleamed wrath through his big round spectacles.

"I've a jolly good mind to give you a jolly good licking, Bob Cherry!" he roared.

"Mercy!" gasped Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Wharton, as head boy of the Form, you ought to go and remind Wingate that it's time for dorm."

"It isn't time yet, ass!"

"Well, what's the—?"

"Oh crumbs! If you say 'time' I'll jolly well bang your head on the table!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Give us a rest, you frumptions chump!"

"Beast!"

There was a heavy footstep outside the door of the Rag. Billy Bunter gave a squeak of relief.

"That's Wingate at last! I told you fellows your watches were slow. We shall be jolly sleepy in Form to-morrow, and we've got a new beak who's got a beastly temper—"

"That's not Wingate," said Bob. "It's not time yet."

The door of the Rag was hurled open. The heavy footsteps tramped in. But it was not Wingate of the Sixth; the prefect was not due yet. It was Horace Coker of the Fifth Form who tramped into the Rag with a heavy tramp and glared wrathfully at the surprised juniors. And the voice of Horace Coker, in tones that would have done credit to the celebrated Bull of Bashan of olden time, roared:

"Where's Bunter? Where's that fat scoundrel? Where's that podgy pirate? Where is he? I'm going to smash him! Where's Bunter?"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

In a Hornets' Nest!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stared at Coker of the Fifth. Billy Bunter, with a startled squeak, dodged behind the Famous Five. His little round eyes almost popped through his big round spectacles as he blinked at Horace Coker's wrathful red face.

"I—I say, you fellows, keep him off!" squeaked Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What the thump do you want, Coker?" demanded Bob Cherry, looking warlike at once.

There were warlike looks on all sides. The Rag was the special preserve of the junior Forms. Fifth Form men were not allowed to throw their weight about in that apartment.

"I want Bunter!" roared Coker.

"You can have him at a gift!" remarked Skinner. "Nobody here wants Bunter. You can have him if you'll keep him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where is he?" roared Coker.

He did not for the moment discern the fat figure that had whisked behind the rampart of the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, don't tell him I'm here!" gasped Bunter.

"Where's Bunter?" roared Coker.

"The wherefulness is preposterous, my esteemed, idiotic Coker!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin.

"Oh, there you are!" Coker spotted Bunter at last, and strode towards him.

"Get out of the way, you fags! I want Bunter!"

Harry Wharton & Co. did not get out of the way. They grinned and stood fast. Coker, apparently, did not know, or had forgotten, that Fifth-Formers weren't allowed to throw their weight about in the Rag. The Famous Five were ready to remind him.

"What do you want Bunter for, old bean?" asked Wharton.

"Never mind that! Get out of the way!"

"Bow-wow!"

Coker came to a halt. He breathed hard. Evidently Coker was in a state of

Who is "Jimmy the One"? This is the perplexing question to which the police require an answer. Only one person can help them—a junior schoolboy at Greyfriars! But "Jimmy the One" takes good care to see that the schoolboy's lips are sealed!

towering wrath. He found it hard to keep his hands off the cheeky juniors who barred his lofty way. But a dozen other fellows were gathering round, all prepared to handle Coker at a moment's notice—indeed, rather keen on handling him.

Coker paused. It was not Coker's way to count odds; but even Coker's powerful brain realised the fact that, on this occasion, the odds were fearfully heavy. So he paused.

"That fat burglar's been to my study!" he breathed. "He's bagged a pie—a steak-and-kidney pie!"

"Oh, really, Coker—" came from behind the Famous Five.

"I'm going to get it back and smash him—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"You fat villain!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Have you been grub-raiding in the Fifth? Let Coker have him, you men!"

"Oh, really, Bull, I haven't!" yelled Bunter, in alarm. "I haven't been near the Fifth! I haven't seen a pie! I never knew Coker had a pie! I don't believe he had one, either. I never heard him giving the order to Mrs. Mumble—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's got it!" roared Coker. "I ordered that pie for supper! I've got half a dozen men coming! It was sent in from the tuckshop after prep. I went round to tell the men to come, and

when we got back to the study it was gone."

"And so the poor dog had none!" sighed Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But how do you know Bunter had it?" demanded Wharton.

Snort from Coker.

"He was in the tuckshop when I gave the order! Potter saw him sneaking about the Fifth Form passage half an hour ago. I know jolly well he had it! He's got it now!"

"Have you got it, Bunter?"

"Ow! No!"

"He hasn't got it about him, unless he's got it inside!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"If it's an inside passenger, Coker, you'll never get it back!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Then I'll jolly well take it out of his hide!" roared Coker.

"Have you scoffed Coker's pie, you fat villain?" demanded Wharton.

"Ow! No! I'm hungry now!" gasped Bunter. "Think I should be hungry if I'd scoffed a steak-and-kidney pie?"

The captain of the Remove eyed Bunter very dubiously. It certainly was a fact that nobody's tuck was safe at Greyfriars if Bunter got wind of it. Where tuck was concerned, Billy Bunter was absolutely oblivious to the distinction between "meum" and "tuum." The Removites were ready to hurl Coker from the Rag on the back of his neck; but they were not prepared to keep him out of possession of his own pie. Still, even Bunter was entitled to the benefit of the doubt.

"He had it!" roared Coker. "Get out of the way, you fags! I'm going to thump him till he hands over that pie!"

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton pacifically. "If the fat boulder's had your pie, we'll make him shell out! But if he hasn't—"

"He has!" roared Coker.

"Look here, Bunter—"

"I say, you fellows, I hope you can take my word!" gasped Bunter. "I—I haven't scoffed a pie! I haven't seen a pie! I never knew there was a pie! If—if Coker had a pie, I—I dare say he's eaten it, and—and forgotten all about it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let me get hold of him!" bellowed Coker.

"Hold on! Let's have this out!" said the captain of the Remove. "When did you miss the pie, Coker? Bunter's been here since nine o'clock."

"He had it before that, then. I missed it soon after nine, and I've been to his study. I thought I should find him scoffing it there—"

"Oh, really, Coker, as if I'd touch a fellow's pie—"

"Let me get at him!" roared Coker, and he made a stride.

Five pairs of hands pushed him back.

"Chuck it!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully. "If Bunter's been raiding in your study, old bean, we'll make him shell out and bump him into the bargain. But if he hasn't—"

"I tell you—"

"Shut up a minute, Coker! Now, look here, Bunter, what have you been doing since prep?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"I—I stayed in my study to—to do some verbs—"

"You didn't!" said Peter Todd.

"You left the study before I did!"

"I—I—I mean, I—I went to see Quelch—"

"Quelch!" roared Wharton.

As Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was confined to the sanatorium with a severe and prolonged cold, Bunter's statement was rather improbable, to say the least. In the hurry of the moment, Bunter had forgotten that the Remove master was not in the House.

"I—I mean, I—I went to see the new beak, Lagden, you know!" gasped Bunter. "I had to see him in his study, you know! I meant Lagden, not Quelch, of course."

"You fat villain! Lagden's not in!" exclaimed Wharton. "He's been away all the evening—he's not in yet."

"Oh! Isn't he?" ejaculated Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was a tremendous fibber; but often and often he had no luck with his fibs. Apparently he was unaware that Mr. Lagden, the new master of the Remove, was not in.

"I—I say, you fellows, I didn't know Lagden was out!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean, I—I never went to see Lagden—I mean, I went to see the Head."

"Let me get at him!" roared Coker. "He went to my study and bagged my pie while I was gone to call the men to supper—"

"Did you go to Coker's study, Bunter?"

"I never went near it!" howled Bunter. "I—I don't know which is Coker's study in the Fifth, as a matter of fact. I've been busy since prep—I've been in the Second Form room. I—I had to see that kid Flip—I've been helping him with his Latin—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"You can ask Flip!" said Bunter, remembering that dorm for the Second was at nine, and that the Second Form were therefore out of the reach of questioning. "You can call Nugent's minor—and my minor, too! They all saw me—in the Second Form room—"

"Bunter was paying a lot of calls this evening, you see," remarked Skinner. "He went to see Quelch, who's in sanny; and Lagden, who hasn't come in; and the Head; and the Second Form fags! Talk about an alibi!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter had rather overdone the "alibi." The Removites were feeling more than doubtful now. Had Horace been patient, no doubt he would have gained his point. But patience was not included among the many gifts of Horace Coker. His temper was simmering; and now it boiled over.

"Get out of the way!" he roared. "I want that pie, not a lot of whoppers from Bunter! Gerrouit!"

Coker advanced again. And as the juniors did not move out of the way he shoved them aside.

That did it!

Harry Wharton & Co. were prepared to inquire into the matter judicially, and see fair play. But they were not prepared to allow Coker of the Fifth to carry matters with a high hand in their own special domain. Coker of the Fifth shoved them right and left, and jumped at Bunter. But at the same moment the Famous Five jumped at Coker.

Coker did not reach Bunter! The Famous Five reached Coker! And Coker, grasped by many vigorous hands, came down on the floor with a terrific concussion.

"Whoop!" roared Coker.

"Sit on him!"

"I say, you fellows, hold him!" yelled Bunter. "Rag him! Wallop him! Give him jip! Making out that a man's got his pie! Scrag him!"

"Collar him!"

"Mop him up!"

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"Down with the Fifth!"

"Scrag him terrifically!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The rights and wrongs of the matter were quite forgotten now. Billy Bunter looked on with a fat grin while Coker of the Fifth was scragged.

Coker put up a terrific scrap. He was not easy to handle, even for a mob of juniors. But they handled him. He heaved under them like an earthquake. But he did not succeed in getting on his feet. Removites fairly swarmed over him. Coker was almost lost to view. With yells of laughter, the juniors piled on the hapless senior, and the Rag was in a roar when Wingate of the Sixth stepped in.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Who Had the Pie?

WINGATE stared. It was not unusual for the Rag to be the scene of a little uproar. Indeed, the apartment was so-called, from the fact that rags and rows were of only too frequent occurrence there. But, even in the Rag, there was seldom a row like this.

"My hat!" ejaculated the Greyfriars captain.

He stared at the heap of humanity. He could not see Coker! Coker had disappeared from sight. A mob of fags seemed to be sprawling over something; that was all that the prefect could see.

"Stop that!" roared Wingate.

"Give him jip!"

"Yurrrrrrh!" from Coker.

Wingate strode on the scene. His official ashplant was under his arm. He slid it down into his hand. For once the juniors were deaf to the voice of the captain of the school. Excitement and hilarity reigned, and they did not seem even to hear Wingate.

It was time for action, and Wingate proceeded to appeal to their feelings.

With liberal impartiality, the prefect distributed whacks from the cane on all within reach.

The yells of laughter were shut off at once, and with yells of a quite different kind, the juniors scrambled out of the way.

Coker was revealed.

"Now, what—" began Wingate. He broke off, staring at the sprawling Fifth-Former. "What—what—who's that?"

Coker was really difficult to recognise. He was in a dusty and dishevelled and frightfully rumpled state. His face was the colour of a freshly boiled beetroot; his hair was a mop; his collar hung by a single stud; his tie was gone; his coat was split up the back; his waistcoat had lost most of its buttons. He could not speak. He could only sprawl and gurgle.

"What the thump!" exclaimed the astonished Wingate. "Is that the wild man from Borneo, or what?"

"Groooooooooogh!"

"Is it Coker?" asked Wingate.

"Coker, what are you up to? Ragging with a mob of fags, you silly ass?"

"Oooooooooogh!"

"Look here, Coker, this won't do!" said Wingate severely. "A Fifth Form man ought to have a little more sense. What the dickens do you mean, coming here and ragging with the fags?"

"Wooooooooogh!"

Coker could not explain. He could only gurgle. He had to get his second wind before he could explain.

"If you weren't a senior," said Wingate, "I'd jolly well make you bend over, and give you six, Coker!"

The juniors chuckled breathlessly. The sight of Coker—the great Coker—bending over and getting six, would have been a real delight.

"Give him six, Wingate!" called out Skinner. "Coming here and kicking up a shindy—give him six!"

"Shut up!" said Wingate. "Get off to your dorm! I've a jolly good mind to hand out six all round, and I jolly well will if you're not out of this room in two ticks!"

The Remove were out of the Rag in two "ticks." Wingate, frowning, shepherded them off to their dormitory, and Coker was left alone in his glory, still struggling after his second wind.

It was quite a hilarious Remove that marched into the dormitory. They had enjoyed those exciting few minutes with Coker of the Fifth. They were rather sorry that the entertainment was over. But, as a matter of fact, they were not quite finished with Coker yet.

The juniors had turned in, and Wingate was about to turn out the light, when there was a heavy tread, and a sound of gasping in the corridor. Coker of the Fifth, still crimson and considerably breathless, appeared in the doorway. Wingate stared at him.

"What the thump do you want here, Coker?" he demanded. "My hat! If you've come here to get on with that shindy, I'll jolly well give you six, Fifth or not!"

Coker glared, a dusty glare. He had collected a great deal of dust on the floor of the Rag.

"I've come here—" he bawled.

"I can see you've come here! I'm waiting for you to go!"

"I've come here—" gurgled Coker.

"I want—"

"Well, what do you want, you ass?" snapped Wingate.

"A pie!" roared Coker.

"A what?"

"A pie—a steak-and-kidney pie—"

"A pip-pip-pie!" stuttered Wingate.

"You—you want a pie? Are you potty, Coker? Do you think this dormitory is the tuckshop, or what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the Remove.

"I want that pie!" shrieked Coker.

"You want a strait-waistcoat, I should think. Is a junior dorm the place to come to for a pie?" roared Wingate.

"A pie—my steak-and-kidney!" babbled Coker. "That pie—my pie—my pie, you know—"

"Coker's turning pi!" remarked Skinner. "This is Coker's variety of pi-jaw!"

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

Coker was looking anything but "pi" at that moment. He was babbling with wrath and indignation.

"What do you mean, Coker?" shrieked Wingate. "What the merry thump do you mean about a pie?"

"My pie—they've bagged it—Bunter's scooped it—my pie—bagged from my study—that fat scoundrel Bunter—"

Coker got it out.

"Oh!" said Wingate. "Is that it! Bunter, have you bagged a pie from Coker's study?"

"Oh, really, Wingate! I hope I'm not the fellow to bag a fellow's pie! I don't believe Coker had a pie!"

"It was in my study!" roared Coker.

"It's gone! It was that grub-hunting, fat pig—"

"Do you know what's become of Coker's pie, Bunter?"

"I—I haven't the foggiest, Wingate! Perhaps it was the cat! Mrs. Kebble's cat—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled the Remove,



Horace Coker burst into the Rag and glared wrathfully at the Famous Five. "Where's that fat scoundrel Bunter?" he roared. "Where's that podgy pirate? I'm going to burst him!" "I say, you fellows, keep him off!" squeaked Bunter, dodging behind the Removites for safety.

greatly tickled by the idea of the House-dame's cat carrying off a steak-and-kidney pie.

"He had it!" roared Coker. "He's scoffed it, and I'm going—"

"Shut up!" said Wingate. "Look here, did you see Bunter bag your pie?"

"Think he'd come to the study while I was there?" roared Coker. "Of course I didn't see him! Potter saw him sneaking about the passage after prep—"

"Did he see him with the pie?"

"Think he'd let him see him with the pie? Don't be an ass!"

"What?" roared Wingate.

"Ass!" yelled Coker.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Dob Cherry.

The Removites, sitting up in bed, stared on with tense interest. Of all the fellows at Greyfriars probably only Coker of the Fifth would have ventured to call the captain of the school an ass. Even Coker would only have made the venture in a moment of high excitement.

Wingate gripped his ashplant.

"That will do, Coker!" he said tersely. "Not another word!"

"I—"

"Another single word," said Wingate, "and I'll make you bend over, here in this dorm, and give you six! Another syllable—"

Coker's mouth opened.

It shut again!

Great man as he was—the greatest at Greyfriars, in his own estimation—Coker was liable to "six" just like a common mortal. Certainly it was quite unknown for a Fifth Form man to be

ordered to bend over like a fag and take six. Nevertheless, the power was there, and Wingate evidently intended to exercise it if Coker begged for it. His face was grim, and the cane was in his hand. Another word from Coker meant six—before the eyes of all the Remove! Words trembled on Coker's lips, but fortunately they remained unuttered. He gurgled and he glared, and finally he swung away and tramped down the corridor and vanished.

Billy Bunter, at least, was glad to see him go. Wingate turned a grim look on the fat junior.

"If you had Coker's pie, Bunter—"

"Oh, really, Wingate, I—I never knew he had a pie! I hope I'm not the chap to bag a pie! Ask any of these fellows; they'll tell you whether I'm the man to touch a fellow's pie—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate grinned.

"Well, good-night!" he said, and turned out the light and departed.

"Did you bag the pie, Bunter?" asked Skinner.

"I've said I didn't!" hooted Bunter.

"That's evidence that you did!" remarked the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think you fellows might take a fellow's word. A fellow can't miss any grub without thinking of me at once!" said Bunter plaintively. "Just as if I'd touch any fellow's tuck! If you fellows can't take a fellow's word—"

"Well, there's no evidence that Bunter had the pie," said Harry Wharton. "We'll take your word, Bunter."

"I should jolly well think so!" grunted Bunter.

And he laid his bullet head on the pillow. But his deep and echoing snore did not immediately follow. Generally Bunter's snore woke the echoes a very few moments after his head touched the pillow. But this time—for reasons best known to himself—Billy Bunter was remaining awake. And the reasons, possibly, were not wholly unconnected with a pie!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not a Feed!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter sat up in bed.

It was five minutes since the prefect had put out the light and gone. Nobody was asleep in the Remove dormitory yet. The usual buzz of talk ran from bed to bed. Some of the fellows were wondering what had become of their new Form master, Mr. Lagden. He had not been seen during the latter part of the day, and had not returned to the school yet. There was a rumour that he had left; which, if true, was surprising, for Mr. Lagden had only arrived that week to take the place of Henry Samuel Quelch while the latter was confined to "sanny."

"I fancy he's gone," said Skinner. "I heard one of the prefects saying that he had phoned the Head. He wouldn't phone him if he was coming back."

"It's jolly odd if he's gone," said Harry Wharton. "It's odd, too, that that kid Flip of the Second asked me

two or three times whether he was gone or whether he was going. If he's gone—"

"What could that kid know about it?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Blessed if I know, but he seemed to think that Lagden was going. And if he's gone the kid was right."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Can't say I'm jolly sorry he's gone, if he has," remarked Bob Cherry. "I thought he was a decent chap at first, but he's got a beastly bad temper packed away under his jolly nice manners—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"I dare say Bunter knows about it," chuckled Skinner. "Bunter, old bean, has Lagden gone?"

"How should I know, you ass?"

"My hat! Is there anything that Peeping Tom doesn't know? Mean to say you haven't nosed it out?"

"Beast!"

"The beak will have to get another man from the jolly old agency if Lagden's gone," remarked Peter Todd. "We may get another easy day with a prefect instead of a master. So much to the good, my beloved 'earers."

"I say, you fellows, do listen to a chap! I say, any of you fellows feel up to a feed?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Bunter standing a dorm feed! Has your postal order come, old fat bean?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, you fellows make out that I never stand a spread—"

"Well, you jolly well never do!" said Skinner.

"The neverfulness is terrific!"

"Well, I'm jolly well going to stand

one, and chance it!" snorted Bunter. "Not all the Form, of course; there isn't enough to go round. I'm asking my friends."

"Bunter, old man, I'm your friend for life if you're standing a dorm feed," said Skinner. "Trot it out. But I think I'll wait till I see it before I extend the right hand of friendship!"

"I'm jolly well not asking you, Skinner."

"What a loss!" sighed Skinner.

Evidently Harold Skinner did not believe that Bunter was standing a dormitory feed. Indeed, it wanted some believing. Bunter was a determined butter-in at spreads; but it was seldom—very seldom indeed—that he was the founder of the feast. Bunter's view was that a spread was one of those things which it is more blessed to receive than to give.

"You fellows make out," continued Bunter, "that I come to a fellow's feed and never ask a fellow to one! Well, I'll jolly well show you! I'm asking you, Toddy—"

"Thank you for nothing!" said Peter. "Beast! I'm asking you, Wharton, as—"

"Thanks the same as Toddy!" said the captain of the Remove, laughing.

"And you, Bob—"

"My dear old porpoise, it's no good asking me to a spread," said Bob. "I've got no tuck to bring to the jolly old festive board."

"I've got the tuck, you silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "I've got it here in the dorm, hidden under my bed—ready."

"Whose is it?" asked Skinner.

"Beast! You're jolly well not having any, anyhow! I'm asking Toddy and

Wharton and Bob and Nugent and Bull and Inky. I'm leaving you out, Smithy."

"Poor little me!" sighed the Bounder.

"You shied a cushion at me yesterday when I dropped into your study at tea-time," said Bunter.

"I'll shy another if you drop in to-morrow," answered the Bounder.

"Yah!"

There was a sound of Bunter scrambling out of bed. Several of the Removites sat up and took notice. It began to look as if the fat Owl really had a spread to whack out; and the juniors remembered, too, how anxious Bunter had been for bed-time. That had been inexplicable at the time, but if Bunter had a spread hidden ready in the dorm it was fully explained.

"My only hat!" said Skinner, in a tone of wonder. "Is Bunter telling the truth for once?"

"You'll jolly well see!" grunted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, lend me a match! Where's that candle? It's all right now—Wingate won't be coming back. Turn out, you chaps."

A match scratched, and Billy Bunter lighted a candle-end. In the glimmering light his fat face was seen to be keen and eager. The juniors stared at him. Apparently there was, after all, a spread, and Skinner rather repented him that he had been so humorous.

"I say, you fellows, I've got a knife and fork for myself," said Bunter. "You chaps will have to manage with pocket-knives. I say, I fancy you'll like this! It's a real corker!"

"But what is it?" asked Harry. "A cake?"

"Bit better than a cake, old chap. It's a pie!"

"A—a—a what?" gasped Wharton.

"Pie, old chap!"

"A—a—a pie!" Wharton fairly stuttered. "What—what—what sort of a pie?"

"Steak-and-kidney, old fellow."

"S-s-steak-and-kidney!" gurgled the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, old chap! Specially sent from Bunter Court!" said the fat Owl. "Our cook made it specially to send to me. I've told you fellows what a splendid cook we've got at Bunter Court. French chef, you know—the pater pays him an immense salary."

"A—a—a steak-and-kidney pie!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat!"

Bunter stooped and groped under his bed.

A large bundle, wrapped in newspapers, came to light. Bunter unwrapped the newspapers. A pie was revealed.

It was a large pie—a very large pie—in a dish; and it looked a very nice pie! Dormitory feeds were not infrequent at Greyfriars School; but it was seldom that such an article as steak-and-kidney pie figured in a dorm feed. On this occasion it was the only article in the menu. It was a large pie; but there was only the pie—merely that, and nothing more!

The juniors gazed at it.

They did not need telling now what had become of Coker's pie.

"Look at it!" said Bunter proudly. "Some pie, what? You fellows won't make out after this that I never stand a spread, I hope! It isn't every chap at Greyfriars who pays twelve-and-six for a big pie to whack out among his friends, I can tell you!"

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

"Did your pater's French chef charge twelve-and-six for making the pie?"

"Oh! I—I—I mean—I mean, it—it's just as good as those pies that Mrs.



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Mimble charges twelve-and-six for! I say, you fellows—"

"You fat villain!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"That's Coker's pie!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You bagged that pie from Coker's study!" roared Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"That's why he wanted to get up to dorm!" chortled Skinner. "He had Coker's pie hidden under his bed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, that isn't Coker's pie, you know," said Bunter, in alarm. "Don't you run away with that idea! Think Coker of the Fifth is the only chap at Greyfriars with a steak-and-kidney-pie?"

"Where did it come from, then?" demanded Toddy.

"Bunter Court, old chap. Came in a hamper this afternoon—"

"Oh, my hat! And it's just a coincidence that Coker's missed a steak-and-kidney pie, while you've got one in this dorm?" gasped Peter.

"That's it, old chap. One of those coincidences, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at, you fellows! I've asked you to a feed!" said Bunter warmly. "I could have scoffed this pie on my own! I didn't leave it till after lights out because I knew that beast Coker would come rooting in my study after me—"

"It's Coker's pie!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Not at all, old chap! Of course, steak-and-kidney pies are much alike. If Coker saw this pie, he might think it was his. He's suspicious, you know. Not that I believe Coker had a pie! I wasn't going to his study when Potter saw me in the Fifth Form passage. I wasn't there when he saw me—"

"You fat villain!" gasped Wharton. "We've ragged Coker bald-headed for coming after you, and you had the pie all the time!"

"I keep on telling you that this isn't Coker's pie! He says he had a pie; but my opinion is that Coker isn't truthful. If he had a pie, it wasn't this pie; but my belief is that he never had a pie. Coker's rather a madman, you know; he may have fancied that he had a pie."

Harry Wharton & Co. turned out of bed. But they did not turn out to join in the feed. It was undoubtedly a scrumptious pie; but it did not tempt the Famous Five. They were rather more particular about the rights of property than William George Bunter was. They surrounded the Owl of the Remove, with grim looks.

Bunter blinked at them uneasily. As he had said, steak-and-kidney pies were much alike; and he saw no reason why they should suppose that this pie was Coker's pie! But it was only too clear that they did suppose so.

"I say, you fellows, get your pocket-knives—"

"You fat rascal!"

"Is that what you call gratitude to a fellow for asking you to a spread, Wharton—"

"Let that pie alone, you fat villain!"

"I'm going to carve it— Yaroooh! Leggo!" roared Bunter, in wrath and indignation. "Leggo my neck, you beast! You're jolly well not going to scoff that pie and leave me out! After I took all the risk—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean, after that pie was specially sent from Bunter Court—"

"Bump him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Yoooooop!"

Billy Bunter sat down with a heavy bump, and roared. Harry Wharton

picked up the pie and wrapped the newspapers round it again.

"I say, you fellows, don't let them scoff the pie!" howled Bunter. "I say, I'll whack it out among the whole Form. There! Don't let those beasts scoff it—"

"You pernicious porpoise!" yelled Wharton. "We're not going to scoff it, you blithering bandersnatch! We're going to return it where it belongs."

"Oh crikey! You—you silly idiot!" gasped Bunter. "You're thinking of wasting that scrumptious pie on Coker? I say, it's a shame to waste a lovely pie like that! 'Waste not, want not,' you know."

"It's Coker's, you fat villain!"

"It isn't! I say, you fellows, I think you might take a fellow's word! I keep saying— Yaroooh! If you kick me again, Bob Cherry, I'll— Yooooop!"

WHO'S READY FOR A LAUGH

at this amusing joke, which earns for Horace Gee, of 166, Long Street, Dordon, Tamworth, one of this week's useful

POCKET-KNIVES?



Kind Old Lady: "What are you crying for, Tommy?"
Tommy: "I don't know what to do. Mother won't let me stand on my head, and father grumbles 'cause I wear my shoes out!"

Now then, you fellows, get busy and try to win one of these useful prizes!

"After all it's not Coker's pie now," remarked Skinner. "Possession is nine points of the law. Why bother about the tenth? Let's whack it out."

"Shut up, Skinner!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"This pie is going back to Coker," said Harry Wharton. "We can't take it back now; but I'll put it in a safe place till morning."

"I say, old chap, I'll put it in a safe place, if you like!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. There was no doubt that Billy Bunter would have put the pie in a safe place—a very safe place—if his fat hands had been allowed to deal with it.

"Shut up, you fat owl!"

"I hope I'm to be trusted with a pie—yaroooh! Leave off kicking me, you beast!"

"Kick that fat villain back into bed!" said Harry. "I'll shove the pie into the box-room at the end of the corridor, and we can tip Coker where to find it in the morning."

"I say, you fellows— Whooop!"

Billy Bunter was loath to lose sight of the pie. But he scrambled back into bed in a great hurry. Four active feet helped him there, while the captain of the Remove carried the pie away.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows—don't let that beast take that pie away—it's my pie, you know—our cook made it specially in Coker's study—I mean, at Bunter Court—I say, it's a lovely pie—a twelve-and-six pie—you fellows know what Mrs. Mimble's steak-and-kidney pies are like—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton left the dormitory with the pie. He returned in a few minutes—without the pie!

Bunter blinked at him.

"Look here, you beast, where's that pie?" he gasped.

"Find out, fathead!"

"I say, if you've scoffed it—"

"What?" roared Wharton, while the Removites yelled.

"I say, you fellows, it's beastly mean of Wharton to take that pie out of the dorm to scoff it all on his own—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Wharton.

Words failed the captain of the Remove. He grabbed a pillow from his bed.

Swipe! Swipe! Swipe!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Now shut up, you fat frump!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Harry Wharton blew out the candle, and turned in. The Removites settled down to sleep at last. But Bunter did not sleep. He was hungry! The mere thought of that scrumptious pie made him hungry! Like Rachel of old, Billy Bunter mourned for that which was lost, and could not be comforted. It was a quarter of an hour at least before Bunter's snore rumbled through the dormitory. And even then he did not, as usual, sleep like Rip Van Winkle. That scrumptious pie haunted him in his dreams, and for once his fat slumbers were fitful.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Sammy is Not Taking Any!

BILLY BUNTER sat up in bed. He groped for his spectacles, jammed them on his fat little nose, and blinked up and down the dusky dormitory.

All was silent and still.

What time it was, Bunter did not know, but he knew that it must be very late. As a matter of fact, it was past midnight.

At that hour, as a rule, Billy Bunter was deep in the embrace of Morpheus. Now he was wide awake.

Bunter was hungry!

Several times he had awakened, and composed himself to sleep again. This time he did not compose himself. The thought of the pie in the box-room was an irresistible attraction.

In the morning, that pie was to be returned to its owner; it would be gone from Bunter's gaze like a beautiful dream! It was now or never—and Bunter had made up his fat mind. He disliked intensely getting out of a warm bed on a cold night—he disliked dark passages and deserted box-rooms at midnight's witching hour—but his fat heart yearned for Coker's pie. And at last he crawled out of bed, put on his slippers, and crept to the door.

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He crept away with great caution.

All the beasts were asleep, but if any of them awakened, they were quite likely to collar Bunter and heave him back into bed. In fact, if any of the Famous Five awakened they were fairly certain to do so, and to pillow him into the bargain.

Bunter's fat heart beat as he tiptoed to the door. He almost gasped with relief when he reached it.

Silently he opened the door.

A chill draught from the passage caught him, and he shivered. But he stepped out, and drew the door softly shut behind him.

The passage was dark and cold. It was far from inviting. But there was a happy picture in Bunter's mind—he saw himself sitting up in bed, the scrumptious pie on his knees, tucking away at steak and kidney and delicious crust! That beatific vision urged him on.

Silently he trod along the passage, past the door of the Second Form dormitory, where the fags slept the sleep of the just. Billy Bunter paused as he was passing that door.

The darkness, the silence, and the faint indefinable sounds of midnight that stirred the silence, worried Bunter. The whole House was buried in slumber, not a light gleamed from a single window in all Greyfriars School, and there was something eerie, something unnerving, in being the only fellow awake in the great building. The thought of burglars came uncomfortably into Bunter's fat mind.

He blinked uneasily through the shadows. Every faint sound from the midnight silence made his fat heart jump. And the shadowy box-room, at the end of the shadowy passage, was more unpleasant still. Billy Bunter's nerve, never very strong, was getting extremely shaky. But a fellow with stronger nerves than Bunter's might have disliked wandering about dark and lonely passages in the middle of the night.

Owing to those beasts, he had had to make the venture alone. But he remembered his minor in the Second Form, and paused at the door. Sammy Bunter was as keen on a feed as his major. Bunter, as a rule, cared very little for Sammy's society, but it was a case of any port in a storm. He would have been glad of any company just then. The pie was an enormous one—there was plenty for two—even two of the tribe of Bunter. The Owl of the Remove resolved to call Sammy.

He opened the door of the Second Form dormitory, and peered in.

In the dim, wintry starlight from the high windows, he dimly made out the row of beds.

He knew which was Sammy's bed—next to Flip's. But if he had not known it, Sammy's snore would have guided him. Bunter minor had a snore very like Bunter major's.

Billy Bunter stepped softly into the dormitory. He did not want to wake a whole swarm of the fags. Dicky Nugent, or Gatty or Myers, would be quite likely to "bolster" any Remove man they found butting into their dorm, without even inquiring what he wanted there.

The fat owl groped his way to his minor's bedside. Dimly in the gloom he made out a fat face, with the eyes shut and mouth open.

Sammy was fast asleep—as Billy would have been, but for the haunting thought of Coker's pie. He snored peacefully—if not melodiously.

Bunter stretched out a fat hand, and shook him lightly.

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"Moooooooooooooh!" came sleepily from Sammy.

Shake!

"Ooooooooooooooh!"

Shake!

"Wake up, you snoring little beast!" whispered Bunter.

Sammy's eyes opened.

He blinked.

"Oooogh! Grooogh! Wha-a-a-t——" stuttered Sammy.

"It's all right, you young ass——"

"Look here, you silly idiot, wharrer you waking a man up for? If that's young Nugent——"

"It's me, you little idiot!"

"Who's 'me,' you silly fathead?" grunted Bunter minor.

"Me—Billy!" breathed the Owl.

"Oh crikey!"

Sammy Bunter sat up, and blinked at the dim, shadowy form of his major, in amazement.

"You silly chump!" he said, in measured tones. "What's the matter with you? What the dickens have you come here for? What are you doing out of your dorm? Waking a man up! I was just dreaming about a Christmas pudding——"

"Get up, old chap," whispered Bunter. "I want you!"

"You silly owl, you can wait! Catch me getting up!"

"There's a pie!" breathed Bunter.

"I've got a pie——"

"Gammon!"

"I've got it in the box-room, old chap! I've called you specially to whack it out with you—a lovely pie——"

"Yes—I can see you whacking out a pie with anybody!" hissed Sammy.

"You fat chump, do you think you can pull my leg like that! What have you woke me up for, blow you?"

"A scrumptious pie——"

Sammy Bunter made a movement to sit up. Billy Bunter concluded that he was getting out of bed. But that conclusion was an error. Sammy was groping for his pillow.

Sammy, sad to relate, did not place in his elder brother the unquestioning faith that a younger brother ought to place in an elder. Perhaps he knew him too well.

So far from believing that Bunter had a pie, which he was anxious to whack out, Sammy did not believe that Billy would have whacked out a pie, even if he had had one!

His belief was that Billy was pulling his leg, and to be awakened on a cold night, from a gorgeous dream of Christmas pudding, for the sake of an idiotic jape, stirred Sammy's deepest wrath.

Sitting up in bed, he grasped his pillow, and fixed a deadly glare on William George.

"Buck up, old man!" breathed Bunter. "Don't make a row and wake up the other little beasts! I—yaroooooooooh!"

Thud!

The pillow, wielded in both Sammy's fat hands, landed on a fat face, utterly unexpectedly, and Billy Bunter staggered back, and collapsed on the next bed, with a howl.

"There!" gasped Sammy. "Take that, you funny idiot—and come back for some more, if you like!"

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Wow! Oooh!"

"Ere, what's up?" came a voice from the bed he had collapsed on—the voice of Flip of the Second. The Greyfriars waif sat up, staring. "Ere, I say, what's this game, larking with a bloke, wot?"

"It's my silly idiot of a major!" said Sammy. "Give him a whop!"

"Ow! You ungrateful little beast!" gasped Bunter. "You jolly well shan't have any of the pie now——"

"Come and have another swipe!" jeered Sammy.

"I've a jolly good mind——"

"That Master Bunter!" asked Flip, peering in amazement through the gloom. "That you, Master Bunter?"

"Ow! Yes!" Bunter staggered off the bed. "I'll give you a jolly good hiding to-morrow, Sammy. I'd give you one now only I don't want to wake up the other little pigs. I——"

"Come and have another swipe, you fat chump!" invited Sammy, with his pillow ready for action.

Billy Bunter gave him a glare. He was tempted to hurl himself on Sammy and smite him hip and thigh. But it was no time for vengeance—the pie came first. And already some of the fags were stirring. Bunter did not want to wake up a hornet's-nest.

He turned to Flip's bed. Flip was not so keen on pies, especially in the middle of the night, as the Bunters; but though a pie certainly would not have tempted him out of bed and out of his dormitory, his devotion to Bunter might have that effect. The Greyfriars waif had not forgotten, and was never likely to forget, that he owed it to Billy Bunter that he was no longer a vagrant and a "pincher" in Puggins' Alley.

"Flip, you come with me, kid!" whispered Bunter. "I—I want somebody—I mean, I've got a pie——"

"Oh, sir," said Flip, staring at him, "you'll get into a row being out of your dormitory this 'ere time of night——"

"It's a steak-and-kidney pie——"

"You'll get into a row, sir——"

Flip was anxious about his podgy patron, not about a pie.

"Look here, you cheeky little beast, will you come or not?" hissed Bunter.

"Oh, yessir! Anything you like, sir!" said Flip obediently.

He turned out of bed.

Flip's devotion to Billy Bunter was rather a source of entertainment to the Greyfriars fellows who noticed it. But it was very real. It was strictly against the rules to break dormitory bounds; and Flip, since he had been at Greyfriars, had carefully controlled his vagrant instincts and observed the rules. But no risk was too great to be taken for "Master Bunter."

Flip hurriedly slipped on his clothes. Sammy Bunter blinked through the gloom.

"I—I say, Billy, is there really a pie?" he ejaculated.

It dawned on Sammy that perhaps he had been a little too hasty.

"There jolly well is, and you jolly well shan't have any, you little beast!" said Bunter.

"Yah! I don't believe there's a pie! Catch you whacking out a pie!" said Sammy derisively. And he settled down again.

Flip followed Billy Bunter from the dormitory. The door closed behind them.

In the long, wide corridor Flip eyed his podgy patron curiously.

"What's the game, sir?" he asked.

"This way!" answered Bunter.

"Keep close to me! Don't make a row! Shut up, see?"

Flip obediently shut up.

Billy Bunter groped on through the shadows with Flip at his heels. It was dark and lonely and eerie, and Bunter much better with human companionship. In fact, he was quite his fat self



"My hat!" ejaculated Wingate, staring in amazement at the heap of humanity on the floor of the Rag. "Stop that!" But the Removites were deaf to the voice of the captain of the school. Their attention was occupied in ragging Coker, who was sprawling and struggling beneath them.

again when he reached the door of the box-room and opened it.

The room was dark. The only light was a glimmer of stars at a small window which looked out on the sloping roof of a lower apartment.

Billy Bunter groped in, caught his shin on a box, and squeaked.

"Ow!"

"Urt, yourself, sir?" said Flip anxiously.

"Wow!"

Bunter rubbed a fat shin.

"Shut the door and don't jaw!" he grunted.

The fag shut the door softly.

"Got any matches?" whispered Bunter.

"No, sir."

"You silly little idiot! You might have thought of bringing some matches when we've got to look for something in the dark."

Flip made no reply to that. Perhaps he thought that Bunter might have thought of bringing matches, if matches were wanted. But it was not for the wail to argue with his podgy patron.

"We've got to find the pie!" grunted Bunter. "Look here, Wharton hid my pie here for a lark, see—a big steak-and-kidney pie that I had from home to-day. The silly idiot hid it here for a silly lark, see? You look for it."

"Suttingly, sir!" said Flip.

Billy Bunter sat on the edge of a box. It was not easy to look for a pie, or anything else, in the dim glimmer of stars from the little window. The task being a difficult one, Bunter considered that it might as well be left to Flip.

"Got it?" he inquired, after a minute or two.

"I can't see any blooming pie, sir!" came Flip's whisper.

"Well, find it, you ass!"

"Yessir! You don't know where the bloke put it?"

"I shouldn't want you to find it if I did! Don't be a silly idiot!"

"Yessir!"

And Flip of the Second continued to root about the shadowy box-room for the pie, while Bunter sat and blinked at him and grunted impatiently.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Man at the Window!

"O H swipes!"

It was a sudden, startled, suppressed ejaculation from the fag.

"Got it?" breathed Bunter.

"Quiet, sir!" whispered Flip.

"What—"

"Quiet!"

For a quarter of an hour or more Flip had been rooting about the box-room. He had not found the pie. Wharton had left the pie in the box-room till morning; Bunter knew that. But it dawned on him that possibly the beast had suspected that Bunter might not wait till morning. Anyhow, it was evident that he had placed it somewhere out of sight—probably in one of the empty boxes. Bunter had not expected to have a long search before him, and he grunted with angry impatience from moment to moment. It was cold and chilly in the box-room, and the fat Owl was anxious to get back to bed—with the pie.

Flip grasped his arm and pressed it in warning. Billy Bunter quaked. If a prefect or a beak found him out of his dormitory at that hour of the night it meant a licking for Bunter—and no pie! He supposed that Flip had heard some sound of alarm.

"What is it?" he breathed. "What—what—"

"Look, sir!" whispered Flip.

He pointed towards the little window.

Bunter, in amazement, blinked in that direction. Certainly a prefect or a beak was not likely to arrive that way.

He gave a violent start.

There was a black silhouette against the dim starlight. Outside the window the head and shoulders of a man blocked the light.

Bunter's fat heart gave a wild jump. His teeth chattered.

His eyes almost bulged through his spectacles as he stared at that dark shadow at the window.

"Ooooooogh!" he gurgled.

He half-rose and sank back on the box again in sheer terror. His bulging eyes were fixed on the window.

There was no sound. But a man was standing precariously on the sloping roof below, and his head and shoulders showed above the window-sill. His face was close to the glass, though of his features nothing could be seen; the head was simply a black shadow against the starlight.

But that it was a burglar admitted of no doubt. Nobody else could be supposed to be attempting a surreptitious entrance into Greyfriars at that hour of

the night. As Bunter blinked in terror he saw a hand and arm rise into view, groping over the outside of the window. There was the faintest of sounds.

Billy Bunter shuddered with terror. The man outside was groping over the window—seeking entrance.

Bunter's teeth clicked together audibly.

Flip seemed quite cool. The Greyfriars waif had had a very different training from Bunter's. In his old days at Puggins' Alley he had been used to turn night into day. Such incidents as this had been far from unknown to the hapless little waif.

Bunter tried to stagger up again. He sat down once more. His fat legs refused to support him.

"Ooooooooooh!" he gurgled, in sheer terror.

Flip pressed his arm again.

"Quiet, sir!" he whispered.

"It's a bub-bub-bub-bub—" gurgled Bunter.

"Eh?"

"It's a bub-bub-burglar—"

Bunter made an effort to heave himself from the box. Coker's pie was forgotten now. The sight of the dark figure at the window drove even the scrumptious steak-and-kidney pie from Bunter's mind. From the bottom of his fat heart he repented him of having left his bed in the Remove dormitory. His hair stood on end. His legs quaked under him, and his fat knees knocked together. He leaned on Flip, and the little fag braced himself under the weight.

"It's alright, sir—" whispered Flip.

"Ow!"

"He won't get in yet, sir—he won't get that winder open in a 'urry, sir!" muttered Flip reassuringly. He was watching the shadowy hand that glided over the outside of the sashes. "Don't you be afeared, sir."

Billy Bunter gave the window a terrified blink. But he realised that the fag was right—the window was secured, and the man outside had to deal with the fastenings before he could enter. He realised, too, that the man could not, as he had dreaded, see him; the interior of the room was too dark for the man at the window to see anything through the glass. Indeed, had the man guessed that anyone was there, it was pretty certain that he would not have remained. It was because he was assured that no one was there, that the midnight prowler was seeking to enter. "Safe as 'ouses, sir!" murmured Flip.

"Let's get out of it before he sees us," breathed Bunter.

"He can't see nothing, sir—he ain't a blooming cat! Nor he can't 'ear nothing till he gets the winder open!"

"C-c-come on!" gasped Bunter.

"Let's get out and—and wake the House—and—give the alarm, you know! C-c-come on!"

"Old on, sir!" whispered Flip.

"You young idiot, come on, I tell you!" hissed Bunter. "He—he will be in in two ticks—"

"He won't, sir!" said Flip. "He ain't even found the fastening yet, sir, and then he's got to get it open! And he won't get in, neither, sir."

"He will, you young idiot—"

"He won't, sir," said Flip coolly. "'Cause why; soon as he gets that winder up he's getting a cosh on the phiz—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"And I'm going to hand it over, sir!"

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He's standing on a slope, and a cosh that he ain't looking for will send him rolling!"

Flip chuckled softly in the darkness. Bunter blinked at him—blankly.

The Greyfriars waif was perfectly cool—cool as ice! Bunter was trembling in every fat limb; the shadowy form at the window struck terror to his very soul. But in the gloom he could discern a grin on Flip's chubby, grubby face. It dawned on the amazed Bunter that Flip was enjoying this strange and terrifying situation. Perhaps the episode recalled strange and lawless happenings in his vagrant life in Puggins' Alley—episodes that the queer little fag remembered not wholly with regret.

"B-b-but—" stammered Bunter.

"You keep cool, sir! We ain't in no danger. 'Sides, you being so plucky you wouldn't care if we was."

Bunter gave the fag a suspicious blink. But Flip was not speaking sarcastically. He believed that Bunter was plucky—he believed all sorts of things about Bunter that would have made any other Greyfriars fellow smile. Certainly, the little waif's faith in his podgy patron was able to stand severe tests; it really was not easy to give Bunter credit for pluck when he was trembling to such an extent that it shook the fag he was leaning on. But Flip's sturdy faith stood the strain.

"Oh—um—yes—" gasped Bunter.

The fat junior pulled himself together a little. The dark figure was still at the window, on the other side of the room, black against the pale starlight; but there was no sound yet of the window opening. Bunter could understand that the danger was not immediate; he was close to the door, and there was nothing to stop his retreat, except the shaking of his own fat, terrified limbs. And somehow, the little fag's simple belief that he had pluck, infused a little pluck into Bunter's podgy breast. He did not want to give himself away before the only fellow at Greyfriars who believed in him. He tried hard to pull himself together and still the shaking of his nerves.

Flip, staring towards the dark patch at the window, was grinning.

"That bloke'll be surprised when I cosh him!" he murmured. "It's all right, sir—wait till I hand him a one!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I— Look here, you young ass, it's too jolly risky! We'd better get out—quick—"

"Safe as 'ouses, sir!" Flip's grasp closed tighter on Bunter's fat arm. "Old your row, sir, or he'll 'ear you now! He's getting that winder open."

Bunter shuddered.

There was a sharp creak from the window.

It was caused by some instrument that was pushed between the old sashes, evidently for the purpose of forcing back the catch.

"Keep quiet, sir!" breathed Flip.

He released Bunter's arm, dropped on his hands and knees, and crawled across the room towards the window.

Bunter blinked after him, rooted to the floor.

His hand was on the door now, but he did not go. He stood rooted, watching the barely visible form of the fag creeping towards the window, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles.

Flip reached the window and crouched below it.

Bunter still watched—fascinated.

Click!

Sharply the catch on the window snapped back.

Creak!

The lower sash was forced up from

outside. Inch by inch it rose, and the cold winter night wind blew in. Bunter shuddered. Still he stood rooted, his hand on the door, watching, fascinated.

Slowly the sash rose; the head and shoulders of the man outside were at an open window now. The head was tilted in.

What happened next passed like a flash.

From beneath the window Flip rose suddenly, and as he rose his fist shot up, jolting a terrific jab on the night-prowler's jaw. Flip was small, but he was strong, and there was plenty of beef in that sudden jab on the midnight marauder's jaw, and it took the man utterly by surprise. He went backwards as if he had been shot.

Crash!

The crash of the falling man on the sloping roof below the window outside was followed by a sound of rolling, scrambling, scuffling.

The slope was not steep, but the man was rolling down it helplessly, and in a second or two he had rolled off the edge over the gutter.

Thud! Crash!

It was a heavy fall—in a laurel bush below.

Flip slammed the sash down, and shot the catch. Bunter heard him give a breathless chuckle.

"Got him, sir! Coshed him proper!"

But Bunter stayed for no more. He tore out of the box-room and rushed along the passage, yelling:

"I say, you fellows! Help! Burglars! Wake up! Oh crikey!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

An Alarm in the Night!

HARRY WHARTON sat up in bed.

"What the thump—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What the ridiculous dickens—" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

There were pattering footsteps in the passage and a yelling voice. Far and wide rang that yell:

"Ow! Help! Burglars! I say, you fellows—burglars! Help!"

"That's Bunter!" gasped Peter Todd.

"Bunter! The fat idiot's out of the dorm—"

"After the pie!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat!"

"He'll wake the House at this rate—"

"Help! Burglars! Burglars! Help!" came the yell from the passage. The door of the Remove dormitory was hurled open.

Harry Wharton was already out of bed. He ran towards the door to switch on the light. He was in time to meet Bunter as he charged in.

Crash!

"Ooooooooooh!" spluttered Billy Bunter as he rolled over. "Oooooop!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Wharton, as he sat down. "Oh, my hat! You potty idiot—you benighted rhinoceros! Ow! Ow! Oh!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Oh crikey!"

"You silly owl!" yelled the Bounder.

"You'll have the beaks up here soon, you potty porpoise!"

"Ow! Help! It's burglars—ow!"

"Shut up, you fat idiot!"

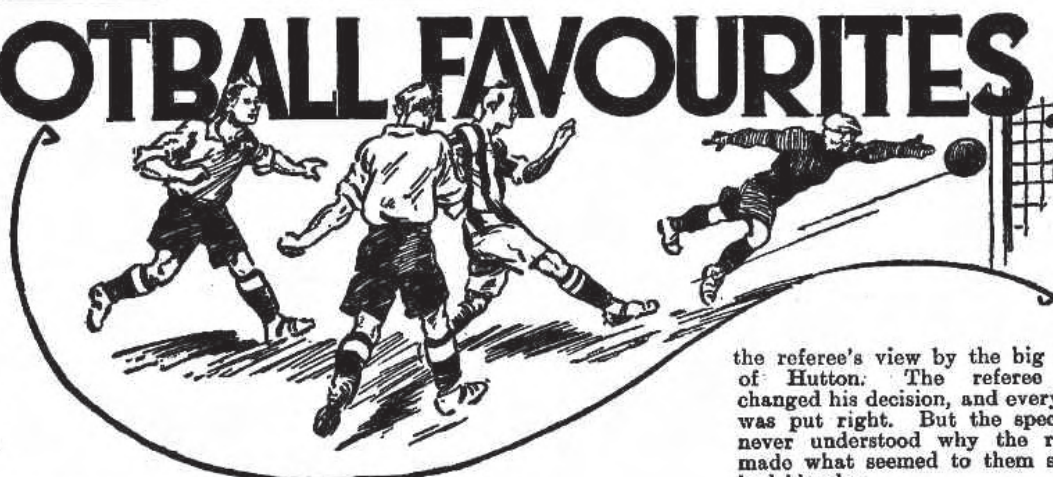
Wharton staggered to his feet. He reached the switch by the door, and turned the light on.

Bunter sprawled and roared. The captain of the Remove bent over him, grasped him by a fat ear, and helped

(Continued on page 12.)

FOOTBALL FAVOURITES/

No. 16.
**JOCK
HUTTON,**
the
International
Full-back,
who pulls his
weight for
**BLACKBURN
ROVERS F.C.**



the referee's view by the big frame of Hutton. The referee duly changed his decision, and everything was put right. But the spectators never understood why the referee made what seemed to them such a bad blunder.

A Smile That Won't Come Off!

IF you have not seen Jock Hutton, the full-back of Blackburn Rovers, you have missed one of the sights of football. In some respects he is the most interesting personality in the game to-day. In the first place he can properly be described as Britain's burliest back. Indeed, there is no player in any position actively engaged in first-class football to-day who is as big as Jock.

If Hutton were to go on Blackpool Pier with a stock of pennies, he would probably break the weighing-machines down one by one. You see, Jock—everybody calls him that—weighs as near fifteen stone as dash it, when he hasn't any clothes on.

Earlier in the present season Hutton was not a regular member of the Blackburn Rovers' first team; but when the side were doing badly he was restored to his place at right-back, and forthwith there was an upward jump in the fortunes of the side. Whenever I see Hutton I am convinced anew of the truth of the old proverb—laugh and grow big. Hutton just laughs his way through life, and doesn't mind a bit when his big bulk causes amusement among the followers of football. When Jock comes on to the field at a strange ground the spectators open their eyes wide at sight of him. Then they laugh a little at the idea of such a big fellow being a first-class footballer. But Jock doesn't mind a bit. He will have his little joke with the spectators and with his opponents, who soon find out that he is a real footballer.

A Difficult Situation!

NOT long ago I was present at a match in which Hutton was playing. The spectators chipped him nearly all the time. During a lull in the game, when it was becoming a bit slow, somebody in the crowd shouted in a loud voice: "Come on, Carnera!" Hutton put a finger behind one ear to press it in the direction of the voice, and replied: "Sorry, I can hear a word!" There is quick wit in the Blackburn back.

I asked him on the very last occasion when I saw him playing whether he minded the chaffing. Not a bit of it. "It is all good humour, and I don't see why the spectators at a football match should not amuse themselves. After all, they are paying my wages, aren't they?" Hutton went on to tell me that he knew footballers in Scotland who went on to the field with cotton-wool in their ears so that they should remain in ignorance of the remarks of the crowd. "But those fellows miss a good bit of the fun of the game," was Jock's comment.

Naturally, Jock takes outsizes in football attire, and I recall a match about a year ago in which this presented a little difficulty. In the course of the game Jock's pants got rather badly torn, so he had to leave the field for a change. Unfortunately the trainer of the side had not thought of such an emergency, and although there were several pairs of spare knickers about the dressing-room, there was not a pair of white ones—usually worn by the Blackburn Rovers players—which would fit Jock. A hunt had to be made, and eventually, by great good luck, a pair of black knickers were found just big enough to fit Jock. It was really funny to see the back playing with black knickers while the rest of the Blackburn team were wearing white knickers.

One other story. I remember a referee who got into real trouble one day because he disallowed a goal, on the ground of offside, scored against the Blackburn side. The whistler could not understand the hullabaloo. He was certain he was right. While all the shouting was going on, however, big Jock Hutton moved. And then the referee saw that there was another Rovers back nearer to the goal than Jock. This other player had been hidden completely from

A Canny Scot!

THERE is another reason why this defender of the Rovers is the centre of many jokes. He used to play for Aberdeen, but he denies most strenuously the story that he was once one of the fourteen Aberdonians who were injured in one taxicab smash. Indeed, when it is necessary for the Blackburn players to have taxicabs to drive them from a station to the ground at which they are playing, you will see the other players carefully walk away and make a show of leaving Jock with a taxi all to himself.

"Scotsmen make good footballers because they start playing when they are very young," is among the truisms which I received in a talk with Hutton. Born at Motherwell, he started playing football as soon as he could walk, and just kept on playing. Eventually he found himself in the Bellshill Athletic side. While there, he had an idea that centre-forward was his best natural position. Like most other boys, he thought that part of the glory of the game—the chief part—was to be found in the scoring of goals. He still considered himself to be a forward when he was signed on by Aberdeen—his first big club.

There was a man at Aberdeen, however—the trainer—who had other ideas concerning Jock's usefulness on the football field. "There was nothing particularly brilliant about this trainer's idea," said Hutton. "He looked at me, weighed me up, and then said: 'Why, you ought to be a full-back, not a centre-forward.' And a full-back I have been ever since."

A Credit To His Country!

IN 1926 the Rovers paid something like four thousand pounds for Hutton's transfer from Aberdeen, but before then the mighty man had played for Scotland in an International match against Ireland. This was in 1923, and there was a bit of luck attached to the distinction. It is the habit of the Scottish team selectors, in picking an International side, to have a reserve man for each position. Jock was reserve full-back, but three days before the match was due to be played another Jock—Marshall, of Middlesbrough—had to cry off owing to an injury. Accordingly, Hutton took his place, and at the age of twenty-two played for Scotland against Ireland at Belfast.

A bit of advice given to Hutton before he started on the journey to play in that game is worth passing on, and may come in useful to some of my young readers who get a big lift in football one of these days. Jock told his manager that he was a bit nervous about the coming ordeal. "You'll be quite all right," said the manager of the Aberdeen side. "Forget that it is an International game, and play as if you were with your own team on your own doorstep."

Jock played well enough to get the more coveted cap for the game against England later on, and, in all, he has appeared ten times in "pukka" Internationals for his native country.

It can be said of Hutton that he never uses his weight unfairly; but, of course, if he charges an opponent, then the opponent knows about it.

As a player he is quite sprightly, good in the tackle, and when he makes up his mind to kick the ball as hard as he can—well, take it from me, the ball moves a very long way from Jock's boot!

In the summer-time he often goes back to his native land to do some fishing, but he says he can't be off serious training for any considerable length of time. A great character, Jock. Football would be a brighter and jollier game if all taking part in it were like Jock!

JIMMY THE ONE!

(Continued from page 10.)

him up. Bunter yelled as he was helped.

"Ow! Leggo! Beast! It's burglars—"

"You fat dummy! What have you been out of the dorm for?" roared Wharton. "After that pie, you podgy pirate?"

"Ow! No! I—I never thought of the pie! Besides, it was my pie! I say, you fellows, lock the door! He may get in any minute! I saw him—"

"You silly owl, you've been frightened in the dark—"

"It's all right, old fat man," said Peter Todd. "There was only one burglar—and he was after a pie—"

"Hullo, hullo, hullo! Who's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as Flip's grinning face looked in at the open door.

"Little me!" grinned Flip. "It's alright—I coshed him proper, and he ain't getting in, he ain't! I fancy he's a-picking of hisself up and counting his bones to see if they're broke!"

"Who?" yelled Bob.

"The bloke didn't give his name," answered Flip cheerfully. "He didn't stop to 'and in his card!"

"It was a burglar!" yelled Bunter. "We—we stopped him, but he may get in somewhere else—"

"Ketch him!" grinned Flip. "I'll bet he's hitting the road about now, sir, fast as he can!"

"But—but what—" gasped Wharton. "You mean to say there was somebody—a burglar—"

"Jest that, sir!" said Flip. "But he won't come back, you can bet your Sunday 'at on that!"

"I say, you fellows, call the Head—call the masters—call the prefects—call the police—"

"Call out the jolly old Army, what?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Beast! I tell you—"

"Well, there's going to be a row now," remarked the Bounder. "Bunter's brought down the house this time!"

There were footsteps in the corridor, and flashing lights. Bunter's yells had awakened Greyfriars far and wide. Wingate of the Sixth, half-dressed, was the first to arrive. Coker of the Fifth was close behind, and after them came more seniors, and Mr. Prout, and Mr. Capper, and Mr. Hacker. Three or four servants brought up the rear.

"What's this row?" roared Wingate, wrathfully. "What are you young rascals all out of bed for? What—"

"Burglars!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "You young ass—"

"Where?" demanded Coker of the Fifth. "If there's a burglar, I'll jolly soon collar him! Where?"

"What—what is all this?" boomed the deep and fruity voice of Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth. "This—this unprecedented disturbance in the small hours—"

"The Remove!" said Mr. Hacker to Mr. Capper, with a shrug of the shoulders. "The Remove, of course! Utterly out of hand now that their Form master is in the sanatorium—"

"Oh, quite!" said Mr. Capper. "Really, Mr. Lagden ought to be here to deal with them. Is Mr. Lagden still asleep through all this uproar?"

"I believe he is away from the school to-night—"

"Very odd!" said Mr. Capper.

"Very odd, indeed, as he has only just joined the staff, in a temporary capacity! This unruly Form is, of

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course, taking advantage of the fact—"

"I demand to know the cause of this disturbance!" boomed Prout. "I have been awakened—disturbed—by an unparalleled uproar in the small hours of the night—"

"It was a burglar, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Nonsense!"

"It was a blooming burglar, sir!" said Flip.

"What? What? Stuff and nonsense!"

"I hit him a cosh on the jaw—"

"What? What?"

"And I dessay he's broke something a-rolling off the roof," said Flip cheerfully, "and if he has, he can be picked up and took to the coppers, sir!"

"What—what does this extraordinary boy mean?" boomed Prout. "What does he mean by a cosh? What is a cosh?"

"Explain yourself, kid," said Wingate, eyeing the fag curiously. "If you will let the boy speak, sir—"

"Nonsense!" boomed Prout. "But let the boy speak! Speak, boy! What do you mean? Explain yourself at once!"

Flip cheerfully explained—to wondering ears! Billy Bunter chimed in with breathless corroboration. Mr. Prout snorted, in evident disbelief. But Wingate exchanged a word with Gwynne and North of the Sixth, and they hurried away and ran downstairs.

Mr. Prout glared at the waif. He had been awakened at one in the morning, and he did not like being awakened at one in the morning, and he did not believe that there had been a burglar. That, in Mr. Prout's opinion, was a fantastic fancy, or a reckless invention. Mr. Twigg, the master of the Second, had arrived on the scene by this time, and he eyed Flip very severely.

"If this is true—" said Mr. Twigg.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Prout.

"If this is true, what were you doing out of your dormitory?" demanded the Second Form master. "And what were you doing out of your dormitory, Bunter?"

"I—I—I wasn't going after the pie!" gasped Bunter.

"The what?"

"The pie?" repeated Coker of the Fifth.

"It—it was nothing to do with a pie!" stammered Bunter. "The—the fact is, I couldn't sleep—I'm a rather poor sleeper—and—and I—I just—just—took a—a little walk along the—the passage—to—to—"

"Tell the truth!" boomed Prout.

"Bunter, if I were your Form master, I should cane you on the spot!"

"Oh, I'm jolly glad you ain't my Form master, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, what were you doing out of your dormitory?" boomed Prout.

"You have alarmed the whole House—for nothing, as I am convinced! What was your object in leaving your dormitory, sir, in the small hours of the night? I insist upon an answer!"

"Oh dear! I—I—I heard a noise, and—and thought it was burglars, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"So I—I—I went to look—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry, and the Removites chuckled. They could not picture Billy Bunter in the role of a bold burglar-hunter.

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Prout.

"This boy's untruthfulness—"

"I jolly well know what he went after!" roared Coker of the Fifth. "He bagged a pie from my study last

evening, and he's got it hidden somewhere—"

"Oh, really, Coker! I haven't got the pie hidden in the box-room! I don't know where it's hidden! That beast Wharton never told me where he put it, and I never found it—I mean, I never looked for it! I—I don't know anything about a pie—"

"Wharton!" boomed Prout.

"What—"

"There was a pie, sir," gasped Wharton. "We found that Bunter had Coker's pie, so we bagged it, and I put it in the box-room, to give back to Coker in the morning. It's in one of the boxes. That fat duffer must have gone rooting after it, and called Flip to help him. But it's rather lucky he did, as there was a burglar—"

"Nonsense! There was no burglar!"

"My pie! I knew that fat villain had my pie! A steak-and-kidney pie—"

"Silence, Coker! Bunter, although I am not your Form master, I shall take it upon myself to punish you for creating this—this nocturnal disturbance—as your Form master is ill, and Mr. Lagden has seen fit to absent himself, I shall take it upon myself to—"

Mr. Prout broke off, as Gwynne of the Sixth came hurrying back, with an excited face. He stared at the Sixth-Former.

"Gwynne! Have you found anything? Have you—"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Gwynne. "There's a laurel bush smashed—it looks as if somebody fell from the roof, just as this kid says. And we picked up a hat, sir—the man seems to have lost his hat, and he didn't stop to look for it!"

"I bet he was in a 'urry!" grinned Flip.

"There's no doubt that there was somebody, sir!" said Gwynne. "The other fellows are searching, sir. I came back to tell you. We may collar him in the grounds somewhere."

Gwynne darted away again, and a crowd of seniors followed him.

"Bless my soul!" spluttered Mr. Prout. "Then—then there really was a burglar? Bless my soul! I will come—I will come at once! You juniors will go back to bed immediately!"

"Hadm't we better help look for the burglar, sir?" asked the Bounder.

"What, what! Certainly not! Loder—Carne—Walker—see that these juniors return to bed immediately!"

Mr. Prout hurried away, with the other masters. Flip returned to his dormitory, where he found all the Second wide awake and in a state of high excitement. Unwillingly the Removites turned in again—with the exception of Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter had no desire whatever to join in a burglar hunt. He was glad to plunge back into a warm bed—especially without Mr. Prout having performed the duty which, in the absence of a master of the Remove, Mr. Prout had thought of taking on himself!

There was a buzz of excited voices in the Remove dormitory. The juniors had to go back to bed, but they were not likely to sleep so long as the excitement lasted.

"I say, you fellows, what about that pie?" Bunter had remembered the pie.

"I say, Wharton, old chap, if you'll go and fetch that pie—"

"Shut up, you fat frump!"

"I—I'd rather not go back to the box-room myself, it—it's so jolly cold, you know! But if you'll fetch it, old chap, I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"Shut up, you fat frump!"

"I—I'd rather not go back to the box-room myself, it—it's so jolly cold, you know! But if you'll fetch it, old chap, I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"



"You whack out a pie with me?" gasped Sammy Bunter. "Why, you fat bluffer!" Thud! The pillow, wielded in Sammy's fat hands, landed on a fat face, and his major collapsed with a howl. "There!" gasped Sammy. "Take that, you funny idiot—and come back for more if you like!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'm not afraid to go back to the box-room! But it's so c-c-cold, you know! I say, you fellows, one of you fetch that pie, and I'll whack it out! I'm fearfully hungry! I say, you fellows, it's my pie, you know—"

There was a sound of someone getting out of bed.

"Is that you getting up, Wharton, old chap?"

"Yes."

"Good! You're going for the pie?"

"No! I'm going for you!"

"Eh? What? Yaroooh! Keep that pillow away, you beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Swipe, swipe!

"Now, any more about the pie?" asked Wharton.

"Ow! No! Wow! Beast! I—I don't want the pie! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And nothing more was heard about the pie!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

No Luck!

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL the following morning showed some traces of rather unusual excitement. Every fellow knew that there had been a disturbance in the night, and every fellow learned in the morning what had happened.

Flip of the Second was quite a hero among the fags. Dicky Nugent & Co. had no very high opinion of the waif of Puggins' Alley—but he rose very much in their estimation now. Again and again he was called upon to tell what

had happened, and to give illustrations of the "cosh" he had landed on the midnight prowler's chin. One of his knuckles had been barked by that cosh, and fag after fag gazed with deep interest at that honourable scar.

The Lower School buzzed with the story, and even the high-and-mighty Sixth were keenly interested. Most of the prefects had joined in the hunt for the prowler who had rolled off the roof under Flip's cosh. Wingate had found his hat—other fellows had picked up traces of fleeing footsteps—but the man himself had not been seen. He had made his escape, though he had left ample "sign" behind him.

After prayers that morning crowds of fellows went round to stare at the laurel-bush that had been crushed and crumpled by the fall of the house-breaker. That bush, evidently, had broken the marauder's fall, and doubtless saved his bones, for the height of the sloping roof was considerable.

"That sportsman must have been jolly surprised when Flip passed him that jolt!" remarked the Bounder. "Plucky kid, to think of it."

"The pluckfulness was terrific," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Well, I was there, you know," remarked Billy Bunter. "With me setting him an example of cool courage, you know—"

"You sounded frightfully courageous when we heard you yelling!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Breakfast called the juniors back to the House. A prefect sat at the head of the Remove table, in the place of the

absent Form master. Mr. Lagden, it seemed, had not yet returned to the school.

There was a good deal of curiosity in the Remove on this subject; in fact, it rather outweighed the attempted burglary in interest. Rupert Lagden, M.A., had come to Greyfriars as a temporary master of the Remove, while Mr. Quelch was laid up, and it was extremely odd that he should be absent so soon after his arrival. The Removites had heard nothing on the subject the previous day. But Mr. Lagden had gone, had not returned at night, and was evidently still absent. The juniors wondered what had become of him, and what it all meant, anyhow.

They little dreamed that Flip of the Second Form could have enlightened them—had he chosen so to do!

They were not likely to guess that the waif of Puggins' Alley knew more about Mr. Lagden than anyone else at Greyfriars knew or suspected. Still less were they likely to guess that the handsome young Form master was a man with a double life—and that the few who knew the hidden side of his life knew him as "Jimmy the One"—the crook who had been wanted by the police for more than a decade. That was Flip's secret, of which the waif had not breathed a word.

"Where on earth's Lagden?" asked Bob Cherry, when the Remove gathered for first school. "Jolly queer of the man to hike off like this! He's not taking us this morning."

"It's jolly queer!" agreed Wharton.

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

"The oddest thing is that that kid Flip knew yesterday that he was going—after only just coming! But he can't be gone for good, surely!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm rather glad that beast's gone," said Billy Bunter. "He licked me yesterday. I thought he was a better-tempered beast than Quelch—and he turned out to be a worse-tempered beast! It actually made me wish that Quelch would get well and come back, you know."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Wingate!"

Wingate of the Sixth came along and opened the door of the Form-room. The Remove went to their places.

"You taking us this morning, Wingate?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes; first and second school," said Wingate. "Lascelles is taking you in third school—extra maths."

"Oh lor'!" ejaculated Billy Bunter. "I say, Wingate, couldn't you take us in third school? 'Tain't fair to give us extra maths because Lagden has hiked off!"

"Better mention that to the Head, Bunter, if you're not satisfied," said Wingate.

"Think it would be any good?" asked Bunter hopefully. "What do you think the Head would do, Wingate?"

"Lick you for your cheek!"

"Oh! I—I shan't speak to the Head about it. But—but I wish you'd take us in third school, Wingate! Not because I don't like maths, you know; but—but because we all like you so much—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But where's Lagden, Wingate?" asked Bob Cherry. "Isn't he coming back to take the Remove again?"

"Yes, yes! It seems that he phoned the Head last evening, and explained that a relative is seriously ill," said Wingate. "Dr. Locke gave him leave, over the phone, to stay away. But I understand that he will be back again in a day or two—perhaps sooner."

"Oh dear! He's not gone for good?" asked Bunter.

"Not at all!"

"Still, perhaps his relative might take a turn for the worse!" said Bunter cheerfully. "That would keep him away."

"Shut up, you young ass!" said Wingate, laughing. "Now then, no more talking—we're here to work!"

Billy Bunter eyed the prefect through his big spectacles. Bunter was not there to work—if he could help it. Work, in any shape or form, had never had any appeal for Bunter.

Billy Bunter had hoped for an easier time when Mr. Quelch was laid up and Rupert Lagden had taken his place. To his intense chagrin, Lagden had turned out an even worse beast than Quelch, and instead of being allowed to slack, Bunter had bagged a record licking. But hope springs eternal in the human breast, and the fat Owl hoped for better

things from Wingate. The Greyfriars captain was easy-going and good-natured—just the fellow, in Bunter's opinion, to be imposed upon. And Bunter's belief was that very little work was going to be extracted from him that morning.

He was encouraged by the fact that Wingate passed over his "con" in the first lesson without comment. Bunter had been too busy to do any prep the previous evening. His fat thoughts had been concentrated on Coker's pie, and his plans for annexing the same. His construe, therefore, was a little more "rotten" than usual; but Wingate let it pass.

In second lesson, the juniors had Latin papers to write; and Bunter lounged at his desk and left his paper blank.

Bunter had an intense dislike for the Latin language; and as it was a dead language, Bunter was of opinion that it ought to be buried, too. Besides, he had found a packet of toffee in Ogilvy's study that morning, and sucking toffee was immensely more interesting than Latin.

Billy Bunter would have given all the classics, Greek and Latin, for one packet of toffee, and considered that he had the best of the bargain.

While the juniors were writing their papers—or not writing them—Wingate sat at Mr. Quelch's desk, busy with a Greek paper of his own. But he seemed to have an eye on the class, all the same, for presently he rose and strolled among the desks.

Immediately all the juniors became very busy. It was rather late for Bunter to get busy, however, for there was not a single word written on the paper before him.

"I—I'm feeling rather ill, Wingate," ventured Bunter, as the prefect stopped beside him. "I—I haven't been able to get started because—because I—I'm feeling rather knocked out after last night, you know."

"How's that?" asked Wingate genially. "I understand that you did not wolf Coker's pie after all. I hear that he got it from the box-room this morning."

"N-n-unno!" stammered Bunter, with a rather uneasy eye on the pointer in the prefect's hand.

"Then what knocked you out?" asked Wingate.

"The—the burglar, you know! The—the struggle—"

"What struggle?" asked Wingate, while the Removes grinned.

"With—with the burglar—"

"This is the first I've heard of the struggle. But if you're really feeling too ill to work, Bunter—"

"Yes, rather, Wingate!" gasped the fat Owl. "Frightfully ill! Upset all over, you know! Sort of—of general feeling of weakness—"

"And tiredness?" asked Wingate.

"Yes—exactly!"

"A strong disinclination to work?" asked Wingate sympathetically. "A feeling that you really can't make an effort?"

"That's it!" gasped Bunter. "I—I was sure you'd understand, Wingate! That—that's just how I feel!"

"My dear kid, I understand perfectly," said Wingate. "Luckily, I'm able to give you something to cure all that. Try this!"

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as the pointer rapped over his fat and podgy back. "Whooop!"

"Feel better now?" asked Wingate.

"Yow-ow-ow! No! Worse!" roared Bunter.

Whack!

"Whoooooop!"

"Better now?"

"Nunno—no—I—I mean, yes! Yes!" roared Bunter, as the pointer rose for a third swipe. "Better—ever so much better! Yow-ow-ow! I—I—I feel all right now, Wingate—quite all right! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Think you can make an effort, and get on with your Latin paper, Bunter? Or shall I give you a few more—"

"I—I—I'm all right—right as rain! Keep off!" roared Bunter. "I—I can do the paper! I—I—I want to do it! Keen on it! Ow!"

"Good!" said Wingate. "But if you feel that weakness and disinclination to work coming on again, let me know. I'll see to it!"

Wingate went back to his desk. Billy Bunter bent dolorously over his Latin paper. He found that he could make an effort, after all. The disinclination to work was as strong as ever; but he did not want Wingate to see to it any more. Wingate seemed to be just as beastly a beast as Quelch or Lagden; in fact, it was a beastly world altogether.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Inspector Grimes Wants to Know!

FLIP!"

Mr. Twigg, master of the Second, peered over his Form through his glasses, and his eyes rested on the waif of Greyfriars.

"Yessir!" said Flip.

"You will go to the headmaster's study!" said Mr. Twigg.

"Yessir!"

Flip left the Second Form room, followed by many glances from the fags. Flip went very cheerfully. A summons to the headmaster's study generally portended trouble; but on this occasion it was not trouble.

Flip was aware that he was wanted in connection with the affair of the previous night; he knew that Inspector Grimes was coming over from Courtfield that morning. And, though the waif had not yet quite overcome his ancient fear of "coppers," he rather preferred a talk with Mr. Grimes to the valuable instruction he had been receiving from Mr. Twigg.

He made his way to the Head's study and tapped at the door. Dr. Locke's voice bade him enter.

Inspector Grimes was there with the headmaster. He gave the waif of Greyfriars a very curious look.

"Flip!" said the Head. "Inspector Grimes has called to see see you and hear your description of what happened last night. You will tell Mr. Grimes everything that occurred."

"Suttingly, sir!" said Flip.

And he proceeded to do so.

Mr. Grimes listened to him very attentively. The fag told his tale quietly and succinctly, and when he had finished he expected to be dismissed. But Mr. Grimes, it seemed, had not done with him yet.

"You did not recognise the man at the window, my boy?" asked the inspector.

"No, sir!" answered Flip, with a stare.

"What did you see of him?"

"Just a shadder, sir, that was all, on the winder."

"He did not seem familiar to you in any way?"

"Not as I knows on, sir."

Flip's brow became thoughtful as he guessed what the Courtfield inspector

was driving at. Apparently the inspector surmised that the midnight prowler might have been some one of Flip's old acquaintances in his vagrant days. But the fag shook his head.

"All I see was just a shadder on the winder, sir," he said. "I wouldn't have known him if I'd seen him afore."

Mr. Grimes nodded.

"Now listen to me, Flip," he said quietly. "Since you have been at this school an attempt was made to kidnap you. But for an accident you would have fallen into the hands of a crook whom you knew in former days—a man called 'Jimmy the One.'"

Flip started.

"Yessir," he said slowly.

"You told your headmaster and you told me that the man who seized you and almost succeeded in kidnapping you was set on by Jimmy the One."

"That's the truth, sir!"

"You have seen this crook, Jimmy the One, since you have been at the school," continued the inspector. "I need not tell you that it was your duty to denounce him immediately to the police. You know that."

Flip quivered.

"I ain't a copper's nark, sir!" he said stubbornly.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head. "Mr. Grimes, this boy uses very extraordinary expressions—very extraordinary indeed! I cannot explain to you what he means by a copper's nark."

Mr. Grimes smiled.

"The expression is well known to me, sir—it is thieves' slang! It means an informer employed by the police."

"Dear me!" said the Head, gazing at Flip. "Dear me! Does it, indeed? Bless my soul!" He blinked at Flip. "My dear boy, no one would desire you to play the dishonourable part of an informer. But it is the duty of every law-abiding citizen to assist the police in the execution of their duties. Surely you understand that."

"Yessir," mumbled Flip. "But—but giving a bloke away, sir, to the coppers—" He stammered. "Jimmy the One wasn't no friend of mine, sir! I was like dirt under his feet. He was a swell, he was—a gentleman like you, sir—"

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head.

"And he give me an awful belting once, in the alley!" said Flip. "But another time he give me a pound note when I was down and out. He ain't all bad, sir, though I ain't denying that he's a bad egg. I told him straight, sir, to get out and keep clear of this place, sir, or I'd give him away to the coppers, sir!"

"And the attempt to kidnap you followed?" snapped the inspector.

"But it never come off, sir," said Flip. "I got away all right."

"If it had succeeded you would never have been seen here again, and Jimmy the One would have been left free to carry out his designs, whatever they may be."

"Yessir. But I got away."

"You think that that—that person had some designs on this school, Mr. Grimes?" asked the Head.

"If this boy's statements are truthful, sir, there is no doubt about it. The rascal can have had no other reason for desiring to remove this boy from Greyfriars."

"Bless my soul!"

"I ain't denying it, sir," said Flip. "Jimmy the One was arter your safe, sir, like he's been arter many a one in his time, and got away with it, too. But I told him I wouldn't stand for

it, and I'd put the coppers on him if he didn't mizzle. And he mizzled, sir."

The inspector's eyes were searchingly on Flip's face.

"You think he has gone?" he asked.

A momentary grin that puzzled the inspector flickered over Flip's face. He knew that Mr. Lagden, the new master of the Remove, was gone.

"I know he's gone, sir," he answered.

"You think he will not come back?"

"He knows I'd put the coppers on him if he did, sir."

"That is what you should have done immediately," grunted the inspector.

Flip was silent.

"A—a mistaken sense of loyalty to a former associate, Mr. Grimes," said the Head. "The boy is mistaken. But such a sense of loyalty, after all, does him credit. Do you not think so?"

Grunt from the inspector.

"Dr. Locke, this crook, called Jimmy the One, has been wanted by the police for ten or twelve years," he said. "He has defied the best brains of Scotland Yard. Only once has he been near capture, and that was ten years ago. If he has associates, they are faithful to him. It seems impossible to get in touch with any man who knows him by sight. It is suspected, if not known, that he keeps up the respectable appearance of an ordinary member of society when he is not engaged in his nefarious work. Such a man is dangerous."

"Undoubtedly."

"If this boy has told the truth, he

is one of the few—the very few—who could help the police to capture a desperate crook, who has defied them for years. Indeed, he is amenable to the law for not having done so."

The inspector was evidently deeply annoyed. Dr. Locke smiled faintly. To the headmaster of Greyfriars School the underworld was an unknown world, its inhabitants a different race from any he knew. But he could understand what a feather it would have been in the cap of the country inspector could he have laid hands on an elusive crook who had defied Scotland Yard. It would have been a lifetime's triumph for Mr. Grimes. The Courtfield inspector would really have needed a larger size in hats had he been able to report to Scotland Yard that Jimmy the One was in a cell at Courtfield Police Station.

"By his foolish secrecy," continued the inspector, "the boy himself is running deadly risks." He turned to the fag again. "Listen to me, boy. You say you did not recognise the man

who attempted to enter the school last night?"

"No, sir."

"Did it occur to your mind that it might have been Jimmy the One?"

Flip started violently.

Evidently that suspicion had not occurred to his mind.

"Oh!" he gasped.

"The man failed in an attempt to kidnap you," snapped the inspector. "But if he has not given up his designs on Greyfriars, he must still desire to remove you from the school. The man last night may have been an ordinary housebreaker. But, following the attempt at kidnapping, the coincidence is at least a little singular."

"Oh swipes!" gasped Flip. "And if Master Bunter hadn't woke me up, Jimmy the One would have nabbed me, arter all! Oh swipes!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Fag's Secret!

"B LESS my soul!" murmured Dr. Locke.

Flip's face was pale.

The inspector's eyes searched him. Mr. Grimes had been made fully acquainted with the peculiar history of the waif of Greyfriars, and he did not, perhaps, place complete trust in poor Flip. He had to admit, certainly, that but for Flip he would never even have

(Continued on next page.)

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heard of Jimmy the One in connection with Greyfriars at all. But there remained the fact that the waif, if he had liked, could have denounced the crook to the police, and that he had not done so.

The hapless waif's scruples about betraying a former associate did not impress Mr. Grimes. Dr. Locke, indeed, unworldly old gentleman as he was, understood those scruples better than the practical, hard-headed police inspector.

"Well," rapped the inspector, "think it over. It did not occur to you that the man might be, not an ordinary burglar, but Jimmy the One, after you a second time?"

"No, sir!" gasped Flip. "I knowed he was gone, and I never dreamed—"

"But now what do you think?"

"It was Jimmy the One all right," said Flip, with a nod. "I ain't much doubt about that, sir. He's a stickler, Jimmy is. He gets his teeth into a job like a bulldog, and sticks."

"Then," said the Head slowly, "this boy owes his safety to the action of that foolish boy Bunter."

"Master Bunter's 'elped me many times, sir," said Flip. "I can't never be grateful enough for all that young gent has done for me, sir."

"Dear me!" murmured the Head.

"You—have no doubt now, boy?" rapped the inspector.

"N-no, sir I—I fancy it was Jimmy the One arter me," said Flip. "He wouldn't give in without a kick, come to think of it."

"Very good," said the inspector. "I have little doubt of it myself; in fact, no doubt. You understand now, boy, that your personal safety depends on Jimmy the One being taken by the police?"

"He won't try it on agin, sir," said Flip uneasily. "I give him a cosh on the jaw, sir, and he went 'ead over 'eels off that roof, sir. He must 'ave thought I knowed and was a-watching for 'im."

"Possibly. Do you imagine that the blow you gave him left a mark?"

Flip grinned.

"I barked my knuckles on his jaw, sir. I'll bet he's got a mark that he won't get shut of for a week or more."

"That is worth nothing," said the inspector dryly. "It may help us. Now that you realise your own danger, boy, you understand that you must do everything you can to place this desperate character in our hands." He glanced at Dr. Locke. "Your headmaster will tell you so."

"Most decidedly!" said the Head. "You must tell Mr. Grimes everything you know of this man, Flip."

"I—I can't put your 'and on him, sir," muttered Flip. "He's gone, and I dunno where he's gone. He shows up in Puggins' Alley once in a month or so—or he used to. That's all I know of 'im, sir."

"What we want is his description," said Mr. Grimes.

Flip was silent.

"And the name he passes by," added the inspector.

"You are aware of these matters, Flip?" asked Dr. Locke gently.

"I never knowed what was his real name, sir, till I saw him t'other day," said Flip. "Precious few know Jimmy the One's real name—which ain't nothing like Jimmy."

"You know it?" rapped the inspector.

No answer.

"You can describe him?"

Flip did not speak.

Inspector Grimes' face hardened like

iron. A very stern expression came over Dr. Locke's brow.

"Flip, you must answer the inspector!" he said severely. "It is your duty and your headmaster's command!"

Still Flip did not speak, though the trouble deepened and darkened in his clouded face.

"If you do not tell what you know, boy, you will be regarded as the accomplice of a man who is seeking and planning to rob the school that has given you shelter!" rapped in the inspector.

Flip's face crimsoned.

"Oh, sir, that ain't right!" he exclaimed earnestly. "I can tell you, sir, that Jimmy the One offered to square me; he was more'n willing to hand me a share in the swag, sir. And he offered me more'n that, sir; he offered me something more'n all what may be in the 'Ead's safe, sir—more'n all what's in the blooming Bank of England, if you come to that."

"What on earth do you mean?" exclaimed the inspector testily. "What did the crook offer you, then?"

"He told me, sir," said Flip in a quivering voice—"he told me that he knowed my father's name, sir; that he could tell me who my father was, and where to find 'im, sir. And it was true, 'cause I've always knowed that Jimmy the One could tell me if he liked."

The inspector stared blankly. Dr. Locke uttered an exclamation.

"My poor boy! The wretch told you this—"

"He did, sir! And if I'd 'ave stood in with him and let him rip I'd have found out where my father is, and his name, sir." The fag's eyes were moist.

"I ain't never had a name, nor yet a 'ome, and I ain't never been anything but a nobody; a blooming vagrant, 'ungry more often than not, afore I met Master Bunter and he took me up. And Jimmy the One knows who my father is, and he'd have told me if I'd have stood in with him."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head. There was emotion in his kind old face. "If this is true the wretch must be found; he must be made to speak—"

"Good gad!" muttered the inspector. "And—and you refused—"

"I wasn't going to stand in with him to put it across the 'Ead, sir," said Flip. "I was a pincher once, but I'd 'ave my 'and cut off sooner now. I don't know who my father is, sir, but he's an honest man—Jimmy the One said so. And if ever he comes across me he's going to find me honest, too. S'elp me!"

"I am sure the boy is honest, Mr. Grimes," said the Head mildly. "I have every trust in him."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Flip.

Inspector Grimes' eyes still searched the fag's troubled face.

"You know nothing of your parents or your name?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"And Jimmy the One could tell you if he liked?"

"Yes, sir."

"He has told you that—and nothing more?"

"He's told me that my father was a detective officer, sir, and that he's still livin'," said Flip. "No more'n that."

"A strange story!" grunted the inspector. "Boy, in your own interests, you must give us what help you can. Once in custody, this scoundrel may be induced—or made—to speak."

"I—I can't 'elp you, sir. I don't know Jimmy's hide-out; nobody knows. He's too sharp for that."

"You know the name he uses and his description?"

No answer.

"In your own interests—in the name of the law—by your headmaster's commands, Flip, you are bound to tell me what you can," said the inspector in a deep voice.

Flip's lips trembled.

"I can't tell you nothing, sir. I told Jimmy the One that I'd keep it dark if he went—and he's gone. I ain't a copper's mark, sir. I can't give a cove away like that."

"If it was Jimmy the One who attempted to enter this building last night he is not gone," said the inspector coldly.

"I ain't certain of that, sir. And even if it was, he slipped up on it. If he tried it on again—" Flip paused.

"I tell you straight, sir, if I see him agin near this 'ere school I'll go straight to my 'eadmaster, sir, and say so. I told Jimmy that, and I'll keep to it. Next time I clap eyes on him I put the coppers on to him."

"Very good—very good! But you must tell me now what you know. It is your duty."

Flip looked at the inspector's iron face, and then cast an appealing look at the Head.

"It is your duty, Flip," said Dr. Locke quietly.

"Oh, sir!" muttered Flip miserably.

"If you say so, sir—"

"Certainly I say so!"

"Mebbe you wouldn't believe me, sir, if I was to speak out," muttered Flip. "I tell you nobody would guess that he was Jimmy the One to look at 'im and 'ear him speak—nobody, sir! Mebbe you would think I was jest talking out of my 'at, sir."

"That is for Mr. Grimes to judge, my dear boy," said the Head. "You can do no more than state what you know and leave the matter to the inspector's judgment."

"Exactly!" said Mr. Grimes.

There was eagerness in the inspector's eyes now.

"Mebbe the inspector would think I was stuffing him, sir," muttered Flip. "I tell you, sir, it ain't a thing easy to believe if I told you the name Jimmy the One went by."

"I hardly understand you," said the Head. "Can you mean that this—this person is someone whose name I have heard?"

"Yes, sir, you've 'eard of 'im all right," mumbled Flip.

"It seems incredible!" exclaimed Dr. Locke in astonishment. "Do you mean to imply that this man—this outcast, this cracksmen—is a man I might meet without suspicion—"

"Jest that, sir."

"Is that possible, Inspector Grimes?" exclaimed the Head.

"Only too possible, sir," said the inspector, his eyes gleaming. "Little or nothing is known of Jimmy the One; but it is fairly certain that he is no common crook—that he keeps up respectable appearances in a respectable circle. Boy, give me his name!" He bent towards the waif. "His name?"

"I—I can't, sir!" muttered Flip. "I can't give a man away like that! I can't go for to do it, sir. Not if he keeps clear of this 'ere school."

"Flip!" said the Head gently.

"Give a bloke time to think it over, sir," muttered Flip desperately. "I ain't setting up agin you, sir, arter you been so good to me. I knows you knows best, sir. But giving a bloke away to the coppers—it comes 'ard, sir. If—if you'll let me think it over, sir—"

"You will speak!" said the inspector sternly.

Flip's jaw set obstinately.



Bunter stood rooted to the floor as he saw the head and shoulders of a man thrust through the open window. Then, suddenly from beneath the window, Flip rose, and as he did so, his fist shot up, jolting a terrific jab on the night-prowler's jaw!

"I—I think I understand the boy's feelings, Mr. Grimes," said the Head quietly. "They do him credit—though he is in error. Let him have time to reflect."

Grunt—from the inspector.

"As you think best, sir," he said. "I will see the boy again, then."

Dr. Locke made a sign to Flip, and the fag left the study. Inspector Grimes frowned after him as he went. He was still frowning when he took his leave of Dr. Locke and walked away from the school.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Up—and Down!

"I SAY, you fellows!"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
"I—I say— Yaroooh!"
"What the thump—"

Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering under the elms after morning school, when Billy Bunter happened.

He happened suddenly.

There was a patter of flying feet, and the fat junior came breathlessly up. He halted, clutched at Bob Cherry for support, and gasped.

"Ow! Keep him off!"

"Him? Who? What? Which?"

"Ow! That beast Coker! He's after me!" gasped Bunter. "He—he makes out that I had his pie yesterday—ow—though I've told him I hadn't—ow—and— Oh dear! Ow! Ooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of the Remove chortled. Billy Bunter had been leading a hunted life that day.

In view of the fortunate outcome of

Bunter's adventures of the night, his misdeeds had been overlooked by the powers that were. He had not been punished for breaking dormitory bounds, neither had official notice been taken of the fact that he had purloined a pie from a study in the Fifth. The pie had gone back to where it belonged, and the matter had dropped—which was satisfactory, so far as it went.

Unfortunately, it was not satisfactory to Coker of the Fifth. Coker's study supper had been queered by the loss of the pie; Coker had been ragged by the Removites while in search of the lost pie; Coker had had a narrow escape of getting "six" for cheeking a prefect; and Coker, though no doubt glad that the pie had found its way home, was far from considering that that closed the matter. Coker's view was that a fellow who purloined a pie, especially from such an important person as himself, required a licking; and his view, further, was that he—Horace Coker—was the man to administer the required licking.

So Horace Coker, who generally disregarded such small fry as fags, and treated them with the contempt they deserved from so great a man, had given a lot of thought to Bunter that day—quite a lot. He had looked for him after prayers; and Bunter had barely escaped with his life, so to speak. He had looked for him after breakfast; and again Bunter had eluded vengeance merely by the skin of his teeth. He had looked for him once more in break; and all through break Billy Bunter had led the life of a hare with the hounds on the trail. Now, apparently, he was looking for him again, and Billy Bunter was once more on the go.

And the chums of the Remove, instead of sympathising as they ought to have done, roared with laughter, as if there was something comic in this life of wild and hectic excitement that Bunter was leading.

"He's after me again!" groaned Bunter. "Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, you ought to stand by a Remove man, after all I've done for you, too. Letting a Fifth Form beast bully the Remove—"

"Leave Fifth Form pies alone, then," grinned Johnny Bull. "I'd jolly well kick you, if you bagged a pie from my study!"

"The kickfulness would be terrific, my idiotic Bunter," chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "You should keep your osteemed hands from the pickfulness and the stealfulness."

"I—I never touched his pie," groaned Bunter. "That—that pie came from Bunter Court. I told you fellows so at—"

"Tell Coker so," chuckled Bob.

"The—the beast won't take my word!" groaned Bunter. "Making a fellow out to be a liar, you know."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I say, you fellows, keep him off! I know he's coming this way! I say—"

"Bunter!" The powerful voice of Coker of the Fifth was heard from a distance. "You fat villain! Where are you?"

"I—I say, you fellows, keep round, and—and hide me!" gasped Bunter. "D-don't let him see me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

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"Nothing doing, old fat bean! You're wider than the lot of us."

"Beast!" Bunter gave a terrified blink through his big spectacles. "I say, you fellows, he's coming! I say, give me a bunk up!"

Keeping the trunk of the elm between him and the Fifth-Former, now visible along the path, Bunter made a frantic attempt to clamber up. There was a low branch only a couple of feet out of his reach. But Billy Bunter was no climber.

"Better take your licking, old fat bean," advised Johnny Bull. "You've asked for it, you know. Coker's in the right."

"Beast! Bunk a fellow up!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, all right!" said Bob Cherry.

And he gave the fat Owl the required "bunk." There was a howl from Bunter.

"Ow! Don't bang my face on the trunk, you silly idiot! Wow! Have a little sense, you dummy! Wow! Don't let go, you idiot! Oh lor!"

"Lend a hand, you men!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This chap weighs something!"

"The weightfulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five all lent a hand. Billy Bunter's weight was considerable—more than considerable, in fact—and there was no doubt that he required some "bunking." But many hands make light work. And the fat Owl was successfully bunked up the elm, and he clutched hold of the branch above and dragged himself on to it. There he gasped and spluttered.

"I—I—I say, you fellows, d-don't let Coker know I'm here! If he asks you, tell him I've gone out of gates, will you?"

"I don't think," chuckled Nugent.

"Well, tell him I've gone to see Quelch in sanny, or—or tell him Lagden's coming back, and that I've gone to meet him at the station. Or—or say I've gone to lunch with the Head."

"Shall we say you're dead and buried, and gone to your own funeral?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! I say, you fellows—"

"Better shut up," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Coker's coming this way. He will hear you in a minute."

"Oh lor!"

Billy Bunter was silent. He crouched on the branch, blinking down through his big spectacles.

Coker of the Fifth evidently knew that Bunter had fled in that direction. He was striding directly towards the Famous Five. There was a grim expression on Coker's rugged face, and there was a fives bat under his arm. What he was going to do with the fives bat did not need explaining—if he found Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. regarded him with smiling faces. Coker of the Fifth did not smile. He glared.

"Where's Bunter?" he demanded.

"O where and O where can he be?" chanted Bob Cherry.

"He came this way!" roared Coker.

"I saw him dodging this way. Did he pass you? Answer me, you sniggering, little idiots! If you want me to lick you all round, you'd better say so."

"So!" said the Famous Five, with one voice.

Coker blinked at them. Coker's powerful brain was not quick on the uptake, and he did not assimilate that this was a jest.

"Eh? What do you mean?" he snapped. "I asked you where Bunter was. I know he's skulking about here somewhere. I'm going to whop him for bagging my pie last night. I'm going to give him six with this bat. I'm going—What are you cackling at?" roared Coker.

Coker was not looking up. Had he looked up he could not have failed to see a podgy form extended on a leafless branch over his head. But he did not look up, and so he did not see Bunter. Coker had no eyes in the top of his head, of course, and even had he been so provided, his hat would have obstructed the view. So he remained in blissful unconsciousness of the fact that Bunter was only three or four feet distant. Which seemed funny to the Famous Five; and they chortled.

Coker glared at them in exasperation.

"You cheeky little sweeps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's that fat frog?" bawled Coker.

"Echo answers that the wherefulness is terrific," chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Coker was evidently tempted to rush on the Famous Five, and give them the fives bat. But he restrained his just wrath. It was Bunter that he wanted—and he wanted him badly. All that morning, except when school claimed him, he had been hunting Bunter. And the fat Owl had proved remarkably elusive. Coker, breathing hard, passed the group of juniors, and circled round the big elm to see if Bunter was hiding behind the trunk.

The Removites watched him, with interest. They wondered whether, and when, it would occur to Coker to look up. From the branch above, Billy Bunter was watching Coker with eyes that almost popped through his spectacles, and suppressing his breathing.

"He's not here!" hooted Coker. He glared to and fro among the trees. No fat figure was in sight. He came back to the grinning five. "You cheeky little sweeps, where—"

"Ooooooh!" came a sudden gasp.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

Coker looked amazed. He heard the gasp of the fat Owl, who had slipped on the branch, and almost fallen. But he could not see Bunter. He was standing almost directly beneath the branch, and, as already mentioned, he had no eyes in the top of his head.

Bunter was no acrobat. His remote ancestors, no doubt, had been quite at home in trees. But their climbing powers had not descended to Bunter. His perch on the branch was precarious, and when he slipped the game was up. He swung over, clutching frantically, and gasping spasmodically.

"Urrrh!" gurgled Bunter.

Even then Coker did not seem to realise that the gasping and gurgling came from above. He stared round him, while the Famous Five shrieked. But he was suddenly apprised of the fact that Bunter was overhead, as a swinging foot came into collision with his hat, and knocked it off. Coker jumped as if electrified.

"Wha-a-t!" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

He stared up. Bunter hung spasmodically on the branch, trying to clamber up again after his slip. He failed. He had too much weight to pull up, and the well-known law of gravitation, which attracts all things towards the centre of the earth, did the rest.

"Yoop!" spluttered Bunter, as his grasp slipped from the branch.

He shot downward. Under the resistless pull of the law of gravitation, he shot towards the centre of the earth. He did not, of course, reach the centre of the earth. He did not even reach the surface of the earth immediately. Coker's face was in the way.

It was on Coker's face that he landed, with a terrific crash.

"Oooooooop!" came from Coker.

"Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker staggered. Coker was a hefty fellow; but Hercules himself might have staggered, with Billy Bunter's weight landing suddenly on his features.

Coker rolled over! Bunter rolled on him. Coker, in a dizzy and dazed state, sprawled helplessly; Bunter sprawled over him. But the fat junior was quick to move. He planted a knee in Coker's eye, and rose, leaped to his feet, and scudded.

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"Ooooooooooh!" came from Coker. "What—what— Ooooooooooh! Oh! Ow! Woooooh! Ooooooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Coker sat up dizzily. He was breathless, and his face felt as if it had been pushed through the back of his head. He felt over his face with his hand as if to ascertain that it was still there. He blinked wildly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five. And they sauntered cheerily away, leaving Coker still blinking wildly.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Flip Is Wanted!

SEEN Master Bunter, sir?" Flip of the Second Form asked the question, and the Famous Five grinned. Nobody was likely to see Billy Bunter again for a time—not until dinner, at least. Bunter, for the present, was understudying Brer Fox, on the occasion when that artful animal "lay low and said nuffin." After falling on Coker's face Bunter realised more clearly than ever the necessity of giving Horace Coker a wide berth. Bunter had disappeared from view—and was staying disappeared.

"Bunter's a shy violet at the present moment, kid!" said Bob Cherry. "He's cultivating a modest retirement."

"You won't see him till dinner," said Johnny Bull. "Dinner will bring him out!"

"I want to see 'im, sir," said Flip, with a worried look.

And the Famous Five became grave as they noted the cloud of trouble on the face of the waif of Greyfriars.

"Well, he's in cover somewhere, kid," said Harry. "Coker of the Fifth is looking for him, with a fives bat. Anything up?"

"I—I wanted to ask him to advise a bloke, sir," muttered Flip. "I dunno what to do—I don't straight! Master Bunter's the only friend I've got—and he's that good to a bloke."

The chums of the Remove eyed the fag. They liked him all the better for his loyal faith and belief in Bunter, though they could not help wondering how that faith and belief survived a closer acquaintance with the fat Owl. They knew—if Flip did not—that Bunter's fat thoughts were all concentrated on his fat self, and that he was not likely to give much attention to the fag's problems—especially while Coker was after him.

"Something up, kid?" asked Harry kindly.

"Yes, an' no blooming error!" mumbled Flip. He hesitated. "I'm in a fix, sir, and—I thought p'raps Master Bunter might have 'elped me out. I—I dunno what a bloke ought to do, sir. P'raps—"

He hesitated again, but the captain of the Remove understood. The little fag was in trouble, and sorely in need of counsel, and Harry was only too willing to help, if he could.

"Perhaps I could give you some advice—perhaps as good as Bunter's," said Wharton, with a smile. "We're all your friends, Flip, if you like to tell us the trouble."

"The friendfulness is terrific, my esteemed Flip!"

Flip grinned for a moment.

"It's about Jimmy the One, sir!" he said, after another hesitation. "You blokes remember I told you he put a cove up to getting 'old of me, to get me away and keep my mouth shut.

Well, the 'Ead thinks I ought to give Jimmy away to the coppers—and Mr. Grimes is keen on 'earing what I could tell him if I liked. But—"

"So you ought!" said Johnny Bull.

"It ain't so easy, sir," muttered Flip. "Jimmy's a bad egg, and well I know it; but I don't think much of a copper's nark. I told Jimmy I'd keep mum if he cleared—and he's cleared."

"Sure he's cleared?" asked Wharton. Flip could not help grinning.

He had heard a good many of the Removites commenting on the absence of their new Form master. There was no doubt that Jimmy the One had cleared!

But it was not likely to occur to the juniors to connect Mr. Lagden with Jimmy the One! Even had Flip told them what he knew, they would have found it very hard to believe him.

"He's cleared all right, sir," said Flip. "But Mr. Grimes thinks—and I can't help thinking—that the bloke at the winder last night was Jimmy the One—arter me ag'in."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Course a bloke can't be certain," said Flip. "But it looks like it. And if he's still arter me—"

He paused.

"By Jove!" said Wharton. "It's possible—in fact, it's jolly likely. You're

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not safe while that villain's at liberty, Flip."

The captain of the Remove looked very thoughtful. He understood the waif's scruples about "giving away" the man whose secret he knew. He could understand that, in Puggins' Alley, a "copper's nark" was an object of contempt.

"The 'Ead's give me time to think it over, sir," mumbled Flip. "But giving a bloke away—it don't seem right some'ow. Mr. Grimes was nasty—I fancy he'll want to see me again, to-day most likely, and get it out of me. But—"

"I think you're bound to speak out, kid," said Harry gravely. "You say that the brute agreed to clear off if you kept mum. But he hasn't cleared off—he tried to kidnap you on Courtfield Common—and it looks as if he made another try last night. He may try again and get away with it. My advice to you is to tell Mr. Grimes everything you can."

"Same here!" said Bob, with a nod.

"The samefulness is terrific."

Flip nodded slowly.

"I s'pose you're right, sir!" he said at length. "I told him I would, if he didn't clear off—and it don't look as if he'd mizzled. 'Anging about, most likely, looking for another chance at a cove."

"The sooner you get it off your chest, the better," said Harry, "and in the meantime you'd better keep within

gates, Flip! You're not safe from that man while he's free."

"You bet!" said Flip. "I ain't giving Jimmy the One another chance at me. Thank you kindly, sir."

The chums of the Remove went on their way, leaving the Greyfriars waif with a clouded, thoughtful brow. Wharton's advice had helped him to make up his mind; but Flip was not wholly decided yet. His old sympathy with the lawless, his old suspicion and fear of "coppers," had not died, though they had weakened since he had been a Greyfriars fellow. And it was a strain of loyalty in his nature that made him shrink from acting like what he called a "nark."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Looks as if Grimey's sent for him already!" grinned Bob Cherry, with a gesture towards a uniformed, helmeted figure at the gates.

The juniors glanced at the constable. He was speaking to Gosling, who had come out of his lodge. He was a stout, ruddy-faced man, with a large patch of sticking-plaster on one cheek, which looked as if he had had recent trouble with some law-breaker. He was a stranger to the juniors, but they had no doubt that he was from Courtfield.

He left Gosling and came towards the House with a heavy tread. The chums of the Remove saw Flip eyeing him from a distance, with uneasy eyes, and smiled. Evidently "coppers" had not lost their old terror for the former waif of Puggins' Alley.

A good many fellows glanced at the policeman, though without any particular interest, concluding that he was there from Inspector Grimes, in connection with the affair of the night before.

He disappeared into the House, and a few minutes later Trotter, the page, came out, and told Flip he was wanted in the Head's study.

Slowly, with evident indecision and reluctance, Flip went in.

He found the ruddy-faced constable in the Head's study with Dr. Locke. The Head gave him a kind smile.

"If you please, sir, I—I ain't thought it out yet, sir!" said Flip humbly. "I—I ain't got it clear, sir, if—if you don't mind, sir!"

"It is not in reference to that matter that I have sent for you, my boy," said the Head kindly. "This constable has called in reference to the attempt that was made to kidnap you near Courtfield."

"Oh!" said Flip, much relieved. "That's all right, sir! But I've told Mr. Grimes all about that, sir."

"Quite so," said the Head. "But Mr. Grimes desires you to show this constable the place where you were seized, while out of the school—you will guide him to the exact spot, where—I understand—Inspector Grimes will be awaiting you." He glanced at the constable.

"Yes, sir," said the constable.

"Ready and willing, sir!" said Flip cheerfully.

"You will go with the constable, my boy," said the Head. "I have already requested him to walk back to the school with you afterwards, as in present circumstances I do not consider it safe for you to be out of gates alone. He has kindly consented to do so."

"Yessir."

"You may go, my boy."

Flip went for his cap and coat, and walked out of the House with the constable from Courtfield. Harry Wharton & Co. saw them going down to the gates, and Wharton gave the waif an encouraging wave of the hand. Flip turned out of the gates and disappeared.

from their sight. They little dreamed how long it was to be before they saw the waif of Greyfriars again.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Trapped!

FLIP trotted cheerfully by the side of the constable.

He made a remark or two, as they walked away from the school; but the man in uniform only grunted a monosyllable in reply. He seemed extremely uncommunicative, and he walked very fast, as if anxious to get to the spot where his inspector waited for him. Flip fell into silence, and trotted by his side.

Greyfriars was left behind, and they came out on the high-road that ran across Courtfield Common to the town.

The constable turned from the high-road, by a footpath that cut across the common.

"Ere, that ain't the way!" said Flip.

"Short cut," said the constable curtly.

"Oh, all right!"

The constable tramped on, faster than before, Flip had to trot quite actively to keep pace with his long strides.

The footpath led to a lane shadowed by tall trees, whose branches, leafless as they were, almost shut off the steely sky. Flip stared round him.

No doubt a Courtfield constable was well acquainted with all the short cuts in the neighbourhood; but it did not seem to Flip that this lane would lead him to the spot where the attempt had been made to kidnap him, and which he had already described to Inspector Grimes.

"Sure you're going right?" he asked.

"Quite!" was the brief answer.

"Oh, all right!" said Flip.

The constable tramped on into the shady lane, without even glancing at the schoolboy. Flip trotted after him.

Trees and hedges shut them off from the common now. Some distance ahead a motor-car was standing in the lane, and Flip glanced at it carelessly as he approached. A man dressed as a chauffeur was standing by it, but his back was to Flip.

They reached the halted car, and the constable stopped. What happened next seemed like a dream to the fag. The chauffeur threw open the door of the car; the constable seized the fag by the shoulders, and, in the twinkling of an eye, Flip was thrown headlong into the car.

"Swipes!" gasped Flip, amazed.

The constable followed him in.

"Get her going, Buster!" he rapped.

"Leave it to me!" answered the man who was dressed as a chauffeur. He jumped into the driving-seat, and the buzz of the engine followed.

Flip struggled up.

The name "Buster" had enlightened him; he knew the name of the associate of "Jimmy the One." But as he struggled up, an iron grasp crumpled him down on the floor of the car.

"Quiet, Flip! One cry, and you will never utter another!" said a quiet, cold, steely voice.

Flip's eyes, distended with amazement and terror, fixed on the face of the constable, bending over him. He knew now. In that ruddy face, under the policeman's helmet, with the disguising sticking plaster, he read no resemblance to the face of the gentleman crook. But he knew.

"Jimmy the One!" he whispered.

The disguised crook made no answer.

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Bending over the fag, he drew his wrists together, and bound them fast. Then he forced open the fag's mouth and jammed home a gag. Then Flip's ankles were tied.

Flip made no resistance. It was futile to resist; he was an infant in the powerful grip of the crook.

He lay on the floor of the car, staring up with dilated eyes.

The crook threw a rug over him, leaving only the white, scared face of the hapless fag in view.

The car was already in motion. The engine roared, and the Buster, at the driving-wheel, toolled the car rapidly through the lane. Jimmy the One sat down, staring grimly at the frightened face that looked up at him. There was grim ruthlessness in the steely eyes of the crook.

"Did you expect to see me again, Flip?"

The fag only stared with dilated eyes.

"Did you know that it was I—last night?"

Flip made no sign.

"Was it you?" The crook passed his hand over his chin. There was a mark there, though Jimmy the One had done his best to hide it. Flip's eyes gleamed, but he made no sign.

"That fool, Buster, failed me," said Jimmy the One quietly. "But—I had no better luck—last night. Someone was awake—on the alert. It could hardly have been you, I suppose—I had a narrow escape. Not so narrow as yours, Flip—it was the unexpected that happened. But for that, I should have had you in my hands. I had a chloroform pad ready. I should have lowered you from that window. This car was waiting at a safe distance—"

He shrugged his shoulders.

Flip groaned behind the gag.

Billy Bunter had saved him the night before. Bunter could not save him now. There was no help for him, he was utterly in the power of the crook whose secret he knew.

"But I failed," said Jimmy the One, in the same quiet, steely voice, "and I had to take a chance to-day—a desperate chance; but I have taken longer chances, and got away with them, Flip. You expected to see me again; but you did not expect to see Jimmy the One as a constable—what?" He grinned for a moment. "The longest chances are often the safest, Flip. I could not afford to delay—it was high time that Mr. Lagden got back to his Form at Greyfriars."

He laughed softly.

Flip only stared with dilated and despairing eyes. He had not spoken, and it was too late now. And the crook knew that he had not spoken. That was clear. The way was open for Rupert Lagden, Master of Arts, to return to Greyfriars as master of the Remove, and Jimmy the One knew it.

"Did you think I was gone—frightened away by a nameless vagrant? I have been in touch with Dr. Locke, on the telephone, several times, Flip! He expects me to return—to-day! A sick relative—who is better now. Dr. Locke is not a suspicious man."

So that was how he knew that the coast was clear.

Jimmy the One laughed again, and threw the corner of the rug over Flip's face. The fag was completely hidden from sight when the car turned out of the shady lane.

The car ran on and on; how many miles it covered Flip did not know, and could not guess. He could see nothing, hidden under the rug. But he could hear the crook moving.

The car stopped at last, and the rug was pulled away. Flip blinked with dizzy eyes.

Jimmy the One was no longer in the constable's uniform. He had removed it, and it was rolled in a bundle on the seat. He was dressed in natty lounge clothes, with a Homburg hat. But he would not have been recognised as Mr. Lagden. He still had the ruddy complexion, and there was a thick moustache on his upper lip, and horn-rimmed spectacles over his eyes. The Buster was standing at the door of the halted car, looking at it. He grinned down at Flip.

"Got you this time!" he said.

"That's enough, Buster," said Jimmy the One. "You can beat it now."

"You won't want me any more, guv'nor?"

"No."

The Buster seemed to hesitate. Perhaps he was curious as to the further intentions of the crook. Jimmy the One gave him a single look, and the ruffian backed away from the car hurriedly.

"I'm goin', guv'nor."

"The sooner the better!" said Jimmy the One.

The Buster vanished from Flip's eyes. He heard a sound of retreating footsteps. He was left alone with the crook.

Jimmy the One bent over him, and made a careful examination of his bonds, and of the gag. Flip guessed that he was to be left alone in the car, while Jimmy the One was driving, and the crook was not a man to leave anything to chance. Satisfied that the prisoner was safe, and without addressing a word to him, Jimmy the One threw the rug over him again.

Flip heard him slip into the driving-seat; the engine buzzed again. The car glided rapidly on.

Whither?

The hapless fag could not surmise. He was in merciless hands—and even the thug who had helped in securing him, was not allowed to know where Jimmy the One was taking him. Where was he going—and what was to be his fate? He could form no guess, as he lay, helpless, hidden under the rug on the floor, while the rapid car ate up the miles.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter and the Hunter!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Has Flip come in?" asked

Harry Wharton eagerly.

"Blow Flip!" grunted Bunter irritably.

Billy Bunter was not thinking of Flip.

But the other fellows were; in fact, all Greyfriars School was thinking of Flip of the Second Form.

School was long over, and Flip had not returned.

Plenty of fellows knew that Flip had left Greyfriars with a constable, who had been sent from Courtfield by Inspector Grimes. Harry Wharton & Co. and a good many others had seen him go. Why the fag had not come back was a mystery; it was hardly to be conjectured that Mr. Grimes wanted him all the afternoon.

Mr. Twigg was heard to mention to other masters that the Head had telephoned to Inspector Grimes, to inquire why the boy had not returned to the school, and that Mr. Grimes had answered that he knew nothing whatever of the matter. Mr. Twigg seemed considerably disturbed, and fellows who had seen the Head declared that the



Coker stared at Bunter, who was frantically endeavouring to clamber up the tree. Then—"Whoop! Yarooop!" Coker fairly roared as the fat junior shot downwards and landed with a terrific crash on top of him.

chief beak was looking worried. After this, Inspector Grimes arrived from Courtfield in a car, and was shown in immediately to the Head.

By that time, all the school knew that something was amiss, and many eyes were on Inspector Grimes when he left in the car again. His official calm could not quite conceal the fact that Mr. Grimes was troubled and perturbed.

From one source or another, the rumours spread and grew. After tea all the fellows were aware that Inspector Grimes had never sent a constable to fetch Flip—that that constable was quite unknown at Courtfield Police Station, that he was, in fact, not a constable at all, but some person unknown who had adopted a constable's uniform to deceive the headmaster, and to get Flip into his hands.

Amazing as it was to the Head, almost incredible, he had to believe it, after he had seen Inspector Grimes. Amazing as it was to Mr. Grimes, he could not doubt, after he had seen the Head. And the school fairly buzzed with the story.

With all thoughts on the missing fag, the Remove fellows heard, without great interest, that their new Form master, Mr. Lagden, was expected back that day, after his unexpected absence.

In the circumstances, they were not much interested in Mr. Lagden. All their interest was in Flip.

Except Billy Bunter! Billy Bunter, as the podgy patron of the waif, might have been expected to worry about him more than other fellows. But Bunter was very busy worrying about himself.

Bunter was still leading the hectic life of a hunted hare. After dinner Coker of the Fifth had looked for him;

after class, he had looked again. After tea, Coker was still on the trail. It seemed as if Horace Coker never could forget the raid on his steak-and-kidney pie. Perhaps a stern sense of duty urged Coker on to make an example of the raider. Perhaps he was annoyed by Bunter falling on his face from the tree. Anyhow, Coker was still on the trail of vengeance, and Bunter was getting tired.

He was not likely to be thinking of Flip! A crowd of fellows were discussing Flip in the Rag when Bunter dodged in. His hunted look showed that he had had another narrow escape.

"No news of Flip?" asked several voices.

"Blow Flip! Bother Flip! Bless Flip!" hooted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, that beast Coker is after me!"

"Blow Coker! Blow you!" said Bob Cherry. "Poor old Flip! If we'd had the faintest idea at the time—"

"If we'd only guessed who that bobby really was!" said Wharton, clenching his hands. "Not a bobby at all!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"That beast Coker—"

"Shut up!" roared a dozen voices.

Skinner strolled into the Rag.

"Bunter here? Hallo, Bunter, Coker's coming this way! Look out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh crikey!"

The heavy tread of Horace Coker was heard without. Billy Bunter cast an almost agonised blink round at the Removites. Then he dodged behind the door.

It was hurled open the next moment, and Horace Coker strode in. He came

striding across the Rag, with a frowning brow.

"Bunter here?" he roared.

Billy Bunter, quaking, stepped out from behind the door on tiptoe, and tiptoed out of the Rag, behind Coker's back.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker glared.

"I'm looking for Bunter! I know he came here! I'm going to whop him! Where's Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter was gone! A howl of laughter followed him, and—after a few minutes—Coker! But when Coker, realising that Bunter had dodged him once more, emerged from the Rag, the fat Owl was not to be seen. Once more the wrathful Horace proceeded to hunt high and low for Bunter.

The hapless Owl was in safe hiding this time. From one lair after another the vengeful Fifth-Former had rooted him out—Bunter had had a series of hairbreadth escapes. In sheer desperation, the fat Owl had scuttled away to Masters' Studies.

Masters' Studies, of course, were no refuge for a hunted fag, as a rule. But Bunter remembered that one master's study was vacant. Mr. Quelch's old study belonged to Mr. Lagden now—but Mr. Lagden was absent. And Billy Bunter dodged into that study, and hoped for the best. It was his last refuge.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter, almost collapsing into Mr. Quelch's armchair.

He quaked at every footstep in the passage. But the footsteps passed the door every time. Nobody had any

(Continued on page 27.)

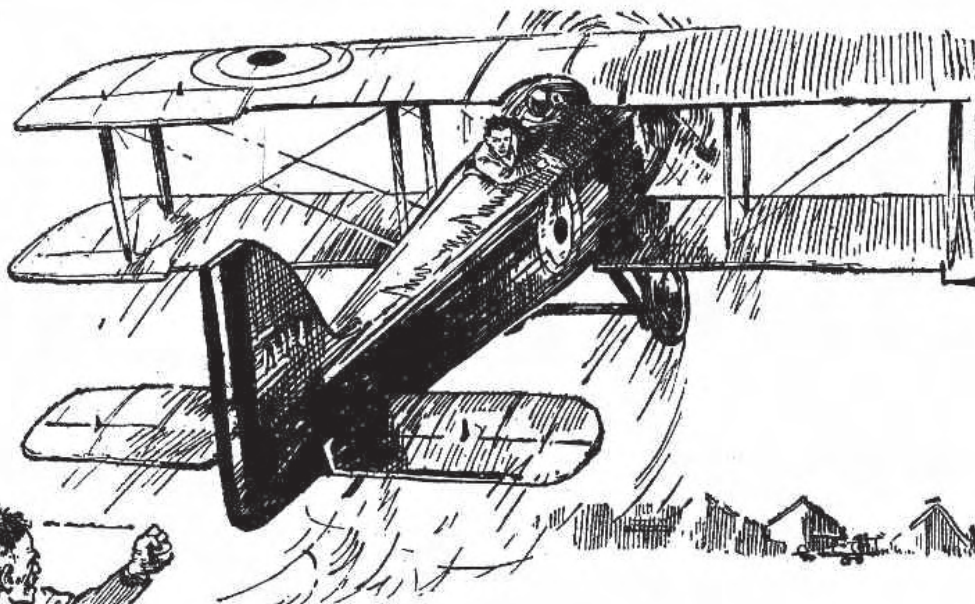
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THE FIRST CHAPTER !

The Tyrant !

L EFT, right! Left, right!" The sergeant's throaty bellow, monotonous, savage, made peculiar contrast with the gleeful chirping of a hedge-sparrow nesting in the only clump of bushes that lined Ingleshon drome.

"Left, right! Pick 'em up, there! Double!"

From a marching pace the dispirited squad, tired, sullen, yet obedient to the rigid discipline of the Royal Air Force, broke into a run. Overhead, the hottest sun experienced during that summer blazed down with a merciless glare, bathing the dust-grimed squad in perspiration, and demanding more.

"Get a move on!" Sergeant Wilkins was enjoying himself. "I'll keep you on the run till your tongues drop out!"

There was a savage, gloating expression on the coarse features of the sergeant as, keeping in the shade himself, he bawled a succession of orders to the squad of youngsters who were well-nigh dropping in their tracks from fatigue.

For two hours without a break Wilkins had drilled the squad that was shortly to pass out as full-blown flying officers. Officers! Every time Sergeant Wilkins thought of it, he snarled. He hated them—had always hated them. And in the Cadet School he found every

opportunity of venting his vengeance on the plucky youngsters whose one desire was to join in the world struggle that had dragged on from the eventful day in August, 1914.

Panting for breath, the leg-weary squad kept on the move like so many cogs in a piece of machinery. Rebellion surged in each youthful heart, but the tyrant in charge of them was their superior officer. His was to command, theirs to obey. Human nature, however, rides over discipline. There was a sharp cry from a cadet in the leading four, as he pitched headlong to the ground. In a moment the squad was tumbling over him—a mass of dusty, uncontrolled legs and weary khaki-clad bodies.

"Halt!" Sergeant Wilkins' face flamed scarlet, and the veins stood out like the vicious forks of a serpent's tongue as he doubled over to the struggling mass of youthful humanity. "What in blazes do you think you're doing?"

The near presence of the bully brought the squad with one exception, stiffly to attention.

"Get up!" stormed Wilkins, stirring the still figure at his feet with the toe of his Army boot. "Get up, you white-livered rat!"

There was a murmur from the drawn-faced squad of cadets which Sergeant Wilkins quelled with one ferocious glance.

"Going to be officers, are you?" he jeered. "Well, you ain't officers yet—see! You gotta learn discipline yourselves before you pass it on to others! Get up!"

He kicked the prostrate figure before him savagely, and was about to repeat the dose, when a quiet voice broke in:

"I should give them a rest for a few moments, sergeant, if I were you!"

The sergeant stiffened into a salute, and wheeled sharply. The adjutant

mechanically returned the salute, glanced quickly and critically at the dust-begrimed squad of cadets, pursed his lips, and strode off.

Sergeant Wilkins glared after him, his thick lips drawn back from cigarette-stained teeth in a derisive smile.

"You shall have your few moments' rest, you lily-skinned beauties!" He laughed evilly. "In fact, you've had exactly half of 'em!"

His bull neck jerked forward aggressively, his chin thrust out as he eyed each member of the squad. Then a guffaw left him when Flight-cadet Thorburn picked himself up, straightened his tunic, and fell in.

The youngster's face was dusty and sweat-begrimed, and there was a sickly pallor beneath the grime that even the bullying sergeant could see. Normally, there was nothing wrong with Thorburn, or the stringent medical tests through which every prospective flying officer was put before being allowed to take a course of flying would have found it out. But the fair-haired youngster had been down with ptomaine poisoning, and had only been passed fit for duty a matter of a couple of days previously. Quite naturally, he was in no physical condition to be drilled in the blazing sunshine for two hours or more.

"Feeling rocky, eh?" asked Sergeant Wilkins, with feigned consideration.

"A little, sergeant," came the steady reply. "I've only been up and about a couple of days, you know."

"Silence!" bawled Wilkins. "Don't back-answer! I haven't finished with any of you yet! I'll double you round this ground till you think you're playing at Turkish baths! Squad, 'shun!"

The weary squad, about twenty strong, dragged themselves to attention.

"Fall out, Daniels and Glynn!"

The leading pair left their places and ran round to the sergeant at the double.

"You two blamed kids seem to think

this is a picnic, don't yer?" snapped the bully.

Ron Glyn and Jim Daniels eyed him questioningly. The air of fatigue that hung about their sturdy frames hardly suggested anything in the nature of a picnic. Still, they knew from old that it was not to their advantage to bandy words with Sergeant Wilkins. Since they had arrived at Ingleson drome the bully had marked them down as his pet victims. Both possessed a full measure of high spirits and indomitable pluck, plus a respectful regard for discipline and the sergeant's stripes that graced or disgraced the khaki sleeves of Wilkins' jacket. All the same, they had taken tally of the accounts that were some day to be settled with the bully who made their lives a misery. Few soldiers had passed through Sergeant Wilkins' hands whose spirits he hadn't broken. Yet in these two inseparable youngsters even the hard-bitten sergeant had found his match.

He leered at them now, noted their heaving chests, and pointed to the group of hangars a quarter of a mile distant.

"Double over to the hangars and back, you two!" he rapped. "The last one back gets fatigue for a couple of hours this evening! Quick march! Double!"

The two cadets wheeled and set off at a trot.

Sergeant Wilkins' bellow floated after them.

"D'you call that at the double? Left! Right! Left-right!"

Mechanically the chums forged on, shoulder to shoulder. Both were nearing the stage of complete exhaustion, but a mixture of pride and pluck kept them going. Soon now—very soon—they would be saying good-bye to Ingleson.

"Keep smiling, Ron!" panted Jim. "A couple of days more, and we shall be through."

Ron grunted. On the score of stamina he was a little the inferior of his pal, and speech was difficult in the circumstances. His throat was dusty and dry, his tongue felt as if it had swollen to double its size, his limbs wanted to give up the ghost.

"Soon, Ron, we shall be over with the boys in Flanders!" Jim's panted words were hardly heard by Ron. "No more—no more of this blessed drilling. It'll be Bristol fighters, Ron—machine-guns! Bombs! Archie shells that you put your fingers to, and Huns!"

Ron grunted again. The hangars were within easy distance now, and he was turning over in his mind whether he would have enough energy left to make the return journey. Jim prattled on, regardless.

"Won't it be stunning, old son? We'll soon put a stop to this old war when we get over there. Hallo—"

Ron stumbled, and Jim's ready arm went out and saved him from a fall. For the first time Jim Daniels realised how used up his chum was.

"Take it easier, old man," he advised. "Steady now. That bully ought to be taken up for a flip and dropped out."

His eyes turned longingly on an Avro training machine that was being wheeled out on to the tarmac by four mechanics. Then a light of daredevilry gleamed in those two blue eyes.

He plucked Ron by the arm.

"Come on, old son," he chuckled. "We'll have a breath of real cool air. Follow your uncle."

Ron did. In amazement he saw his chum clamber into the pilot's cockpit; found himself scrambling painfully into

the front seat, and tried not to look guilty as the questioning eyes of the mechanics turned upon them.

"What the—!" began the engine fitter, standing by the propeller.

"Switch on!" rasped Jim. "Contact!" Obeying the order almost mechanically, the fitter and his companion turned the prop. There was a devastating roar which completely drowned any attempt at conversation thereafter as Jim revved the engine. Then his hand signalled to the mechanics to whip away the chocks.

Speeding over the drome as Jim opened the throttle, the plane roared its way into the air, leaving four mechanics on terra firma wondering whether the plane the adjutant ordered to be brought out was really intended for the harum-scarum "Twins" as the mechanics had come to call Ron and Jim.

And while they turned the subject over in their minds Jim was thrilling Ron with a brief account of what he intended doing.

The noise of the engine half-drowned the words that came through the telephone; but as Jim circled over the parade ground upon which Sergeant Wilkins and his squad were drilling, the full meaning of what Jim had said came refreshingly to the exhausted Ron.

Under Arrest!

THE squad was once more on the move, still in the blazing sunshine. Sergeant Wilkins, of course, had chosen a shady spot. Towards this spot, with engine full out, bracing wires humming a musical note, and struts a-quivering, dived the Avro.

The sergeant heard the terrifying approach, looked up, with a gasp of horror, to see the gleaming plane bearing down upon him; gave himself up for a dead man, and promptly dropped flat.

The wheels of the under-carriage passed a few feet above him, and as Jim pulled the plane out of the dive and zoomed her almost standing on her tail, he looked back to see a very discomfited and undignified N.C.O. scramble to his feet, and shake a knuckly fist at him.

Jim's laugh mingled with the reverberating roar of the engine, and as he banked steeply his voice came through to Ron in the front seat.

"Neat bit o' work that, old son. Shall we try it again?"

Ron smiled feebly. At any other time he would have enjoyed the game of hunting the sergeant, but he was still feeling the effects of the broiling heat, and the merciless drilling.

Round came the plane, the altimeter needle flickering at five hundred feet. The engine revved up to its maximum revolutions, and down fell the nose in a sickening dive as Jim pushed the control stick forward.

Sergeant Wilkins had had hardly time to adjust his disarranged tunic and cap before the screaming mass of metal and fabric was tearing down upon him again. Down he flopped once more like a pricked balloon, pressing his six foot of brawn and muscle into mother earth with an affection that was ludicrous. He shut his eyes, felt the wind of the speeding plane stand his hair up on end; cursed luridly, and half wondered whether he had been decapitated.

By the time he had scrambled to his feet again and adjusted his tunic and cap the Avro was a quarter of a mile away. For the second time the bully,

now thoroughly scared, shook his fist at the pilot, of whose identity he hadn't the foggiest notion, and made a mental note that he would report the offender, and give him jip when he caught him.

Meantime, Jim and Ron were gliding down for a landing. Side-slipping to lose height quickly, Jim brought the Avro from that to an even keel, turned her nose against the wind, and brought off a landing that told of the born birdman. With hardly a bump, the plane settled down and taxied gently to a standstill almost at the self-same spot from which she had set off.

As the four mechanics came rushing out Jim and Ron scrambled from the plane and dropped to the tarmac.

"There'll be the devil to pay over this, sir," said a startled fitter. "The adjutant ordered this plane. He must have seen everything."

The brightness faded out of Jim's face for a moment. Then it returned, and enlarged into a grin.

"Well, it was worth it," he said. "We'll take a chance. Can rely on you good fellows to keep mum. Come on, Ron!"

He grabbed his pal by the arm, nodded his thanks as the mechanics began to turn the plane ready to take off again when the adjutant wanted it, and set off at the double to rejoin the squad.

Both the chums were considerably out of breath when finally they halted before the enraged figure of Sergeant Wilkins.

"Where have you two shirkers been—eh?" he stormed.

Ron felt a nudge in the ribs from Jim, and remained silent.

"We stopped for a breather, sergeant," said Jim. "And—and we looked at a plane."

The sergeant bristled with anger.

"You stopped to look at a plane," he shrieked. Then his eyes narrowed. "Was it the durned plane that came stunting over me?"

"Yes, sergeant."

Ron marvelled at Jim's nerve.

The bully's great fists clenched till the whites of his knuckles gleamed.

"I'd like to have five minutes with the murderous dog who was flying that bus!" he snarled. "D'you know who it was flying it—eh?"

Ron trembled slightly, wondering what was coming next. But Jim was cool and self-assured.

"Well, sergeant, I can hardly tell you that," he replied, with an air of reflection. "But we did hear a mechanic say that the adjutant had ordered the plane."

Ron heaved an inward sigh of relief. Sergeant Wilkins' eyes opened wide.

"The adjutant," he muttered. "It was 'im, was it? Well, we'll see. Fall in!"

He roared the command to the two chums, and once again Ron and Jim began the monotonous routine of marching, wheeling, forming fours, and doubling.

"Left, right—left, right! Pick 'em up, you tin soldiers!"

Tired limbs dragged wearily in response to the sergeant's commands. Even Jim, the strongest cadet in the squad was beginning to crack. Ron looked ghastly, whilst young Thorburn was tottering.

"Put more snap into it, Thorburn!" snarled Wilkins. "I'll wring the water out of you! Left! Left! Double—march!"

It was more than flesh and blood could
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stand. Thorburn broke into a run, but he felt as if his legs were chained to the ground. A fierce pounding was drumming in his head, a mist was forming before his eyes.

Thud!

He sagged and collapsed completely in his tracks. This time the weary squad did not fall over him; each one of them had been expecting the breakdown, and automatically came to a standstill.

"Get up!" stormed Sergeant Wilkins. "Get up, you lazy rat!"

And no response, either in the form of movement or words, came from the youngster, the bully let his military walking-cane drop from under his arm into his hand, and took a firm grip of it.

"Get up!"

Whack!

With savage force the cane lashed the unconscious Thorburn. There was a mutinous growl from the rest of the squad.

"Stop it, you hulking great brute!"

Sergeant Wilkins paused and looked up ferociously.

"Who said that?"

"I did!" Jim Daniels stepped forward a pace. "Leave the kid alone! Can't you see he's all in?"

"You—you—"

Words seemed incapable of passing the enraged sergeant's lips. He made as if to swipe at the cold, scornful face of Daniels, thought better of it, and raised his walking-cane above the prostrate Thorburn.

"Get up, you skulking rat, or I'll give you another taste of this!"

The cane whistled through the air, but before it could land, Jim Daniels jumped forward. His temper was up. All the grievances—none of them imaginary—that had been stored up against the bullying sergeant fought for outlet. Hardly knowing what he did, Jim's clenched fist smashed against Wilkins' jaw with devastating effect.

The sergeant reeled away like a drunken man, stumbled a few paces backwards on his heels, and then crashed to earth like a felled ox.

Strained faces were directed towards him and then to Jim.

"Phew!" gasped Ron. "You've done it now, old son!"

Jim laughed shortly.

"I knew the rotter would get it one day. I know what it means, but I'm not whining. Hallo, kid!"

Thorburn sat up dazedly. He smiled wanly at Jim's anxious expression, then noted the recumbent form of the bully a few feet away from him.

"Who did that?" he panted. "You, Jim?"

There was no need for Jim to reply. Thorburn whistled and scrambled wearily to his feet. There was a twisted grin on his face as he started towards some fire-buckets in one of the out-buildings.

The sergeant still lay where he had fallen, knocked out to the wide, when young Thorburn returned with a bucket of water.

"You bullying dog!" he said. "You've told me often enough that you'd wring the water out of me! Well, try some of this!"

With the words he tilted the contents of the fire-bucket over the face of the bully like a second-reviving a fallen prize-fighter. Then he turned towards Jim.

"Wish I'd been awake to see it, Jim.

But, gosh, you'll be court-martialled for it!"

Jim bit his lip. The court-martial itself meant nothing to him, but he knew it spelled the end of him as a flying officer—as a flying man of any description. He would be "sent back to a line unit"—one of the most dreaded punishments that could be meted out to a cadet in the Royal Air Force, whose big ambition was to fly and take his chance up aloft with the rest of the knights of the upper spaces in the titanic world struggle.

Jim's worst fears were speedily confirmed. His only hope was that the bullying sergeant would prefer to keep the matter quiet rather than face the unpleasant cross-questioning of a court-martial. But when Sergeant Wilkins came to, his first command was to put Jim Daniels under close arrest.

In the guard-room Jim was formally charged with rank insubordination and with striking a superior officer.

Sergeant Wilkins fairly gloated over his victim.

"You young puppy," he hissed, "I've got you where I want you! In France you'd be shot for it! As it is, my buck, you can start trading your officer's glad-rags and Sam Browne belt toot-sweet. You won't want 'em!"

Jim sat down on a pile of blankets, wondering what the outcome of it all would be. His thoughts turned to the Western Front, the international shambles which had already carried off millions; and maimed as many. He thought of his brother, Major Daniels, D.F.C., who had covered himself with glory in a hundred aerial combats against the foe, only to fall a victim to an anti-aircraft shell that had struck his plane at a height of ten thousand feet above the war-scarred plains.

It was the sacrifice Major Daniels had made in the service of his country that had prompted Jim to join up at the first opportunity. It was the thought of carrying on the work of Britain's airmen, in which great company his brother had stood so high, that had prompted his application for a flying man's job in the Royal Air Force.

With the keenness and patriotism of youth Jim had quickly mastered the technicalities of flying, had walked through the "ground courses," had passed every exam with credit, and impatiently awaited the day, the hour, when the powers that be finally passed him out as a fit pilot to defend the aerial boundaries of the Allies.

And this was the end!

A court-martial, certain relegation to a "line regiment," severe punishment, and disgrace. So much for punching Sergeant Wilkins on his ugly jaw! Jim tried to cheer himself with the reflection that it was worth it; but the effort failed. In that outburst against the bully he had thrown away everything upon which he had set his heart.

Musing thuswise, Jim failed to hear the door of the guard-room open; failed to hear and to respond to Sergeant Wilkins' bull-like roar of "Shun!"

He became aware of newcomers when a shadow fell across the floor right beneath his gaze. Looking up, Jim saw the grim face of Major Cowlshaw, the adjutant.

"Shun!"

Jim was on his feet, standing stiffly to attention, even as Sergeant Wilkins mouthed the command for a second time.

"Stand easy, Daniels!" The adjutant's grim frown relaxed for a moment as he bent a fatherly glance on the strained face of the youngster. "Sergeant Wilkins has informed me of your assault upon him."

Jim's glance never wavered.

"You know what this means, Daniels?" The adjutant's voice and face were grim again. "Your services will not be required in the Royal Air Force any longer."

Jim's lip trembled just sufficient to expand the gloating smile of Sergeant Wilkins, who saw that the shaft had gone home.

"I understand, sir!"

"It is a rare pity," went on the adjutant, "for we held a very high opinion of you as a pilot. Have you any excuse to offer?"

"No, sir." Jim could not see himself trying to escape by accusing the sergeant, much as that worthy deserved it. "I committed a breach of Army discipline, and I must pay the penalty."

"Spoken like a soldier, at any rate!" murmured Major Cowlshaw. "Sergeant Wilkins!" he added.

The bully advanced a pace and clicked his heels.

"I have just received a batch of papers from the Air Ministry, Sergeant Wilkins," said the adjutant, "appointing twenty of the cadets here to commissioned rank."

"Yes, sir!" grunted Wilkins dutifully.

"Amongst the names appear that of James Fellowes Daniels—the prisoner."

Jim started and the colour ebbed and flowed in his face.

"With all due respect, sir," volunteered Wilkins, "the prisoner will hardly receive a commission in the circumstances."

"But the circumstances are these, sergeant." The adjutant displayed an official document. "That the twenty cadets from this station were granted commissioned rank by his Majesty as from yesterday's date."

Wilkins' jaw dropped, whilst Jim's heart leaped high with excitement and hope.

"The circumstances are altered somewhat, you will admit, sergeant," continued the major in a level tone that was somewhat persuasive, "for when this very regrettable incident occurred Mr. Daniels was your superior officer."

"Oh, was he?" growled Sergeant Wilkins. "Begging your pardon, sir, but even a second lieutenant cannot strike an N.C.O. and get away with it!"

The adjutant smiled.

"I agree. It is an heinous offence. But, sergeant, you and I are old birds at soldiering. Youth is notoriously impetuous. I think both of us can overlook Mr. Daniels' offence—"

Sergeant Wilkins grimaced at the title of "Mr." He had a feeling that he was coming out of this affair at the little end of the horn. Still, the bully was stubborn.

"I'm afraid, sir, I cannot overlook the offence," he submitted. "Cadet Daniels has been one of the most insubordinate soldiers I have ever met in all my years of service! He must pay the penalty!"

(Jim Daniels is a real plucked 'un by the look of things—what say you, chums? This is only the first of many exciting adventures that befall this bulldog spirited youngster. The more you read about him the better you'll like him. Look out, then, for the next chapters of this great yarn in next week's MAGNET.)

JIMMY THE ONE!

(Continued from page 23.)

business in an empty study—no master was likely to look in. Only Coker, if he guessed—

Footsteps again!

Bunter quaked.

The footsteps stopped at the door.

There was a hand on the door handle; it was about to turn. Billy Bunter glared desperately through his big spectacles. Once more he was run down—and now he was cornered! There was only one thing for it—a desperate charge the instant Coker opened the door—and instant flight before Coker recovered from the shock! Even the worm will turn—and Bunter was desperate now! Breathing hard, the fat junior stood in the darkness, watching for the door to open—and as it opened, and a figure appeared in the doorway, Bunter charged.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Mr. Lagden!

H ALLO, hallo, hallo! Lagden's back!

"Here he is!"

"Oh! Good-evening, sir!"

said Harry Wharton, politely, to the slim, handsome young man who had walked into the House.

Mr. Lagden, the new master of the Remove, nodded and smiled to the fellows of his Form who greeted him.

"I am glad to see you again, my boys," he said genially.

"I hope your relative is better, sir," said Bob Cherry.

All the Remove had heard that it was on account of a sick relative that Mr. Lagden had been called away from the school the previous day.

"Thank you, Cherry—yes," said Mr. Lagden—"very much better; and I am not likely to be called away again. Which I hope is good news for my boys," he added, with his pleasant smile.

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Harry.

"I gather that there is some rather unusual excitement going on," said Mr. Lagden. "Is it a fact that some boy is missing?"

"Yes, sir—Flip, of the Second Form."

"Flip!" repeated Mr. Lagden. "I think I remember that odd name! Is

not that the boy who was—'hem!—some sort of a vagrant, or something of the kind—before he came here?"

"That's the kid, sir," said Bob. "Some awful rotter that he knew in his alley, long ago, has got hold of him."

Mr. Lagden's handsome face became grave.

"I am very sorry to hear that," he said. "I hope the lad is safe. Some person he knew in former days—"

"An awful rascal, sir, called Jimmy the One," said Bob.

"Jimmy the One!" repeated Mr. Lagden, with a stare. "That is a very remarkable name! Has the man been caught?"

"Oh, no, sir—nobody's seen him."

"I hope the poor boy will return safely," said Mr. Lagden, with a very grave face. "He seemed rather an odd lad; but though I saw, of course, little of him, he gave me the impression of being a very decent little fellow. We must hope that he will soon be among us again."

And with a pleasant nod to the juniors, Mr. Lagden walked away towards Masters' Studies.

"Decent sort of chap," said Bob Cherry. "He seems sorry for poor old Flip."

Mr. Lagden, as he walked away, caught that remark, and smiled. He could not help wondering what Bob would have thought if he could have known that the man he was speaking of was known, in far other circles, as Jimmy the One! But no one at Greyfriars School was ever likely to know that now that Flip was gone.

The handsome young master strolled into Master's Passage. He exchanged a greeting with Mr. Prout, and another with Mr. Capper, and walked on to his own study.

He opened the door.

Crash!

Bump!

"Oh!"

"Yoooop!"

It was not an earthquake, though it seemed like one to Rupert Lagden.

A figure hurtled at him from the darkness, butting him fairly on the waistcoat. What it was he did not know for the moment. It felt like a battering-ram. A charge with Billy Bunter's weight behind it was no light matter.

Mr. Lagden sprawled headlong on his back.

"Oh!" he gasped, "Ooh—ohhh—what—ooh!"

"Ooooooop!" spluttered Billy Bunter.

The first part of Billy Bunter's programme had been carried out—he had charged the newcomer over. But the second part—instant flight from the spot—was not carried out. Mr. Lagden was quicker on the uptake than Coker of the Fifth!

With one iron hand Mr. Lagden jerked Bunter into the study. He switched on the light and caught up a cane from the table. The expression on his face was more reminiscent of Jimmy the One than of Rupert Lagden, M.A.

"I—I say— Yaroooooooh!" roared Bunter.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Ow, wow, wow!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Bunter hardly knew how he got out of the study. But he got out, and fled for his fat life, roaring.

"I say, you fellows—yow-ow-ow!" Bunter rolled into the Rag, yelling.

"I say, you fellows—wow!"

"What the thump—"

"Ow! Wow! That beast Lagden's back—ow!"

"We saw him come in," said Harry Wharton, staring. "What the dickens—"

"Ow! Wow! I was in his study—ow! I didn't know he was coming—wow! I thought it was Coker after me—yow!—I butted him over—yooop!—and he pitched into me! Yaroooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!" roared Bunter. "If that's how you—yow-ow!—sympathise with a fellow—"

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

Perhaps it was all the sympathy that Billy Bunter deserved. At all events, it was all that he got!

THE END.

(The next adventure in this popular series of Greyfriars yarns is entitled "THE HUNTED MASTER!" Owing to the great demand for the MAGNET nowadays, readers should make a point of ordering their copy WELL IN ADVANCE!)

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We tested dozens of new 2-valve sets . . . examined *every* set that claimed to compete with the K-B "Masterpiece," and *not one* surpassed the standard set by Kolster-Brandes.

The K-B "Masterpiece" is the finest value offered! A revelation in 2-valve radio. Get your K-B quickly and enjoy the pick of the winter programmes . . . free . . . by saving B.D.V. coupons—from to-day.

500

COUPONS . . .

B.D.V.

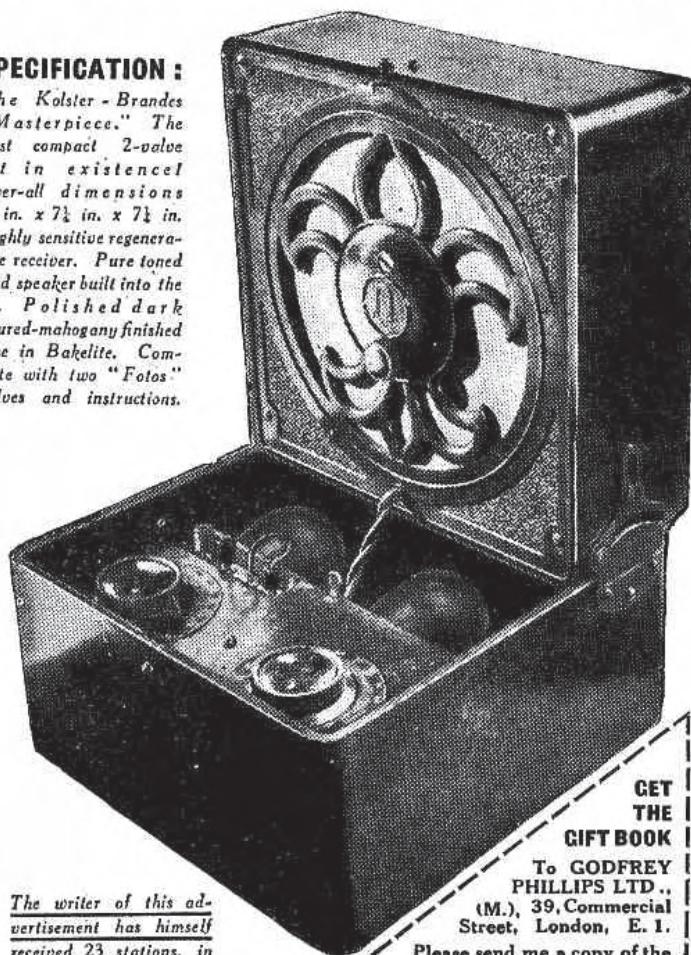
CIGARETTES
each Coupon worth 3
TIMES other coupon values



EVEN LESS COUPONS REQUIRED FROM
B.D.V. TOBACCO—EACH TOBACCO COUPON
BEING WORTH 1½ CIGARETTE COUPONS

SPECIFICATION :

The Kolster - Brandes "Masterpiece." The most compact 2-valve set in existence! Over-all dimensions 7½ in. x 7½ in. x 7½ in. Highly sensitive regenerative receiver. Pure toned loud speaker built into the lid. Polished dark figured-mahogany finished case in Bakelite. Complete with two "Fotos" valves and instructions.



The writer of this advertisement has himself received 23 stations, in London, on the K-B "Masterpiece" Set, using only a 15 ft. indoor aerial.

GET
THE
GIFT BOOK

To GODFREY
PHILLIPS LTD.,
(M.), 39, Commercial
Street, London, E. 1.

Please send me a copy of the
amazing B.D.V. Gift Book, in
colour, showing 275 treble-value
gifts, and including 5 free coupons.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

at B.1.....

ISSUED BY THE PROPRIETORS, GODFREY PHILLIPS,
LIMITED. ESTABLISHED 1844.

"HOW TO BRING UP A FORM MASTER!"

This book that is selling by the thousand! Don't miss it! Written by H. Vernon-Smith, the Terror of a Hundred Form-rooms! Published by the Anglo-American Publishers, Inc., Study No. 14. Price 74c, and dirt cheap as that!

Noises

There was considerable alarm in the Shell quarters last night when a series of rumblings and crashes, interrupted with several ripping sounds, echoed down the passageway. Fears that an earthquake had struck the ship were quickly dispelled when the roar of a "Hoh" ("How") and "Saw" ("I") arose from the kitchen, followed by a series of "Hoh"s and "Saw"s, which carried several as they rubbed for the reason.

We are glad to report that no casualties resulted from the Hoekman study, where the champagne flutes of the form were trying out a new composition.

The faces, which were designed and manufactured by Franky Nugent, are marvellously like the originals. Waxworks are a new line for Wibley.

On Saturday they spent each other coldly. On Monday they exchanged an icy stare. On Tuesday Loder snarped his fingers in Wingate's beard. On Wednesday he recoiled as from a blow, while to the lips. On Wednesday Loder pummed on Wingate, the Common Law. On Thursday he snatched at Wingate's hair. On Friday he said, "Blast it, 'Blast it!"

That's as much as we've been able to do so far. We're simply dressing the most dignified. Why, if they go in this racket, they'll start treating each other's mannikies or something, and then that will confuse Sixth Form society, then think of the noise that will confound Grayzean! if this amazing outbreak of knowing among the prefects is allowed to go on!

I crashed into the bank all of a sudden. Luckily I peaked off again without further mishap. But there would have been something wrong with the river, for about six seconds later I crashed into the opposite bank!

But conditions aren't good for a brilliant performance. On consideration I think I can produce on a wider water.