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THE

# NELSON LEE

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Archie screwed his monocle firmly into his eye and gazed at Yung Ching.



And there lay the Chinaman, motionless as he had fallen.

## "YUNG-CHING, THE CHINEE!"

The First Story of a Grand New Series of School Adventures, with a strong Chinese Mystery and Detective Interest.





Just as the Chinaman was preparing to enter, he suddenly gave a most peculiar sound—a kind of subdued scream.



# YUNG CHING THE CHINEE!



(THE NARRATIVE RELATED THROUGHOUT BY NIPPER.)

This week's story is the first of a grand new series, in which the activities of a powerful Chinese Tong, or secret society, will provide some thrilling descriptions of the strange and wonderful mysteries of the fascinating Far East. With the arrival of Yung Ching, Nelson Lee soon discovers that he will be called upon to match his wits against a cold and inscrutable enemy from China, whose cunning schemes and vengeance have never been known to fail. The laughable situations created by Archie, Handforth, and other well-known St. Frank's Juniors will not be neglected.—THE EDITOR.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE VERY LATEST.

"YUNG CHING," I said, turning away from the window.

"Eh?"

"Who?"

"Yung Ching," I repeated. "You remember that Chinese kid we came across in the Crystal Palace grounds on Bank Holiday. He was collared by a couple of rotters, and carried off. We rescued him——"

"Fathead!" interrupted Handforth. "We know all about that! Weren't we there? What about the kid?"

"He's just arrived," I replied smoothly.

"Just arrived!" exclaimed Tommy Watson. "Here?"

"Coming up the stairs now," I remarked.

"That same Chinaman is with him—Tsen Wang, I think he said his name was. He's one of the big pots at the Chinese Embassy, I believe."

Before any of the juniors could put more questions, the door of the consulting-room opened, and the comfortable figure of Mrs. Jones appeared. For we were at Nelson Lee's well-appointed chambers in Gray's Inn





Road, and the worthy housekeeper was looking somewhat suspicious.

"Oh, there you are, Master Nipper," she said.

"Exactly," I said. "All of me, Mrs. Jones!"

"There's a gent downstairs, sir," said the housekeeper. "Leastaways, he's dressed like a gent, and he's got a boy with him. Says he wants to see the master urgent. But I don't hold with these Japanese, or South Sea Islanders, or whatever they are! I don't trust none of 'em?"

I grinned.

"Don't you worry, Mrs. Jones," I said. "The gentleman is quite all right, and you'd better bring him up at once, and the boy, too! I'm sure the guv'nor will see them."

"If you says so, Master Nipper, I s'pose it's all right," exclaimed Mrs. Jones doubtfully. "But I will say as these furriners always gets me suspicious. I don't reckon they're up to no good!"

And Mrs. Jones departed, shaking her head. I grinned to the others, there were six of them in the consulting room with me. Tommy Watson, Sir Montie Tregellis-West, Archie Glenthorne, and the famous trio of Study D—Handforth and Co.

Most of them had arrived only a short time before. It was the first day of the new term at St. Frank's, and we had been spending the Easter holidays in London. And now these six fellows had come from their own homes to collect me, as it were. We had arranged to go to Victoria in a party, and travel down to the old school in the same train. We should probably find Pitt and Grey and several others at Victoria.

We had spent quite an enjoyable holiday, including a memorable visit to the Crystal Palace on Easter Monday. But now the days of freedom were over, and we were once more going back to St. Frank's with thoughts of fine spring days, and cricket. The season was just commencing, and King Football was practically at the end of his tether.

Nelson Lee, at the moment, was in his laboratory. He had spent the holidays in the most enjoyable way for him—experimenting, making one or two investigations in crime, and assisting Scotland Yard in a few knotty problems. The guv'nor enjoyed being back in London for a spell.

"I wonder why these Chinks have come here," said Handforth. "I'm rather glad, because I wanted to have another talk with that queer little kid. I hardly had a chance when we met them at the Palace."

"Not such a little kid, either," said McClure. "He may be small, but I'll bet he's pretty nearly the same age as we are, Handy."

"What rot!" said Edward Oswald Handforth. "He's not more than ten!"

I grinned.

"I think Yung Ching is somewhere between fourteen and fifteen," I remarked. "He's rather small for his age, but he knows a good bit, I'll warrant. And when we saw him in the Crystal Palace grounds he was suffering from some kind of a drug. He was dull and listless. I'll bet you'll see a difference to-day."

Before Handforth could make any further remark, the door opened and Mrs. Jones ushered the two visitors in. Mr. Tsen Wang was a distinguished looking Oriental, scrupulously attired, with spotless linen, and wearing pince-nez. His companion was a Chinese boy, also scrupulously attired.

Mr. Tsen Wang bowed.

"I am pleased to see you again," he said gravely. "I not forget what you have done. And I have come this morning hoping to see Mr. Nelson Lee. He is willing to grant me interview?"

"Stay here a minute, sir, and I'll tell Mr. Lee," I replied.

Hurrying out, I went into the laboratory and found the guv'nor here. He was busily engaged with test tubes and retorts, and he looked at me rather impatiently as I entered.

"My dear Nipper, please let me finish this experiment—it is most important," he said. "Don't interrupt me now, young 'un. Upon the result of it depends a very important criminal case."

"Sorry, guv'nor; but I was wondering if you could spare a quarter of an hour," I replied. "You remember I told you about that Chinese boy who was nearly kidnapped on Bank Holiday——"

"At the Crystal Palace," said Lee. "Yes what about him?"

"He's just come, sir, with Mr. Tsen Wang, of the Chinese Embassy," I exclaimed. "Mr. Wang wants you to grant him an interview."

Nelson Lee laid one of the test tubes down, and removed his flowing laboratory coat.

"Oh, well, in that case, I suppose I had better see the gentleman," he said. "I am rather interested in the matter, and I don't want to keep Mr. Wang waiting indefinitely. But it is rather a pity he didn't make an appointment."

Nelson Lee accompanied me out into the consulting-room, and I introduced him to Mr. Tsen Wang. The latter bowed gravely, and regarded Nelson Lee with a keen scrutiny.

"I regret, sir, that I should come without appointment," said the Chinese attache. "Perhaps you will forgive? But the matter is important, and I would like to seek your advice."

"Please come with me, Mr. Wang," said Nelson Lee. "Do you wish your young companion to remain here?"



"It would be better," said the Oriental. "Thank you. You boys will look after Yung Ching, will you not?"

"Leave him to us, sir," I replied. "He'll be safe enough."

"I am obliged," said Mr. Tsen Wang, bowing again.

He went with Nelson Lee into a private inner room. And as soon as the door closed, Handforth turned to the Chinese boy, and looked him up and down without any pretence of politeness. Edward Oswald was always blunt in speech and blunt in manner. He couldn't be anything else.

"So your name's Yung Ching?" he asked accusingly.

"T'ankée you, yes!" said the Chinese boy.

"And what's the idea of coming here this morning?"

"No savvy!"

"What?"

"No undelstand," said Yung Ching. "Plentee quick talker no goodee. Me no savvy at allee!"

The Chinese boy smiled broadly, and his eyes twinkled as he shook his head. There was something about him which one couldn't help liking. He was bright and alert, and his smile was one which caused other smiles.

Handforth, however, only glared.

"Great pip!" he said. "No savvy at allee! What language do you call that?"

"Heap good Engleesh," said Yung Ching proudly.

"Heap rotten English," snapped Handforth. "My dear kid, I don't want to be critical, but you talk in the most awful manner. The chap who taught you English knew as much about the language as a donkey!"

Yung Ching again shook his head.

"Allee samee no undelstand," he said.

"Leave him alone, Handy, and don't be an ass!" I said. "Let me ask him a few questions——"

"Rats!" interrupted Handforth. "Go and eat coke! Look here, Yung Ching, I'm talking slowly now, and if you can't understand plain English you're no good! Where do you come from?"

"Ngan-chau-fu," replied the Chinese boy.

"Where's that?"

"Velly heap biggee city in China," said Yung Ching. "Velly big placee. In plovinee of Hu-kiang."

"Plovinee?" repeated Handforth vaguely.

"T'ankée you, yes," said Yung Ching.

"What's a plovinee——"

"Don't be a fathead, Handy!" put in Church. "He means province."

"Oh," said Handforth. "Well, if he means province, why the dickens does he say plovinee? What's the good of talking like that? Now, look here, Yung Ching. Who's your father?"

"Father big mandalin in Ngan-chau-fu," said Yung Ching proudly. "Heap plentee

impolent bossie. Biggee man luler. Muchee lichee!"

Handforth gasped.

"What's this, double Dutch?" he asked blankly. "Or is the young ass talking in Chinese?"

"It's English, you fathead," grinned Church.

"But I can't understand a word of it!" snorted Handforth. "His father's a mandoline? That's a musical instrument——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sundry cackles!" murmured Archie. "I mean to say, the dear old chappie is getting slightly mixed, what? Somewhat entangled, and all that kind of rot! But I must remark that the old chatter is decidedly misty, if you know what I mean! Foggy, and what not!"

"I understood what Yung Ching said, Archie," I smiled.

"Absolutely!" agreed Archie. "Oh, rather! Bulging brain, and so forth! The old bean is a dashed lot more serviceable than mine, don't you know! A kind of ornament, what? I mean to say, my superstructure is built for comfort rather than speed, old tulip! No high gear, and all that!"

"Dry up, Archie!" snapped Handforth. "Don't interrupt!"

"Sorrow!" said Archie bowing. "Several large portions of grovel! Kindly accept the old apology. Proceed, laddie. Carry on! Continue with the somewhat frightfully personal stuff!"

Handforth turned to Yung Ching and sniffed.

"So your father's a musician?" he asked.

"Plays the mandoline, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the cackle for now?" roared Handforth, glaring round. "Did I say anything funny? This Chinese kid distinctly told me that his father is a mandoline! Of course, he means that he's a member of an orchestra——"

"Hold on, Handy," I chuckled. "You've got it all wrong."

"Muchee 'long," said Yung Ching. "Him no savvy at allee!"

"You distinctly said something about a mandoline——" began Handforth.

"He said that his father is a mandarin," I interrupted. "I suppose you know what a mandarin is? A kind of magistrate or judge, or a high official in the service of the government. A mandarin is something like an earl or a duke in England——"

"What's that got to do with it?" demanded Handforth. "This young fathead didn't say anything about a mandarin——"

"Can't you understand, Handy?" asked Church. "He's Chinese, and he can't pronounce the words as we do. He said 'mandalin,' but he meant mandarin."

"He's dotty!" said Handforth gruffly.

"Then what was all that about his pater



being a luler. What the thunder is a luler?"

"Luler?" said Yung Ching. "Him plenty big potee!"

"That's what you are—potty!" snapped Handforth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"T'ankee you, no!" said Yung Ching. "Me no big potee. Too youngee! Become big potee in heap plentee years. Then I be likee my honouable father. I be biggee luler, too!"

"Luler!" roared Handforth. "What's a luler?"

"A ruler, of course," I explained. "You haven't got the hang of it yet, old son!"

"A ruler!" gasped Handforth. "But a ruler's a thing you draw lines with—Oh, a ruler!" he added vaguely. "Why the dickens didn't you say so? You mean a chap who rules?"

"That's what rulers generally do," said McClure.

"Absolutely!" agreed Archie. "I mean to say, the priceless old chappie wouldn't be a ruler unless he shoved the old weight about, what? The fact is, these old buffers who rule——"

"Dry up!" howled Handforth.

"Great dashed Scott!" gasped Archie, staggering slightly. "Severe blast from the north-east! Clarion calls, and what not! This, as it were, is where I slide serenely into oblivion!"

Archie sat down, and looked dreamily at the ceiling. And Handforth, rather red in the face, turned once again to Yung Ching. The Chinese boy was smiling as urbanely as ever.

"Well, we're getting at it by degrees!" said Handforth. "Your father's a mandarin, and a kind of a ruler in Chin-wag-chu——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ngan-chau-fu, Handy!" I corrected.

"Same thing!" snapped Handforth. "Don't interrupt, ass! What does it matter whether it's Chin-wag-chu, or Chu-chin-chow? All these Chinese names sound the same! About the most idiotic language that was ever invented! We've got to the point that Yung Ching's pater is a mandarin——"

"Allee samee, yes!" said Yung Ching. "Him muchee lichee."

"Him what?" said Handforth faintly.

"Muchee lichee," said the Chinese boy. "Plentee tael!"

"Lichee!" repeated Handforth. "I don't——"

"Rich!" said Church. "I never thought you were so dense, Handy."

"Rich," breathed Handforth. "The young idiot—didn't say rich—he said 'lichee!' Why does he stick these Chinese words in?"

"Him Engleesh word!" grinned Yung Ching. "Lichee. Him meane that my father got heap plentee tael."

"Tail!" gasped Handforth feebly. "He's not a monkey, is he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tail, I can't quite get that myself!" said Watson. "He distinctly said that his father has got plenty of tail!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tael—t-a-e-l!" I grinned, spelling it. "A tael is a Chinese coin, you ignorant chumps! If you only paid more attention to your lessons at St. Frank's you wouldn't be puzzled. Everything that Yung Ching has said is perfectly clear. His pater's a mandarin—a ruler—and he's jolly rich."

Archie Glenthorne adjusted his monocle.

"I mean to say, what domes of knowledge!" he observed. "Extraordinary, dear old tins of fruit! Nipper is positively a bally encyclopaedia, don't you know, waltzing around on a pair of legs! A most brainy cove, as a matter of fact."

"There's nothing brainy in understanding Yung Ching," I said calmly. "If you could only be with him for a day or two you'd soon be able to get the hang all right. He ought to come to St. Frank's—then he'd improve in his speech."

"St. Frank's!" echoed Handforth. "We've enough freaks there already!" he added, looking at Archie significantly.

Archie turned slightly red.

"Dash it all!" he exclaimed. "I mean to say, dash it all! A somewhat frightful insinuation, as it were. Near the edge, and all that! A freak, what? Dear old lads, I really think that——"

"Don't worry, Archie!" I put in. "The biggest freak of all is Handy himself!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Handforth snorted.

"Jealousy!" he said bitterly. "You know I'm the chap who ought to be captain of the Remove, and leader of the Fossils, and so you call me a freak. I'll jolly well punch your nose——"

"Oh, Handy!" I said reproachfully. "You would? In my own little home? That's not playing the game, surely——"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Handforth. "We don't want to start an argument now! And I'm going to question this chap a bit more," he added, turning to Yung Ching. "Look here, Chinky, what are you doing in England?"

Yung Ching smiled expansively.

"My honouable father sendee me for learnee t'ings," he replied. "I comee with my honouable father's august friend, Mist' Tsen Wang. He takee me to blig schoolee. Muchee learnee. Plentee workee!"

"You need it!" said Handforth. "Plentee workee! You'd better fill most of your time in by learning how to talk properly. I suppose your pater's got a ripping place in China?"

"No savvy," said Yung Ching, shaking his head.

"A big house, I mean—lots of servants, and all that?"



"My honourable father has heapee poor hovel in China," said Yung Ching. "I leavee my honoured father's humble roofee to comee abload. I now stayee in thee beautiful and glorious homce of Mist' Tsen Wang."

Handforth looked surprised.

"So his pater's only got a hovel in China?" he asked. "I thought somebody said he was rich? Must be a miser——"

"Don't be a fathead, Handy!" I grinned. "Surely, you know that it's a Chinese custom to run one's own property down, and to praise everybody else's? I expect Yung Ching has come from a glorious home in China."

Handforth shook his head.

"It's beyond me!" he said flatly. "Thank goodness, the young ass isn't coming to St. Frank's! That's all I can say!"

But, as it happened, Yung Ching was coming!

## CHAPTER II.

### AN UNKNOWN PERIL!



**N**ELSON LEE sat opposite to Mr. Tsen Wang, and for some moments neither of the pair spoke. Lee was waiting for his visitor to broach the subject of his

call. And at last the Chinaman bent forward in his chair.

"I am sorry to disturb you in this way, Mr. Lee," he said, in perfect English. "I not know that you will do as I ask, but I am hoping that we can come to arrangement. I am very worried."

"Regarding Yung Ching, I presume?"

"Yes. I brought him from China at the wish of His Excellency, my noble master, the great Mandarin of Ngan-chau-fu," said Mr. Tsen Wang. "The boy has come to England for the purpose of education. His Excellency desires that Yung Ching shall have wonderful education. Also, there is danger."

"Danger?" repeated Nelson Lee. "From what source?"

The Chinaman shook his head.

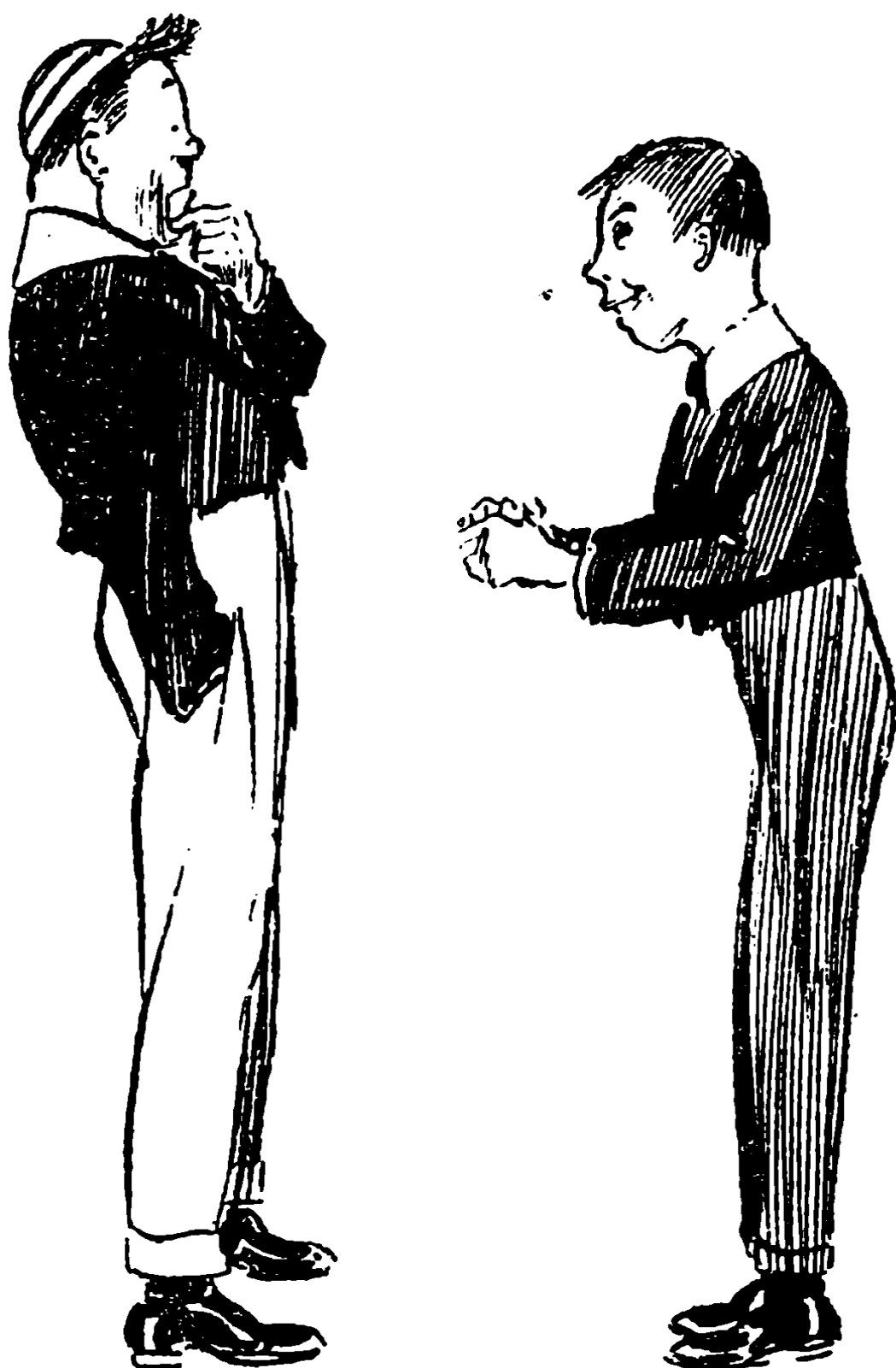
"Much regretting, I cannot explain," he said slowly.

"Then I am afraid——"

"Wait! Forgive bluntness, but I wish to say more," interrupted Tsen Wang. "Perhaps you know of what happened to Yung Ching some days ago when at the Palace of Crystal."

"I have heard some of the details," said Nelson Lee.

"I took the boy there for pleasure, so that he might see some of London," went on the Chinese attache. "I had no idea, Mr. Lee, that any danger might exist. A colleague advised me for pleasure, and I accepted. So we went, and much enjoy-



"And what's the idea of coming here this morning?" asked Handy.

"No undelstand," said Yung Ching. "Plentee quick talkee no goodee. Me no savvy at allee!"

ment was ours—for long time. Yung Ching delighted by everything. No thought of possible danger."

"And then, I understand, you went into the maze?"

"He is good name—maze!" said Mr. Tsen Wang. "It was great foolishness for me to take boy in that place. But I not suspect that anything would happen. Then, as we in the middle, two Chinamen suddenly come from behind. They have been following us all the time, but I ignorant of this. Then they knock me on the head, and take Yung Ching away."

"For what reason?" asked Nelson Lee.

"I cannot tell you."

"Do you mean that you don't know?"

"I do know," said Tsen Wang. "But I cannot tell you."

"I am sorry that you should be compelled to remain secretive," said Nelson Lee. "However, this is your business, Mr. Wang, and not mine. I know the rest of your little story. A party of St. Frank's schoolboys happened to come along, and they picked you up, and then went in



chase of the kidnappers. They succeeded in rescuing Yung Ching just before he got clear of the grounds."

"That is so," said Tsen Wang. "My gratitude enormous. I cannot express how thankful I was—how thankful I am. If Yung Ching taken away, I die from shame and regret. I could not face my honourable master. So my thankfulness is high. And now, Mr. Lee, to speak of another matter."

Nelson Lee could hardly make out what his visitor was driving at.

"While at the Palace of Crystal one of these esteemed schoolboys told me that you are his father," said the Chinese attache. "His father—his governor, as he put it. That is correct?"

"Well, hardly!" smiled Nelson Lee. "You are referring to Nipper. He always calls me his guv'nor, but I am not his father. I am the lad's guardian, and, to all intents and purposes, we are father and son."

"That is good," said Tsen Wang. "I understand, Mr. Lee. It was this honourable boy who told me that you are great and wonderful detective——"

"Nipper has a habit of exaggerating!" put in Lee, with a laugh.

"No, no—others have told me same," exclaimed the Chinaman. "I know. Your reputation great—wonderful. A detective who has been trusted with matters of international importance. A man of honour."

"I trust so, Mr. Wang," said Lee quietly.

"And you are master at St. Frank's College?"

"Yes."

"Is that not strange?" asked Tsen Wang. "You not waste your time there?"

"Well, in a way, perhaps I do waste a certain amount of my time," replied Nelson Lee. "But you would be surprised, Mr. Wang, if you knew the number of criminal cases that come my way. And, after all, St. Frank's is only a short distance from London—simply on the South Coast. Any case of an important nature can be attended to by me promptly and easily. It makes little difference where I am located. In many respects it helps my work to live at St. Frank's in the peaceful role of a schoolmaster."

"I understand—it is a good idea," said the Chinaman. "But you are there—you keep on the spot?"

"Generally, yes," said Nelson Lee. "By all this, Mr. Wang, I gather that you are suggesting St. Frank's as a future home for your charge—Yung Ching? Is that the proposal?"

"I have nearly fixed arrangements for Yung Ching to go to Holtdene College, in Kent," replied the Chinese gentleman. "It is big school, with great advantage. But after what happened at the Palace of Crystal, I am worried. I fear that Yung Ching will be in danger. The enemies from

China know. They have discovered. That is great pity, for I am afraid to leave Yung Ching at school."

"Is the peril so acute, then?"

"I do not know," said Tsen Wang. "It may be, but I hope not. But I can take no risks. You are man who has had much experience of criminals. You are clever in that work, Mr. Lee. Can the boy go to St. Frank's?"

Nelson Lee looked thoughtful.

"I do not quite know," he said slowly. "I think the matter could be arranged with every satisfaction——"

"I will pay large fee—any sum you name," put in Tsen Wang. "Money, it does not matter. Plenty. Yung Ching's safety must be certain."

"You think the boy would be secure at St. Frank's?"

"You are there, Mr. Lee," replied the other. "You would look after Yung Ching. You would protect him. I give you fee for this alone—quite separate from the school charges. You understand? You know such things as this, and you could look after Yung Ching well. There is another reason."

"And what is that?"

"The boy pleased with English boys," said the Chinaman. "He likes them much. They save him, and he is grateful. You follow? He would prefer to go to school where they are, and not to strangers. They clever boys, too. They will help to see that Yung Ching is kept safe."

Nelson Lee nodded.

"Well, I think we can regard that as a certainty," he said, smiling. "I have only to say a few words to Nipper and Handforth and the others, and they will do everything in their power to see that Yung Ching is well looked after. And, as you say, Mr. Wang, I should be on the spot personally. From your point of view, the suggestion is a perfectly sound one."

The Chinaman looked up eagerly.

"And you will agree?" he asked. "You will do this?"

"It is not my way to be hurried," replied Nelson Lee. "I think it only right, Mr. Wang, that I should know just a few more details beforehand. You want me to protect Yung Ching from some danger. I should like to know what that danger is."

"I cannot tell."

"You will not explain why you require the boy to be protected?"

"It is not in my power to tell of these things," said Tsen Wang. "I am greatly sorry, Mr. Lee. I would like to be frank with you. But I cannot. I am pledged by my honourable master."

"That is very unfortunate," said Nelson Lee. "I would like you to know, Mr. Wang, that it is one of my fixed rules to refuse any case unless my client is perfectly and absolutely frank. And yet you are



singularly secretive. This is most regrettable."

The Chinaman's eyes were filled with anxiety.

"You will do nothing?" he asked huskily. "You refuse?"

"No, I do not refuse," said Lee. "There is an exception to every rule, and I am inclined to make this my exception. I should not like anything to happen to Yung Ching because of my refusal to help you. I will take the boy to St. Frank's with me, and I can safely promise you that the matter can be arranged so that he becomes a scholar in the Remove Form with all these other boys as companions."

Mr. Tsen Wang clasped his hands fervently.

"I am grateful, Mr. Lee," he said. "I am so pleased I cannot find words to say what is in me. Thank you—thank you again and again! I am deeply sorry I cannot tell you of the danger."

"It is very unfortunate," said Nelson Lee. "For it would be an immense help if only you could give me some hint as to the reason for this mysterious menace which is hovering over the lad."

The Chinaman nodded.

"A hint?" he repeated thoughtfully. "Perhaps—yes. I can give a hint, Mr. Lee, without betraying confidence. The danger is most acute, and it was for this reason that Yung Ching was sent to England. His honoured father did not merely send him for education."

"I assumed that much, of course."

"You are clever—you understand," said Tsen Wang. "It is sad, Mr. Lee. Yung Ching had a brother and a sister. Both healthy, strong, good. They are dead. They were killed by enemies."

"And Yung Ching is in danger of being killed, too?" said Nelson Lee. "I can easily see, Mr. Wang, that the Mandarin has incurred the wrath of some powerful gang—probably a big secret society in China. Am I right?"

"The Chinaman's face was inscrutable."

"You are clever!" he repeated softly. "I cannot say more—you are too sharp-witted, Mr. Lee. And if I betray confidence I suffer with death. You appreciate my position? I cannot tell without placing myself in position of danger."

"Yes, Mr. Wang, your own position is awkward, and I fully understand," said the detective. "We will let it go at that. You want the boy to come to St. Frank's, and you are anxious for him to be protected and cared for. Very well. We will get down to a few business details. They are necessary, although tedious."

And so for some few minutes Nelson Lee and Tsen Wang discussed matters of finance

Yung Ching's fees at the school—the clothing he would require—his general outfit—what pocket-money he would receive—

and a host of other details. All these things had to be discussed.

So the few minutes, in the end, lengthened into something approaching an hour. But when Nelson Lee and Tsen Wang finally joined us in the consulting-room the whole thing was fixed up. The gov'nor had taken the thing upon himself, knowing full well that Dr. Stafford, the Head of St. Frank's, would be in agreement.

"Sorry to keep you waiting so long, boys, and I hope you haven't missed your train," said the gov'nor cheerfully. "I dare say you were wondering why we were so long?"

"Yes, sir," said Handforth. "And we shall have to buck up and get to Victoria if we want to go down with the other fellows."

"Fortunately, there are plenty of other trains," said Nelson Lee. "Well, boys. I suppose you have been having a chat with your new schoolfellow?"

"New schoolfellow, sir," I said. "You mean—"

"Yung Ching," said Nelson Lee, smiling.

"What!" gasped Handforth. "He's coming to St. Frank's?"

"Yes, Handforth."

"For good, sir?"

"As a permanent scholar."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Handforth blankly. "Then—then we're going to have another freak, after all! Oh, well, what does it matter? We shall have enough to set up a side show, if we want to!"

Mr. Tsen Wang was talking rapidly to the Chinese boy in their native tongue. And Yung Ching's eyes were gleaming with satisfaction and delight. There was no question about his pleasure at hearing the verdict.

"Allee samce heap plentee good!" he said, turning to us with a flush beneath his yellow skin. "Muchee fine! Me congratulate myself. Shakee hands!"

And Yung Ching proceeded to shake hands with himself. He went round, facing all the juniors in turn, clasping and unclasping his hands.

"Is this what he calls shaking hands?" grinned Watson. "I never saw such a queer card!"

"Off his rocker!" said Handforth pityingly. "Still, I'm not going to make a fuss—it's not my business. If he wants to come to St. Frank's, let him come. It wouldn't be a bad idea to put him with Archie, in Study No. 13. They'd make a ripping pair."

Archie Glenthorne adjusted his monocle.

"Absolutely!" he said. "I mean to say, dash it all! Absolutely not! I have an idea, laddies, that Phipps would raise the old objection. Phipps would proceed to give sundry expressions of opinion. You gather the old trend? I'm not the chappie to be impolite, and all that, but there's a limit, what? It simply couldn't be done, old beans. Absolutely imposs.! There's nix doing at all!"



"Don't worry, Archie," I said. "Yung Ching's all right, but I don't suppose he'll be planted in your study. Personally, I am rather pleased that he's coming to St. Frank's. He'll provide the Remove with some amusement."

Yung Ching himself was overjoyed.

He had not particularly wanted to go to the big school in Kent. After meeting the fellows at the Crystal Palace, he had expressed a keen desire to become a scholar at St. Frank's. And so the whole thing was arranged.

Mr. Tsen Wang hurried away very shortly in order to make a number of necessary purchases, for Yung Ching was going to the old school without delay. Nelson Lee had promised to escort him personally.

And soon after the Chinaman had gone I happened to go to the consulting-room window and glance out into Gray's Inn Road upon the busy traffic. Then I suddenly stared hard.

"By jingo!" I muttered tensely.

Was it merely coincidence, or had the fact some significance? Outside, down on the opposite pavement, two ill-dressed Orientals were walking along, and I knew in a moment that they were Chinese!

It struck me at first that the thing was merely a trick of chance. One can see Chinamen in London at almost any time of the day, particularly in the neighbourhood of Commercial Road, or Wapping, or Limehouse. And for a pair of Chinks to be in Gray's Inn Road was not precisely startling.

It was only strange that they should happen to pass just at this moment—when we had a Chinese boy on the premises who had narrowly escaped kidnapping only a few days earlier.

I had almost satisfied myself that I was making something out of nothing, when I saw that the two Chinamen had paused, and were looking in a shop window. There was no law to prevent them doing this, of course. But, having looked, they did not proceed on their way, but turned back.

And their gait was suggestive of the fact that they were killing time. They had no particular objective in view. To put it bluntly, they were hanging about opposite our abode! This meant that the Chinese watchers were interested in Yung Ching—since it was fairly certain that they were not interested in us.

And as I stood there, with Handforth and the other juniors chattering behind me, I was lost in a short daydream.

There is always something mysterious and inscrutable about the Chinese. Both Nelson Lee and I had good reason to know this. And I could only regard the presence of these two watching Chinamen as a sinister omen. After what had happened on Bank Holiday, there could be not the slightest doubt that Yung Ching was very much in demand by certain of his own countrymen.

Why he should be was a mystery. And

the fact that he was coming to St. Frank's seemed to hint that he would bring the mystery there with him. There was nothing sinister about Yung Ching. He was a harmless, bland little fellow, and I couldn't understand why all this activity should be set afoot on his account. There was something behind it all which remained obscure and hidden.

I remembered how the gov'nor and I had once been menaced by a deadly Chinese Tong—that is, a secret society—whose headquarters were in a big American city. Nelson Lee and I had been hounded down from place to place, until our lives had been a misery. It was this, in fact, that had originally led to our going to St. Frank's. The danger from the Tong passed, but we remained at the old school. It would be rather curious if we were once more destined to be associated with the mysterious natives of China and their unfathomable ways.

Again I looked out of the window, after shaking myself into wakefulness. The two Chinamen were still there. I went out of the room, and found the gov'nor in the laboratory.

"I don't want you to say I'm fanciful, sir, but I think there are two Chinks watching this place," I said softly. "They're over the road——"

"My dear Nipper, I saw them some minutes ago," interrupted Nelson Lee. "Yes, without question, they are watching this house. I am not at all sure that I have been wise in permitting Yung Ching to come to St. Frank's."

"You think he'll bring trouble with him, sir?"

Nelson Lee looked grave.

"I have not a doubt of it!" he replied grimly.

"Then why did you have anything to do with Mr. Tsen Wang?" I asked, in surprise.

"Because it is far better for the boy to come to St. Frank's, where he will have a certain amount of protection, at least," said Nelson Lee. "Mr. Wang is a gentleman, Nipper—a highly important official at the Chinese Embassy, and a man, I am convinced, of absolutely honourable motives. He would have sent Yung Ching to Holtdene College if I had refused entry into St. Frank's. And at Holtdene the poor lad would have been utterly at the mercy of any enemies who menaced him. At St. Frank's both you and I will be on the spot. It will be our task to see that Yung Ching is protected and guarded."

I whistled.

"Phew! That's a bit of a tall order, gov'nor," I said. "We can't be hanging round the chap all day——"

"That will not be necessary," interrupted Lee. "There will be very little for you to do, Nipper. I shall be there; and I rather fancy that Yung Ching's enemies will get something of a shock if they commence any



operations at St. Frank's. Under all the circumstances, my only course was to arrange for Yung Ching to come to St. Frank's as a scholar. If he went elsewhere, and harm came to him, I should never afterwards forgive myself."

I nodded.

"That's just it, sir," I said. "You've been practically forced into it. But how do you know that the Head will approve?"

"There are one or two vacancies this term, Nipper, and there is no reason why any objection should be raised to the son of a rich Chinese mandarin becoming a scholar at the old school. In all our big public schools there are pupils from the far corners of the world—Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Brazilian, and others. St. Frank's does not bar foreigners, as you know."

"Well, if Yung Ching's arrival at St. Frank's brings any excitement, I sha'n't mind," I said cheerfully. "We can do with something like that to buck us up! Life's pretty slow unless we have a few adventures sandwiched in here and there."

But, as I uttered those words, I had no possible idea of the startlingly bizarre happenings which were destined to occur in the immediate future.

### CHAPTER III.

#### BEGINNING THE TERM WELL!



"WELL, here we are again—what?"

Archie Glen-thorne paused just inside the Triangle at St. Frank's, and looked round through his monocle approvingly. He gently swished his cane, and smiled with his usual serenity upon the scene.

The spring afternoon was fine and sunny, and altogether summer-like. The sun shone brilliantly, and St. Frank's was undoubtedly looking its best. All the trees were gay in their new plumage, fresh and green. The grass was young and healthy, and even the ivy on the old walls looked different.

"I mean to say, back to the old spot!" went on Archie pleasantly. "Once more we trickle into the priceless old precincts, and no forth! Absolutely! Makes a chappie feel most deucedly bucked, and all that kind of rot!"

Handforth stared.

"Bucked?" he repeated. "Blessed if I can see anything to buck a chap up!"

"Yards of freshness, and what not!" said Archie, sweeping his cane round. "You grasp the old idea? Grass, and leaves, and twigs, and all that! Fresh, don't you know! Green as the bally old springtime, like the poet chappie chats about. If a laddie is feeling positively pipped, one glance is enough! Absolutely shoves him into a dashed assortment of high spirits!"

"You—you fathead!" said Handforth

witheringly. "There's no difference! St. Frank's looks just the same as ever—same old Triangle—same old, ugly buildings—same old trees, and the same old faces! I'm jiggered if I can see anything to rave about! I could build a better building any day!"

Church and McClure grinned. Fortunately they were behind Handforth, and he didn't notice it. Their famous leader had never been remarkable for his appreciation of art.

Handforth was intensely material, and a stark, ugly skyscraper was just as beautiful to him as Westminster Abbey. Indeed, he would probably have chosen the skyscraper as the most picturesque, and would have declared that Westminster Abbey was "Old and mouldy, and only fit to be pulled down." Edward Oswald had no eye for the picturesque. Archie evidently had.

"Absolutely!" he agreed. "The same old everything, dear one; but it gives you a frightful buck to look at 'em, don't you know. Well, we're here—we've arrived. Once again we stagger out of the offing, and present ourselves at the old seat of learning! Work, as it were, has got to be done. Absolutely!"

"Not to-day!" said Church. "That's one good thing! No lessons until the morning—and then only a giddy pretence! We sha'n't shake down properly until the beginning of next week. It's always easy the first few days of term."

"Oh, rather!" agreed Archie. "Absolutely, old top!"

"But you've never been here at the beginning of a term, ass!" said Handforth.

"Gadzooks! That's right, dear old fruit—positively correct!" said Archie. "It never struck me that way. The old bean is somewhat sluggish, you know. The works require a considerable amount of jogging, as it were. Well, what about it? What about trickling indoors to the dear old comfort department?"

"You mean the studies?" asked McClure.

"Absolutely."

"Yours may be a comfort department, but it doesn't apply to many junior studies," said McClure. "Your room is like a giddy palace—all cushions and lounges and luxurious carpets. Lucky chap you are, Archie!"

"Oh, rather!" agreed Archie. "I mean to say, the dear old pater is always well on the mark when it comes to supplying the doubloons. Then, of course, there's Phipps. Good old Phipps! The old eyesight is fairly weeping to catch a glimpse of the dear old sportsman. Adieu, laddies! Au revoir, and so forth!"

Archie strolled off, and made his way into the Ancient House. And Handforth, in the meantime, became the centre of a growing crowd of juniors. He had only arrived a short time earlier, but Handforth meant to be the first to impart the only piece of news that was worth voicing.

About two-thirds of the St. Frank's boys had arrived. Others were coming in batches

and in twos and threes, and singly, every five or ten minutes. They came by train and by road, and they made quite a lot of noise about it, too.

"Heard about the new chap?" asked Handforth, looking round.

"No," said De Valerie. "I suppose there's bound to be one or two fresh faces at the beginning of term—there always are. But they're generally in the fags' section, and we hardly notice 'em."

"I understand that this new chap is coming into the Remove," said Handforth.

"Which new chap?" asked Hubbard.

"The one I mentioned——"

"Fathead!" said Owen major. "You haven't mentioned anybody yet!"

Biff!

"Yow—yaroooooh!" howled Owen major, sitting down suddenly.

"That's for being cheeky!" said Handforth grimly. "I'm starting the term well this time. I'm going to make you chaps thoroughly understand that I won't put up with any rot. And I'm not going to be called a fathead by anybody!"

"You—you dangerous lunatic!" shouted Owen major, scrambling up. "You ought to be put in a padded cell. Ow—yow!"

Biff!

Again Owen major went down, and the watching juniors grinned unsympathetically.

"I warned you!" said Handforth gruffly. "Don't let it occur again, my son! Now, about this new kid. He's Chinese—the awful nerve! A Chink, you know! A blessed yellow-skinned merchant!"

"A Chinese boy, eh?" asked De Valerie. "That's rather interesting—if it's true. I can't quite believe that——"

"Can't believe it?" roared Handforth. "Haven't I just said so?"

"Yes, but——"

"Haven't I just told you that a Chink is coming here?" demanded the leader of Study D. "If you don't believe it, say so! Call me a liar, and finish with it! I'll jolly well wipe you up if you do! Go on—call me a liar!"

De Valerie grinned.

"It's safer to keep my thoughts to myself," he said calmly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you awful rotter!" said Handforth witheringly. "You're jolly well afraid to put your thoughts into words, and so you sneak out of it in that way! You ain't fit to be punched!"

"Poor old Handy!" chuckled De Valerie. "Diddled out of another listie victory. But I've got an idea that if you punched me you'd jolly soon get a punch back! Better go easy, Handy, old son! By the way, is it official about this Chinese boy?"

"Of course it's official," said Handforth. "Mr. Lee's bringing him down."

"How do you know anything about it?" inquired Hubbard.

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Handforth.

"You're like a set of giddy old washerwomen! All you can do is to ask questions! Nothing but questions—one after the other! Simply pestering the life out of a chap! Never heard anything like it!"

Armstrong shrugged his shoulders.

"Blow the new kid!" he said. "He doesn't interest us. About the cricket. We want to do something extra good this year. We've got some first-class men, and I understand that Nipper is keen upon getting the chaps into training at once. I'm game, anyhow."

"Same here!" said De Valerie. "It's necessary to buck up, too. All the other big schools are making extra big efforts this summer, and we shall have to look alive to keep our own end up."

The juniors continued discussing the all-absorbing topic of cricket. And Handforth, in the meantime, glared at them with growing indignation. His face grew redder and redder, and he fairly exploded at last.

"You rotter!" he bellowed violently.

"Great Scott!" gasped Armstrong. "What's the matter with you?"

"The matter!" roared Handforth. "Haven't I just told you that a Chinese boy is coming into the Remove? Haven't I just given you the direct information? And all you can do is to ignore me, and talk about cricket!"

The juniors regarded Handforth with well-feigned blank astonishment.

"But you just called us a lot of old washerwomen!" said Armstrong carelessly. "You said that all we could do was to pester you with questions. And just because we haven't kept it up, you go off the deep end!"

Handforth snorted.

"You rotters!" he snapped. "You've been doing this on purpose! Do you think I care? Do you think it matters to me whether you ask questions or not? I won't say another word about the Chinese kid—not a giddy syllable! He's a queer little bounder, and can't speak a word of English!"

"I thought you said you weren't going to mention him?" grinned Hubbard.

"Rats!" said Handforth. "His name is Yung Ching."

"Yung Ching?" repeated De Valerie. "Ching what?"

"Ching nothing, you lunatic!" said Handforth. "That's his name—his surname. His Christian name is Yung—Y-u-n-g!"

De Valerie smiled pityingly.

"It's about time Mr. Crowell took you in hand!" he remarked. "In the Remove, and can't spell the word 'young'! It's not 'y-u-n-g.' There's an 'o' in it!"

"You—you babbling ass!" howled Handforth. "Do you think I can't spell 'young'? This Chink's name is Yung—without an 'o.' His name's Yung Ching. Yung is simply his Christian name."

"But the Chinese aren't Christians!" said Armstrong.

"Ha, ha, ha!"



Handforth fairly danced with rage.

"I don't mean his Christian name!" he hooted.

"But you just said——"

"Blow what I just said!" bellowed Handforth. "Yung is the kid's first name! And he probably is a Christian, anyhow! He's in England—and speaks English——"

"So do I!" remarked Solomon Levi, with a grin. "Believe me, I was born in England, and I'm English clean through. I talk English, too. But I'm not a Christian, am I?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Handforth breathed hard, and clenched his fists.

"Who said you were a Christian?" he shouted hoarsely. "Everybody knows you're a Jew! One look at your face is enough——"

"By my life!" said Levi. "Leave my face alone, you rubbish!"

"Rubbish!" howled Handforth.

"Yes!" said Solomon. "My face may be a bit different from yours. Believe me, I'm glad it is! The nose may be a little different from the ordinary, but it's a good one! We've got to guess what the object is in the middle of your face!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Solly!"

Handforth pushed back his coat-sleeves.

"That's done it!" he roared. "My only hat! Insulted! Insulted on the first day of term! I'll show you, my son! I've made up my mind to start the term well, and this is a good opportunity!"

Swish!

Handforth's fist whizzed through the air, but Solomon Levi did not wait to receive it. He briskly dodged aside, and as Handforth stumbled forward something hard and bony jarred against his chin. It was Solly's clenched fist. Handforth sat down on the paving-stones of the Triangle with a fearful bump.

"Great pip!" he gasped. "What—what was that?"

"That was you punching my nose!" said Levi calmly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you funny idiot!" howled Handforth, as he rose to his feet. "I've finished! I'm not going to waste any more time on such fatheads as you! I've got something better to do than that!"

"That's right, Handy——" began Church

"Who told you to interfere?" bawled Handforth, turning on his faithful chum. "Take that for interfering!"

Crash!

Church took it all right. He couldn't very well do anything else, for he was utterly unprepared for the tremendous punch which landed on his nose. He staggered backwards, collided with Armstrong and Griffith, and the three of them fell in a heap. Handforth looked on, and nodded.

"That's just the start!" he said grimly.



Outside, down on the opposite pavement, two ill-dressed Orientals were walking along, and I knew in a moment that they were Chinese.

"I think it is the finish, too, Handforth!" exclaimed Mr. Crowell, from the rear. "How dare you behave in that brutal manner?"

Handforth turned, gasping, and found the Form-master practically at his heels, and looking very severe. Handforth had not observed the approach of Mr. Crowell. Some of the other fellows had. But they just wanted to see what would happen. And, after all, it was up to Handy to keep his eyes open.

"I—I—— Halk, sir!" said Handforth feebly. "Jolly pleased to see you, sir, you know——"

"That, Handforth, is scarcely true," interrupted Mr. Crowell drily. "You're not in the least pleased to see me! A moment ago you attacked Church without provocation, and I cannot allow such an offence to pass unnoticed—even to-day, when discipline is necessarily slack. You will write me five hundred lines!"

Handforth stared, and gave a gulp.

"But—but——"

"I do not want any excuses, Handforth," interrupted Mr. Crowell curtly. "Nothing that you say can make any difference. If I find you bullying your companions again, I shall be compelled to use the cane!"

And the Form-master strode away, leaving Handforth limp and weak.

"Bullying!" he said faintly. "Did—did he mean me?"

"Sounded like it!" said Armstrong.

"But—but I'm not a bully!" shouted Handforth indignantly. "I hate bullying—I'm always the first chap to put it down!"

Handforth never was able to appreciate the fact that punching his chums was scarcely a friendly proceeding. In cold truth, he bullied them in the most atrocious manner—from morning till night. But it was not the ordinary kind of bullying. He sort of lorded it over them, and seemed to regard himself as their father, or guardian. And if anything went wrong, they "copped out" strongly.

At heart, Handforth was as generous and as tender as a woman. But he was so impetuous and so strong-headed that he used his muscular power without discretion. And he never seemed to know when he went beyond the limit.

"The best thing we can do is to get indoors, Handy," suggested McClure. "We've got lots to do in the study, and if we stick out here these chaps'll only make things worse. Come on! Ignore them—it's all they deserve!"

McClure winked prodigiously to the juniors as he said this. But Handforth didn't see the wink. He nodded, and sniffed loudly.

"By George!" he said. "You're right! The fatheads ain't worth talking to! They'll find out that I was right before long—when this Chinese kid turns up. He can't speak a word of English——"

"Five minutes ago you said he could speak English," said Levi.

"Did I?" roared Handworth. "Well, I——"

"Oh, come on!" growled Church hastily.

They succeeded in dragging him away, and they managed to cart him along to Study D in the Remove passage, and get him inside.

It was nearly tea-time, anyhow, and presently most of the juniors were in their studies, celebrating the occasion with a regular royal spread. Tea was always a luxurious meal the first day of term—when funds were plentiful.

And it was while the Triangle was quiet and almost deserted that two figures turned in at the gateway. One was tall and finely built, and the other a diminutive junior. Nelson Lee and Yung Ching had arrived.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A STRANGER WITHIN THE GATES.



ARCHIE GLENTHORNE lay back languidly in one of the luxurious easy-chairs which adorned his study. Close beside him stood a small inlaid mahogany table, with a neat tray standing upon it containing a cup of steaming hot tea, some thin bread-and-butter, and a few fancy cakes.

"Back again to the old life, what?" said Archie pleasantly. "This, as it were, is just what the young master likes so much!"

"Yes, sir," said Phipps.

Archie's man was standing respectfully in the centre of the room. He had just brought the tea-tray in, and he looked at Archie without any expression upon his perfectly controlled face. But he could not keep a kind of fatherly light out of his eyes.

"Everything all serene, Phipps?" went on Archie, as he sipped the tea. "I mean to say, during my absence, and so forth? No troubles, or strife, what? No little difficulties?"

"No, sir—nothing," said Phipps. "I quite enjoyed the vacation, sir."

"Good lad!" said Archie. "Absolutely! That's the style, Phipps. Every time, don't you know. If a chappie doesn't bally well enjoy himself—well, dash it all, life ain't worth living! Absolutely not!"

"Quite so, sir," said Phipps. "I missed you quite a lot, sir."

Archie sat forward, and adjusted his monocle. It didn't strike him that Phipps might have missed him in more ways than one. And there was certainly nothing in the valet's tone to indicate that he implied anything of that sort.

"By dashed Jove!" said Archie. "You missed me, what?"

"Yes, to a certain extent, sir."

"Missed the cheery young voice, and so forth?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, don't you know, that's priceless of you, Phipps—absolutely!" exclaimed Archie, regarding Phipps as though he were some zoological specimen. "Dash it all, absolutely priceless! I mean to say, the man's human! Feelings, and all that kind of rot. Yards of gloom when the young master is absent!"

"It has been very quiet here, sir," said Phipps. "I trust you are now thoroughly accustomed to this mode of life?"

"Well, rather!" said Archie. "School, and all that sort of thing, don't you know. Absolutely, Phipps! The old tutor stuff is absolutely a washout—a bally back number, if you understand what I mean. Dead and finished, and what not! This, as it were, is the life! Every dashed time! Among the lads, what?"

"Exactly, sir," said Phipps. "Shall I retire now, sir?"



"What!" said Archie. "What! I mean to say—what? Retire? But, dear laddie, the hour is frightfully early——"

"I mean, from the apartment, sir."

"Oh, ah! I grasp the trend!" said Archie, setting his cup down. "Dashed ridic. of me not to tumble at first. Quite prepos., as you might say. The old bean, Phipps, is decidedly sluggish. Large quantities of lubrication required. Retire, what? Well, hardly, laddie. The fact is, it soothes the old tissues to have you standing in the offing to chat to!"

"Quite so, sir," said Phipps. "By the way, I trust you ordered several suits from your tailor in London, sir? Our present stock is somewhat low, and the warm weather is practically upon us."

Archie wagged a piece of bread-and-butter.

"Trust me, Phipps—trust Archie when it comes to clothing, and what not!" he said. "The thing is done, old lad. The thing, in fact, is positively accomplished! A dozen suits, don't you know. All shades, and so forth! The consignment will roll in during the week."

"I'm glad of that, sir," said Phipps. "Some more tea, sir? Certainly, sir!"

Phipps took Archie's cup, and silently retired. As a rule, he brought in teapot and sugar-basin and everything complete, but things were rather upset on the first day of term. Phipps, in fact, had not been expecting Archie down until later on in the evening.

The super knut of the Ancient House was now in his element. To lounge about in luxury was just his mark. And by the time he had finished tea he decided that the next item on the programme was a short nap.

"Forty of the best, Phipps," he remarked drowsily. "What? A short spell of the good old dreamless, don't you know. Kindly retire, and leave me in a state of repose and sublime quietness!"

"I'm sorry, sir," said Phipps. "But I should hardly advise a sleep now."

"Oh, but I mean to say——"

"It is rather late, sir, and the evening is scarcely the time for sleeping," said the valet. "Moreover, sir, there are one or two little duties I wish to perform. I must tidy up, sir, and——"

"But, dash it all!" protested Archie. "That can wait, old tulip! Absolutely! What could I do if I trickled forth? Would you cast the young master out of his sanctum? Would you send him out into the wilds, as it were?"

"I was about to suggest, sir, that you join the other gentlemen in the Common-room," said Phipps. "Only for a brief spell, sir—say, half an hour. The apartment will then be quite ready."

Archie rose with great reluctance.

"Frightfully beastly, to put it mildly!" he observed. "Somewhat near the limit!

Skating round the old hedge, what? I mean to say, Phipps, this is positively foul! The old tissues are simply pleading for rest.

Archie wandered towards the door, looking rather forlorn.

"No hope, Phipps?" he asked sadly. "The old order stands?"

"Hardly an order, sir," said Phipps. "I think it will be far better if you join the young gentlemen for a short period."

"Oh, well, there you are!" said Archie. "That's it, don't you know. That, in fact, is that! Cast out, and all that kind of rot! Turned away from the old hearth! I'm cut up, Phipps. Positively wounded!"

And Archie lounged out, and made his way sorrowfully down the passage toward the Remove Common-room. And while he was thus engaged, Nelson Lee was with Yung Ching in the Headmaster's study.

The Chinese boy, in fact, had just been examined, and had come through the ordeal quite creditably. On nearly all school subjects he was surprisingly advanced, his English being his weakest point. In geography, arithmetic, general history, and other subjects, he was practically as well informed as the average Removite. But when it came to English grammar and spelling, he was hopeless.

"Well, Ching, upon the whole I am quite satisfied," said Dr. Malcolm Stafford. "I should hardly like to place you in the Third Form. You will therefore commence your duties in the Remove."

"That will be the better plan," said Nelson Lee. "I am particularly anxious for the lad to go into the Remove, as Nipper will be able to associate with him daily. And Yung Ching needs special attention from myself also."

"So I understand, Mr. Lee," said the Head. "I will leave it to you, of course, as to which study the lad will occupy. The matter really requires a little thought, since it would be as well to place Ching with some reliable boys who will set him a good example."

"Quite so," said Nelson Lee. "I have decided that Ching shall share the end study with Goodwin and Levi. They are both boys of sound common sense, and can be trusted to look after their new study-mate."

While this conversation was proceeding, Yung Ching himself was standing by, looking bland and smiling. Nothing appeared to upset him. He took things as they came, and appeared to be perfectly happy. Lee had explained all the circumstances to the Head, and the latter had raised no objection to the Chinese boy remaining at St. Frank's as a permanent scholar.

Mr. Tsen Wang, of course, had paid the school fees in advance—he had paid, in fact, for a whole year. And he stated that he was willing to meet any extra expenses that might arise.

At all events, Yung Ching was now a scholar at St. Frank's. He was a member

of the Remove, and in the Ancient House. And, as Nelson Lee had said, he was booked to share the end study with Solomon Levi and Dick Goodwin.

Both these boys were fellows of steady habits, and they could be trusted not to lead Yung Ching into any bad ways. Furthermore, they were just the kind of fellows who would be patient. The Chinese boy would soon settle down in the company of his new study-mates.

Having concluded the interview with the Head, Nelson Lee took Yung Ching, and they went to the lobby together. It had been the detective's intention to take his charge right to the end study in person.

But he decided against this, on second thoughts. He met Chambers of the Fifth in the lobby, and immediately handed over Yung Ching into Chambers' care. It would be better Nelson Lee thought, to let the new boy get into touch with his school-fellows unhindered by the presence of a master.

"Just one moment, Chambers!" said Nelson Lee. "Let me introduce you to Yung Ching—a new boy this term."

Chambers of the Fifth regarded Yung Ching without favour.

"Oh!" he said. "A Chinese kid, eh? Honour bright, sir, is he really coming into St. Frank's as a scholar?"

"He is already here, Chambers," smiled Nelson Lee. "And he will remain. I want you to do me a little favour, if you will."

"Certainly, sir," said Chambers.

"Take Yung Ching along to the Remove passage, and direct him to the end study," said Nelson Lee. "That is to be his study for the future. If you will introduce him to his new companions I shall be obliged."

"Right you are, sir—only too pleased," said Chambers briskly. "Leave him to me, and he'll be all right, sir!"

"Thank you, Chambers," said Nelson Lee. "Did you understand that, Yung Ching? This boy will take you and direct you to an apartment which will, in future, be your study. I will see you later on regarding sleeping accommodation. At the moment you cannot do better than become acquainted with your schoolfellows."

"Heap plentee goodee!" said Yung Ching. "Me muchee pleased. Oh, yes! Allee samee good chopee. Me likee evelyt'ing plentee!"

"That's good, Ching," said Nelson Lee, smiling.

He walked away leaving the Chinese boy with Chambers. It was rather hard upon the youngster, but there could be no doubt that the sooner he got acquainted with the Removites the better.

Chambers regarded Yung Ching with considerable curiosity. And Yung Ching looked at Chambers with his cheery, open smile. He was apparently aware that the Fifth-Former was scrutinising him very intently.

"You knowee me next timee!" he remarked softly.

"Eh?" said Chambers. "Know you next time? Why, you cheeky young sweep! And do you mean to tell me that you've had the nerve to come to St. Frank's as a pupil? Why, you can't speak English any better than a heathen!"

"Speakee Engleesh muchee fine!" said Yung Ching proudly.

"I don't think!" said Chambers. "Well, I can't waste my time on you, my lad. The end study, eh? All right! Follow me!"

He walked away, but Yung Ching remained.

"Did you hear?" demanded Chambers, turning. "Follow me!"

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching, shaking his head.

"What! You don't understand?"

"No savvy!" said the Chinese boy again. "Flollow? Him strange word, I t'inkee. Not knowee!"

"My hat!" said Chambers. "You've got to come with me. Understand? Come—with me! Do you catch on?"

"Oh, allee light—me savvy!" said Yung Ching. "Goe with you? Him mean flollow? I savvy heap!"

"Thank goodness for that!" said Chambers. "Come on!"

Yung Ching followed promptly enough now. And as they went along the Remove passage Chambers suddenly broke into a grin.

"The end study, eh?" he murmured. "That's where Levi and Goodwin hang out. But what about the other end study—at the end of the Fifth-Form passage? That's Glenthorne's abode! Lee didn't say which passage, and anybody is liable to make a little mistake like that. There's no reason why I shouldn't have a bit of fun with this yellow kid! Rather undignified, of course, but it doesn't matter on the first day of term!"

Chambers couldn't resist the temptation—although, as a senior, he considered that it was somewhat lowering to engage in any sort of jape. But, as he had said, it was the first day of term, and allowances could be made.

He grinned as he took Yung Ching straight to the door of Archie's study—which, as a matter of fact, was No. 13 in the Fifth-Form passage. It was at the end, and next door to the end study of the Remove passage. The two corridors were really one, continuing with only a slight curve.

"Here we are," said Chambers, as he opened the door. "I'll introduce you to your new—Hullo! Nobody at home! All the better!" he added, under his breath.

This was better than he had hoped for. Archie's study was empty, and Chambers grinned again as he thought of the little wheeze. He would leave Yung Ching here, after telling him that it was his study. And the Fifth Former had an idea that Archie Glenthorne would have no little difficulty



in explaining to Yung Ching that he was in the wrong quarters.

"This is your study," said Chambers, speaking deliberately. "Understand?"

"No savvy."

"No savvy!" Well I'm hanged!" said Chambers. "Your study, you young aes! Study—study! This is your room!"

"I getee you," said Yung Ching brightly. "My loom! Allee lightee! Me savvy one timee! My loom! Me work here?"

"That's jt," said Chambers. "This is your loom—your room, I mean! Blessed if I can understand why you talk in that lingo! Well, Ching-ling-fow, this is where you work, and where you play, and read, and everything else. In fact, it's yours. You've got a study mate named Glenthorne."

"Savvy heapee good!" said Yung Ching. "Allee samee my loom. Workee—playee—leadee! Much finee, I t'ink! Velly goodee loom! Heap plentee nicee carpet—chairs—tables! Muchee good!"

"That's the idea," said Chambers. "Oh, and there's another thing. You've got a man to look after you, a servant who'll do everything you order. You've only got to tell him what you want, and he'll obey. Understand?"

"Me savvy," said Yung Ching, nodding. "A slervant, man who dose allee samee I ask. Takee order, and obey!"

"Good for you, Chinky," said Chambers. "You can understand better than I gave you credit for. Well, I must be moving. Make yourself at home—do just as you like. Sit down and wait until Archie comes in!"

And the Fifth Former, fearing that somebody might come, backed out into the passage, and closed the door, leaving Yung Ching within. Then he slipped off to his own study, and waited just inside. Chambers had an idea that there would be quite a lot of fun in the very near future.

Yung Ching walked round Archie's luxurious study once or twice, examining the various ornaments, rugs, and other expensive articles of furniture which adorned the apartment.

"Muchee fine," he murmured, at length. "Allee samee heap good!"

And then the door opened, and Phipps came in. Phipps had already been doing a little tidying up, and now he arrived with some clean cushion covers to adorn the lounge. Archie's man took a great pride in the study.

He came to an abrupt halt as he caught sight of Yung Ching, who, by now, was seated near the fire, with all the assurance of "a man in possession." But Yung Ching jumped to his feet at once.

He bowed low.

"Velly pleased!" he said softly. "Play comee in, Mist' Stlanger!"

Phipps was already in, and he looked at the Chinese boy rather hard.

"What are you doing here?" he asked curiously.

Yung Ching bowed lower than ever. In fact, he almost scraped the floor with his head. This was merely his native politeness.

"I makee you welcome to my miselable hovel!" he said. "Muchee pleased to see you in my 'letched kam!"

"Your 'letched loom!" repeated Phipps, puzzled. "I don't understand, youngster. What are you doing here?"

"This is my study—my loom," explained the new boy.

"Oh, your room!"

"Allee samee, yes!"

"I don't think it is!" exclaimed Phipps. "You've either made a mistake, or this is your idea of being funny. Look here, young man, I don't know who you are, or why you came into this apartment. What is your name?"

"Yung Ching," said the Chinese boy. "My father, heap biggee Mandalin in China. Lich potee in Hu-Kiang——"

"I don't want to know who your father is, or anything about your people," said Phipps. "I suppose you're a visitor?"

"Me new pupil, comee here learnee t'ings!"

"Oh!" said Phipps, changing his tone slightly. "A new pupil, sir. I didn't quite comprehend. Begging your pardon, sir, I think there is some slight misunderstanding. This apartment belongs to Master Glenthorne——"

"No savvy," said Yung Ching.

"You are in somebody else's room——"

"Oh, no! You makee heap big mistake. This my loom——"

"Pardon me for interrupting, but Master Glenthorne will not be quite pleased when he finds out that you have invaded his study," said Phipps. "If you will tell me where you want to go, I will direct you, sir."

Yung Ching shrugged his shoulders.

"No savvy," he repeated, with irritating blandness.

"What," exclaimed Phipps, breathing hard. "No savvy?"

"Me here—stay!"

"Oh, you're going to stay, are you, sir?" said Phipps. "I hardly think so. I shall be obliged if you will——"

"Me just lember," put in Yung Ching brightly. "You my man—my servant! Allee samee good! Fetchee me dlink! Makee tea and bling me one piecee big cup! Me plentee thirsty!"

Phipps nearly exploded. As a rule he was as self-contained as a stone statue. It required a huge upheaval to disturb the equanimity of Phipps. And this, in his opinion, was an upheaval of the most drastic kind.

Phipps was an orderly man. He liked everything to be just so. And here was a

new boy, and Chinese, above all, invading the sacred territory, and planting himself in it as though he was the owner! Not only that, he appeared to think that he—Phipps—was his servant.

"You are thirsty?" said Phipps politely. "Plenfee muchee!"

"Then I suggest, sir, that you go to the House Matron and ask for a drink!" said Phipps. "This study belongs to Master Glenthorne, and it is no part of my duty to wait upon you."

"No savvy," said Yung Ching blandly.

"You—you——" Phipps pulled himself up, and became calm. "Will you please understand, sir, that it will be advisable for you to go elsewhere?" he said, with forced smoothness.

"No savvy," said Yung Ching, smiling broadly.

Just for one moment Phipps was in imminent peril of becoming an ordinary human being. He felt like dashing forward, grasping Yung Ching, and turning him headlong out of the study. This constant repetition of "no savvy"—was simply maddening. And Yung Ching was calm and smiling all the time.

The Chinese boy nodded.

"Me speakee Engleesh," he replied.

"Then if you can speak English, you can understand it," said Phipps triumphantly. "This is not your study—not your room—and you are intruding. Will you kindly leave as soon as possible?"

Yung Ching grimed, and shrugged his shoulders.

"No savvy," he murmured softly.

Phipps nearly swore. If such a thing had been a habit of his, he would have let fly on the instant. But Phipps didn't swear. At least, Archie had never heard him swear.

"You are trying my patience, sir," said Phipps thickly.

"My study," said Yung Ching, waving his hand. "Allee mine! Miselable dwelling, but I not gottee better. You welcome in my loom! Me stayee here allee time. Muchee comfortable."

"I'm not going to say any more, sir!" exclaimed Phipps. "But I am fairly certain that you understand everything I have said to you. If you have been told that this is your study, the statement was incorrect."

"No savvy," repeated Yung Ching calmly.

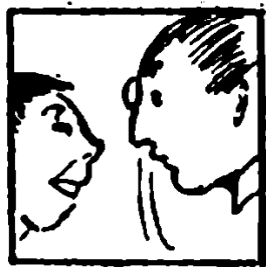
Phipps could have torn his hair out by the roots. But, by a masterly effort of self-control, he stood firm. The only sign he gave was to turn slightly pale, and his nostrils dilated.

"Very well, sir!" he exclaimed. "We will see."

He turned abruptly, and at that moment Archie appeared in the doorway.

## CHAPTER V.

### SETTING THINGS RIGHT.



"HALLO! Hallo! I mean to say, hallo!" exclaimed Archie cheerily. "Visitors,

what? Or, to be exact, one visitor. I trust, Phipps that you have done the honours

in my absence? Is everything all serene now? Ready for the young master to trickle in and spread himself?"

"Quite ready, sir," said Phipps. "But this young gentleman is intruding, sir. He is——"

"Dash it all!" interrupted Archie. "I mean to say—intruding! Somewhat strong, Phipps—rather terse, and all that! Absolutely! Gadzooks! The chappie appears to be a bit different from the other lads!"

Archie screwed his monocle firmly into his eye, and gazed at Yung Ching as directly as his natural politeness would allow him to. The Chinese boy rose, and bowed low two or three times. Then he smiled broadly.

"Muchee glad you come!" he said. "Shakee hands!"

"Oh, rather!" said Archie.

He extended his hand, and then felt rather lost. For Yung Ching proceeded to shake hands with himself. Archie was not aware of this Chinese custom, and he turned slightly red.

"By Jove!" he said. "Considerably embarrassing, and all that! Puts a chappie off his stroke, don't you know. Makes him feel somewhat at sea, and all that kind of rot! Still, we'll let it pass. Absolutely! We'll allow it to slide. How are you, dear old fruit? How, as it were, goes it?"

"Me allee light!" said Yung Ching blandly.

"Gadzooks!" gasped Archie. "All alight! I mean to say, sundry howls for the fire-brigade! Phipps, kindly produce the old hose. I must remark, however, that the chappie appears to be fairly extinguished!"

"He means he's all right, sir," said Phipps. "Just his way of putting it, sir."

"Oh, exactly," said Archie. "What-ho! What-ho! So you're all right, dear old thing? Good! That is to say, topping! Kindly take a seat, and make the carcass at home!"

"I think master Ching has already done that, sir," said Phipps bitterly.

"Master Ching?" repeated Archie.

"The young gentleman's name, sir, is Yung Ching."

"Oh, I gather the old line," said Archie. "Young Ching, what? One of those chappies out of the jolly old comic opera? Absolutely! A lad from Japan! That's the spot, that's the identical place! Tokio and Yokohama, and what not! Rather decent,

(Continued on page 25.)



Special!—"Visiting the jolly old Tailor!" By Archie  
Glenthorne

# NIPPER'S MAGAZINE

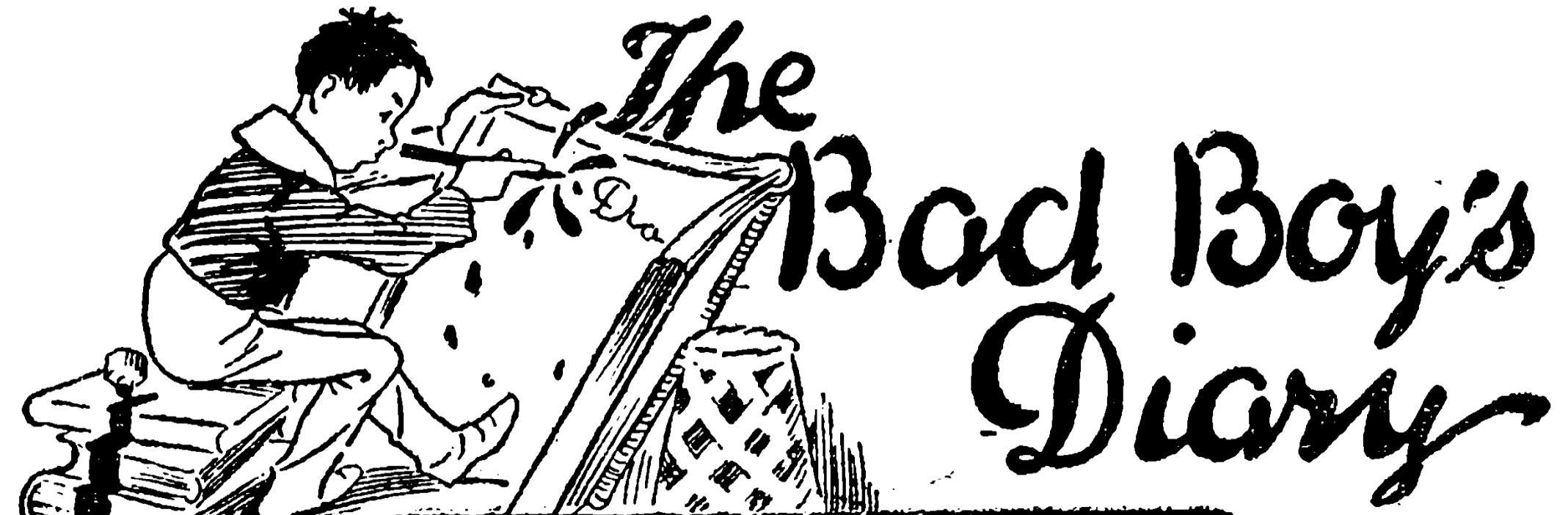
No. 23.

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Edited by Nipper.

April 29,  
1922.



THE CLOISTERS, ST. FRANK'S COLLEGE.



## THE BUGGY RIDE

AUNT BETSEY she come to the wedding for all she was so mad. She brought a present of a silk bedquilt which she patched herself. I told her I guess Lil was disappointed cause I heard her say she expected Aunt Betsey would give her a handsome silver tea-set.

Our Bess was named after her, so's to kepe the propty in the family, but I don't kno who Betty, the made, was called after. I'll ast her some day, when I think of it.

Aunt she flew up like a hen with his head cut off; she said if she gave Bess a tea-set that would be enuff, she guessed.

She'd willed her money to the Orfan's Home, we shouldn't enny of us tuch a sent of itt if a silk bedquilt want good enuff for Lil.

She s'posed she'd have to give Bess something 'cause she was her namesake, but George Washton never give me anything an' I was named after him.

She said I'd made a mess of it as useyul, an' now she wouldn't get a present when she married the dockter. She said I was a marplot. I ast her what that was; if it was like a squirl or woodchuck; she said it had 2 legs an' a friteful busy tung.

There's a new yung gentleman coming to our house. It's my idee he comes to see Bess. I ast Bess if she didn't think so 2, an' she said she did.

They'd better make the most of him, for she's that old it's perfeckly ridicklus—23 last May. I heard my mamma tell her oncest she would go through the wood 'n take up with a crooked stick at last, whatever that means.

The new yung man's name is Mr. Wilkins. Last night I went into the parlor where he an' Bess was talking, an' I went up to him an' took a good look at him. My, ain't he funny! Bess she made a motion for me to go away. I

knew she dassent speke out, so I purtended not to see her.

"How are you, my little man?" sez he.

"I ain't a little man," sez I. "I'm a boy. Did you think I was Tom Thumb?"

He laffed.

I ast him:

"What is that shines so when you laff? Is it gold like that the dentist puts in Bess' teeth?"

"You're a funny boy," sez he, but he didn't laugh so I could see what it was shiny in his mouth.

"You are funny too," said I. "What's the matter with your other eye, it don't go like it ought to? Is it glass?"

"You are very rude," said Bess. "Go away, or I'll tell mamma."

I went away a little while, but I come back, cause I wanted to find out what made his other eye not go, an' I stood an' watched an' watched him till Bess said, afterwards, she thought she'd fly.

"Georgie," sez she, as sweet as pie, "won't you please go tell Betty to bring in some cake and lemmonaid?"

I came back agane just as soon as I told her, cause the more I looked I could not make up my mind what was the matter with his eye.

His hair was friteful red. So Bess she made a sence to go out in the sittin-room a minute, an' when she come in she said:

"George, your mother wants you rite away."

So I had to go, and mamma said it was awiul impolite to stare at visitors.

"Then, mama," I ast her, "why don't he wind up his eye so 'twill go like his other one?"

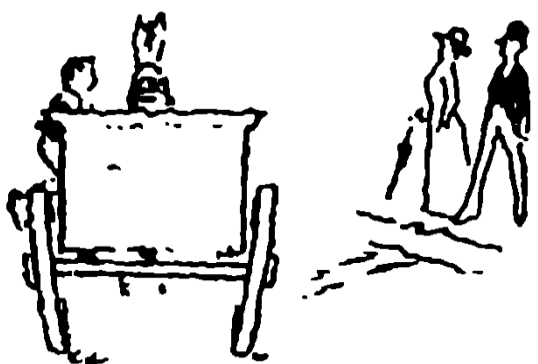
Big folks are very unreasonable to children; 'stead of telling me, all she said was:

"It is your bedtime, George."

Mr. Wilkins comes here every other night reglar. The dockter an' Sue sit in the frunt parlor, he an' Bess sit in the back parlor.

Why don't they all sit together? He's goin' to take Bess a buggy ride to morrow afternoon all by thurselves. I think they might a asted me to go along.

I guess I'll go anyways! It would be fun



I slipped into the buggy, and got under the seat.



to hide under the sete an' hear what he says, he's got such a squeaky voice. I'll try to manage it. Ide ast Johnny, too, only there won't be room.

Mr. Wilkins, he drove up, all so grand, with a new top buggy, an' a black horse, with a gold-mounted harnis, 'bout four o'clock.

I was on the wotch around the corner of the house, an' when he went in the hall a minute to let 'em know he was there I slipped into the buggy, an' got under the seat, the curtain come down an' consealed me from sight.

My knees were ruther cramped. I fixed myself as good as I could, an' kep as still as deth while they got in. He took the ranes, an' we were oph.

The horse he flue along until we were out of the town as much as 8 miles. I was awful sorry I come along, 'cause I got tired bein' squeezed up in such tite quarters. O, how I aaked.

When it was gettin' chilly, and after sunset, the horse he didn't go so fast, he wolked along so slow I thought I'd dye.

I had a big bunch of fire-crackers in my pocket, an' some matches, 'cause I wanted to hear what he was saying to Bess jus' then I didn't set 'em off. I could hardly think if his eyes were not alike.

"My darling, darling Bessie," sez he, as if she was a baby 'bout six months old.

My sister she didn't say a word.

"You are not angry?"

Just as if there was enny thing in that to be mad about! I s'pose he thought such an ole girl wouldn't like to be made a baby of.

And then he tolked to her a lot of sweet stuff like she was a candy store, you never heard! Thinks I, Mister Wilkins, if she'd boxed your ears like she has mine, you wouldn't call her duv an' angel.

These girls that shake an' cuff their little brothers so, never get mad, no matter what the big boys do, I've notised that, but I thought I wouldn't say a word, he could have her if he wanted to be such a fool.

"The dri goods business is reviving," sez he, after he'd called her his angel more'n a duzen times. "I think we might venture to have a wedding sometime 'bout Christmas.

Then Bess she sez:

"I never did beleeve in long engagements. Charles, so if you say Christmas I'll try hard to get reddy."

Then they didn't say nuthing for a minute or two, and I heard suthin' squeak a little. Mebbe it was the wheel. I guess it was.

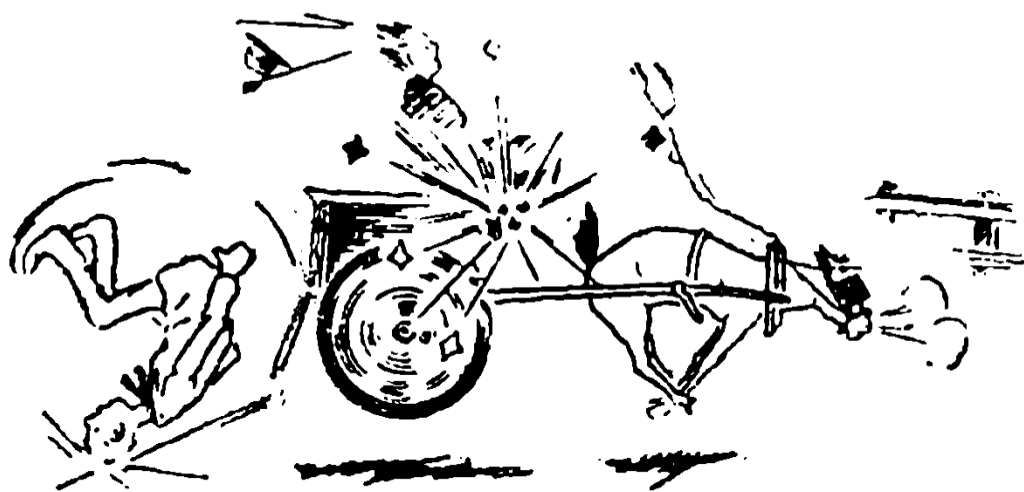
My nees hurt so I cannot say for surtain. I was to cold an' hungry, and my elbows cramped I thought I'd scare Mr. Wilkins, so's to make him hurry up.

"There's somethin' under the seat," sez Bess. "O, my! Oh, grashus! Oh, Charles, I am sure it is a dog!"

"Don't be alarmed," sez he. "I will protect you with my li—— Ouch, wouch, what can it be?"

"Oh, stop the horse! Let me get out," sez Bess.

"Let me see what it is," sez Mister Wilkins. He felt around the sete: his hand went on my hair. I bit his hand to make him think I was



**You never herd such a racket—fizz—fuss—split—crackle—sizzle—bang!**

a dog. "It is a dog!" cried he—"a rabid dog. He's bit me. Oh, I will go mad!"

With that he jumped rite out and left my sister in. [That showed how much he loved her!]

The time was come, thought I, to have some fun. He shan't get in agane. The horse shall take frite and run away with me an' sis, then I'll crall out and stop him.

So I struck a match and lit the fire-crackers, and thru 'em under the horse's heels, which went off like a thousand ton of brick. You never herd such a racket—fizz, fuss, split, crackle, sizzle, bang!

Bess she yelled: Mr. Wilkins he groaned; the horse run away like mad; you never see. I was awful scart myself.

I called out and tride to get the ranes, but they were down under the horse, and it was dark as pitch. I expected nuthing but we would both be killed.

Rattle-te-bang! we went, miles and miles. Mr. Wilkins he was left in the rode, far, far behind; Bess screamed every jump the animal gave. I tell yu, it was fereful.

Pretty soon we began to come into town, where it was lite. Men run out and tried to stop us. After a while the horse he run plump into the livery-stable where he belonged.

Wasn't he a knowing horse? Thare he stopt rite still and trembled. The men they helped us out. Then I said to Bess:

"What for made you yell so? There wasn't any danger."

"George Hackett, is that you? I thought it was a mad dog a-trying to bite me all the time. What was that made that noise? I never was so fritened.

"You notty, wicked boy! You mite have been the deth of me. You'll get the awfullest whipping you ever had in all your life! I don't beleeve I'll ever, ever get over this nite.

"Oh, Mister Livry-stabil-keeper, won't you take another horse and go back for Mr. Wilkins—he's in the road somewhere, a few miles back.

"Oh, what a mercy that we weren't smashed into 10,000 peaces! Oh, I shall fante! You bad, notty, troublesome boy; see what you've done. Your father'll give you fitts."

"I didn't mean no harm," said I; "I got under the seat to here what Mr. Wilkins would talk about. I think if I called a girl a angel, I wouldn't jump out an' leve her alone with a mad dog.

"Oho! He'll have the hydrafobia bad, won't he? Mebbe he's got it a'ready, he's bli so bad!"

# VISITING THE JOLLY OLD TAILOR.

By **ARCHIE GLENTHORNE.**

**F**IRMNESS, don't you know! Absolutely! I mean to say, there's nothing like it; and a chappie bally well needs tons of the stuff when he trickles round to interview the dear old buffer who carves out the old serge, and the flannel, and the cheviot, and what-not! There's my tailor, you know. Quite a brainy cove and a decent sort. Cheery, and all that. Makes a chappie feel frightfully comfortable, and so forth. Lures you into his priceless old emporium and proceeds to put it across you. The old tape-measure, I mean. Winds the dashed thing round your waist-line, runs it down the old leg department, and all that kind of rot!

And the dear old thing puts it across you later on, too, when he sends in the invoice, several yards long and deucedly steep! Somehow or other, tailors appear to be frightfully courageous chappies! I mean to say, tons of nerve! You get the old trend? Heroes, and so forth. Dash it all, if they weren't fearfully brave, they wouldn't dare to make the headlong charge, what?

Well, the other day, as it were, I staggered round to Sackville Street in the old taxi and percolated into my tailor's. Considerable quantities of bowing and scraping, and what-not! Large supplies of politeness!

Tailors have a deucedly foul habit of forcing a chappie to have things he doesn't really want. Of course, I put my foot down on that sort of thing. Absolutely! Fairly shoved the old hoof down forcibly. For example, I was determined to have three suits for the spring, and I'd fixed it all up in the old mind. I don't object to admitting that the works in the top storey had been buzzing fairly rapidly

for some days. I mean to say, I simply had to make quantities of decisions.

Well, there it was; a priceless lounge suit with a loud check pattern. Just the kind of thing to make a laddie look smart. That was No. 1. Then I wanted a blue serge affair with breeches, and a jolly old Norfolk coat. Rather ripping idea, what? Out of the common, and all that. And, for hot days, I rather fancied a good old white flannel, with gold buttons and blue braid, and so forth.

Of course, the tailor chappie proceeded to produce rolls of the good old material. All the latest shades, and that kind of thing. I waved my hand and remained firm. I mean to say, I took a stand. Absolutely! In fact, I put it to the laddie clearly and concisely.

But, dash it all, a fellow can't be obstinate! He simply must listen to reason, and all that. The lad proceeded to explain that a Norfolk suit of blue serge was absolutely impossible. Not the thing at all. Positively out-of-date—nowhere near the

calendar, in fact.

As for a white suit with blue braid and brass buttons, the poor old cove nearly expired on the spot. Several assistants rushing about for smelling-salts, if you know what I mean. And when he recovered, after large S.O.S. signals, he huskily explained that the whole scheme was literally poisonous. I can tell you, I was deucedly startled. I mean to say, I hadn't had the faintest ink that the poor blighter was going to throw a few dozen fits.

However, he gradually recovered, and explained that grey was the right stuff—grey flannel, without any ornamentations

(Continued on page 24.)



**Winds the dashed thing round your waist-line, runs it down the old leg department, and all that kind of rot!**





## SCHOOLBOY HOWLERS

Being a series of humorous stories about scholars of various schools throughout the country.

### Food for Thought.

The following extract from an essay on *Food*—also from the north—throws a curious sidelight upon rustic domestic habits and discipline.

"A very good and nerrishin kind of food is bacon and beans for breakfast. The beans have to be eat 1st, and the bacon aftererds. If you do not save your bacon till you have eat your beans, you will be deservely punished. Also if you do not eat the skins. The rind, after sucking, is all taken off the plates and put into the swill tub for the pigs. You must not eat them, for they are not nerrishin, and might stick in your inside like buttens."

\* \* \*

### When There Were Few Board Schools.

In the boys' department of a London Board School, the piece taken for recitation was Mary Howett's charming poem of "Father is coming."

It may be remembered that the following lines occur in the piece :

"Hark ! hark ! I hear his footsteps now,  
He's through the garden gate ;  
Run little Bess, and ope the door,  
And do not let him wait."

In connection with the third of these lines, the teacher asked of one of the lads :

"Why does Mary Howett write *ope* and not *open* ?"

And the pupil replied confidently :

Because in those days there were not so many Board Schools about, and people couldn't spell so well."

\* \* \*

### Who Was Lord Beaconsfield ?

The following story seems to show that country lads have a fixed idea that if a man and woman are seen walking out together arm in arm, they must either be engaged or married.

In an evening school, the teacher was giving a chatty lesson to the youths on

our great British statesmen, and other notabilities of history. Presently he said to one of the pupils

"You have heard of Lord Beaconsfield, of course ?"

"Oh, yes," replied the lad.

"Well, who was he ?"

"The husband of Queen Victoria !"

The master was so astonished at the lad's answer that it took him some little time to recover himself. Seeing, however, that the lad was really serious, he asked :

"Whatever makes you think that ?"

"Because, sir," he answered, "we have a pictur at home where him and her are walkin' art together."

"Yes," said the master, "but that should not lead you to think they are man and wife."

"Oh, but," said the lad emphatically, "she's a hangin' on his arm !"

On his way from school, the master called in at the cottage where the lad lived, and found that on the parlour wall there really was a picture representing our late beloved Queen walking with the great statesman and leaning on his arm.

\* \* \*

### Where Mr. Chamberlain Came From.

In composition lessons, boys often show much ingenuity not only in displaying all the knowledge they possess, but likewise in hiding their ignorance. An amusing instance of this is sent me by a north country schoolmaster.

The boys had been set to write a short essay on the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain. One lad, who evidently could not remember the name of the town Birmingham, or else did not feel safe about the spelling of it, artfully evolved the following sentence :

"Mr. Chamberlain, who you often see with his glass in the pictures, comes from that town ware they can make everything from a needle to a steam ingine."

\* \* \*

"Where is Ben Nevis ?" enquired the examiner. "He ain't in our school," responded one lad. "There's only Ben Smithers and Ben Robinson !"



## THE PROBLEMS OF TRACKETT GRIM

*The Amazing and Staggering Adventures of the World's greatest Criminal Detective and his Boy Assistant, Splinter.*

By EDWARD OSWALD HANDFORTH.

### GREASED LIGHTNING'S GREATEST RACE.

**The 'Phone Call from Lord Rashpunter !**

**BUZZ-BUZZ-BUZZ !**

The telephone in Trackett Grim's consulting-room jangled noisily. It was ten o'clock on a beautiful spring morning, and the famous criminal detective had just finished his breakfast.

"Answer the 'phone, Splinter !" he said shortly.

Splinter, the wonderful young assistant, dashed to the instrument, and then looked across at Trackett Grim with excitement glowing like red-hot coals in his sparkling eyes.

"It's Lord Rashpunter, sir," he said. "He's talking from Oldmarket."

"Ah !" said Trackett Grim. "From Oldmarket ! There are some big races on to-day, I believe. I was thinking of having a little flutter—ahem ! What is that, Splinter ?"

The great detective got up, went to the telephone, and listened.

"Is that Mr. Grim ?" came an agitated voice. "Ah, Mr. Grim, I need your help ! My horse, Greased Lightning, has been doped !"

"Good heavens !" said Trackett Grim hoarsely.

"I have risked all my fortune on this horse, and, if it loses, I am a ruined man !" went on Lord Rashpunter. "I want you to help me ! I want you to come down here and expose the miscreants who drugged Greased Lightning ! If you can do that, I can get the horse disqualified and my fortune will be returned. But if there is no evidence of villainy, the horse will run, and it will lose !"

"It might have lost in any case !" said Trackett Grim.

"Never !" declared his Lordship. "It was a cert ! Nothing could have beaten him ; he was bound to win ! And now I shall be ruined ! Come to my aid, Mr.

Grim, and I will give you half my winnings, if I click !"

"Have no fear !" said the detective. "I will come at once !"

**At the Great Race Meeting !**

Trackett Grim spent ten busy minutes in his laboratory, and then dashed down into his racing car, which was ready. Then he speeded off for Oldmarket, where the big races were being held.

He arrived before the programme commenced, and found Lord Rashpunter waiting for him in the paddock. This, as everybody knows, is a kind of meadow at the back of the grand-stand.

"I am glad you have come, Mr. Grim !" said Lord Rashpunter, who was a young man with an anxious expression. "My enemies have beaten me ! I'm whacked to the wide ! The chief plotter is Septimus Snort, the trainer. He has bribed Lightweight Larry, the jockey of the favourite to beat me ! It was Lightweight Larry who drugged Greased Lightning !"

"Leave it to me !" said Trackett Grim coolly. "I will examine the horse and tell you what is to be done !"

They went along to the stable, and found Greased Lightning looking very rocky. He was obviously in a bad way. He leaned against the side of the stable, and it was only with difficulty that he opened his eyes.

"H'm !" said Trackett Grim. "The horse has been doped badly. Never mind ; I will ride him myself, and win the big race !"

"You—you will ride him ?" asked the owner amazedly.

"Yes ; I will defeat these scoundrels by their own rascally methods !" said Trackett Grim calmly. "They have adopted vile villainy, and I can beat them at their own game !"



## The Race!

The scene out on the race-course was a lively one; the crowds were stupendous. There were hundreds of thousands of people there. The grand-stand was black with them, and the bookmakers were doing a roaring trade. Each had his massive book in front of him, making it up feverishly.

The great race for the Thousand-Guinea Prize and the Oldmarket Handicap was about to be run. Greased Lightning was an outsider, but Lord Rashpunter had staked his fortune on the horse, and stood to win a great sum. The betting on Greased Lightning was 100 to 1 on—that is to say, Lord Rashpunter would get a hundred times as much money as he had staked. This, of course, was providing that the horse won, and that the bookie had the cash.

The horses came out—twenty of them. Greased Lightning was led by Lord Rashpunter and the trainer, and they were compelled to hold the horse up, or it would have fallen. Trackett Grim was in the saddle.

The race itself was a long one—ten times round the course. It was absolutely obvious that Greased Lightning could not even do one lap. Indeed, it was doubtful if he would get a start.

Trackett Grim kept his eyes well open, and he did not fail to see the gloating face of Septimus Snort leering over the railing. The villainous trainer had done his dirty work, and was waiting to see the result. All his money had been placed on Skinny Lizzio, a rank outsider who was certain to win. Lightweight Larry was the jockey, and Lightweight Larry was roaring with laughter as he waited for the signal to start.

Bang!

The pistol went off, and off went the horses. Greased Lightning staggered, swayed drunkenly, and lurched forward. The other horses were mere specks in the distance.

And then Trackett Grim played his trump card!

Lord Rashpunter looked on despairingly, and already his nervous fingers were clutching a revolver, so that he could blow his brains out. He watched his staggering horse with panting breath.

Then Trackett Grim acted. He swiftly took out a hypodermic syringe from his breast-pocket and plunged the needle into Greased Lightning's neck. The horse jumped two yards into the air. Trackett Grim had injected a dose of marvellous reviver which he had invented himself. It was harmless—not a drug, but a wonderful tonic.

Greased Lightning sprang forward amid cries of dumb amazement. It was like

a horse possessed. It tore down the course and overtook the other horses with ease. He roared past the pack Trackett Grim smiling calmly at Light-weight Larry as he drew alongside. The scoundrelly jockey scowled fiercely.

Then Greased Lightning increased his pace. He swept round the corner, and, before the third lap was commenced, he overtook the other horses from the rear.

Lightning Larry's face worked with insane passion, and as Trackett Grim came up the jockey swung his horse round. It seemed that a collision was certain, and Trackett Grim and Greased Lightning were doomed.

But the famous detective shouted a word of encouragement, and the fine horse sprang up and cleared the other mount in one magnificent leap. Lightweight Larry gnashed his teeth with foiled fury.

And Greased Lightning finished the race splendidly, winning by a clear two laps and thirty lengths! It was a wonderful performance. Lord Rashpunter was overwhelmed with delight and relief.

But Trackett Grim had no time to accept congratulations. He hurried to the paddock, and there, calm and serene, was Splinter. He held a revolver, and he was holding Septimus Snort at bay. And when Lightweight Larry came in, he too, was arrested.

Once again, Trackett Grim had scored.



He swiftly took out a hypodermic syringe and plunged the needle into Greased Lightning's neck.

**VISITING THE JOLLY OLD TAILOR.***(Continued from page 20.)*

And as for the loud check lounge, the idea was simply out of the ques. Not only fearful, but hideous, and several things of that kind.

Not that I was persuaded. Absolutely not! When Archie makes up his mind—well, it's made. Nothing can shift it, if you grasp what I mean. I was absolutely as firm as the old rocks. I insisted. I stuck to the old guns. And, don't you know, when I staggered out into Sackville Street again, I was fairly glowing with triumph. Considerable consignments of victory, as it were.

The white flannel suit was to stand, only, as a concession, I allowed the tailor chappie to cut out the brass buttons and the braid; and I didn't raise the jolly old dust when he suggested just a little modification in colour. After all, a light grey is practically the same as white, what? Anyhow, I had my way. Absolutely!

Then, with regard to the other two suits. There was practically no change at all. Simply reversed the old order, so to speak. The blue serge was to be the lounge suit, and the check tweed the Norfolk. Dash it all, a chappie doesn't need to quibble over trifles. I mean, life's fairly short, don't you know.

And so I was jolly pleased with myself. Well, rather! I had visited the old tailor chappie, and I'd conquered. Absolutely!

We all sympathise with Fatty Little. It was rough luck to be dropped on just as he was partaking of his morning snack on Thursday. But it was his own fault for using gorgonzola cheese sandwiches. When the fellows in the vicinity of Fatty came over faint, Mr. Crowell naturally investigated. Fatty nearly wept when the rest of the sandwiches were consigned to the fire. We expected an explosion, but the niff merely put the fire out.

\* \* \*

Owen major made an awful ass of himself on Friday morning. When Mr. Crowell suddenly asked him, in the geography lesson, where to find Cardiff City, he replied that "they'd gone up North to play against Everton"! That's the worst of reading football notes during lessons.

**RECIPES IN RHYME****By BOB CHRISTINE**

Take a pair of fists like hams,  
A mop of untidy hair,  
And a big protruding jaw,  
And eyes that often glare.  
Take a voice like a rusty foghorn,  
And a frame as strong as a horse,  
Serve up the lot together,  
It's Handy—served with sauce!

Take a pair of rimless glasses,  
And hair that's neatly brushed.  
And trousers always creased,  
And collars never crushed,  
Take the shiniest of toppers,  
And spats without a stain.  
Call it Consommé Montie,  
And serve it on a gold-nobbed cane!

Take a pack of worn-out cards,  
And a few cheap cigarettes,  
And three boys in a study,  
Talking of racing debts.  
Add a little essence of Nuts,  
And mix the lot up well.  
And call this nice dish Fullwood,  
With trimmings *à la Bell*!

Take a very genial ass  
And all that sort of rot.  
A jolly old tulip as it were,  
So to speak and also what not.  
Add a coloured dressing-gown  
And a bit of a priceless old bean.  
And serve in a cosy armchair,  
As Archie Glenthorne, I mean!

Take a pair of bulging cheeks,  
And a couple of currents for eyes.  
Mix with a dozen jam tarts  
And a score or so of mince pies.  
Add in a few rich pastries,  
You'll find that is quite enough  
After a three course lunch at St. Frank's  
To make *Fatty Little Puff*!

Handforth will have to be more careful. When he was told to open one of the windows on Saturday morning, the ass pushed up the lower sash—instead of the upper—and the wind blew all Mr. Crowell's papers off the desk. Then Handy punched Armstrong's nose for grinning, knocked over the inkpot on to Griffith's trousers, and tripped over Pitt's foot. Some fellows can't help being clumsy.



(Continued from page 16.)

what? Surprising quantities of knowledge, Phipps."

"Quite so, sir, but you are slightly wrong," said Phipps.

"Wrong," said Archie. "Pardon me, Phipps! Pardon me! Allow me to insist that Tokio is a bally spot in Japan. Dash it all, my pater staggered across to the old place only last year——"

"I am aware of that, sir, but this young gentleman is a native of China."

"Oh, precisely!" said Archie. "I get you, Phipps—I absolutely get you, laddie. China, and all that? The spot where they make the jolly old crackers and where they grow considerable consignments of tea!"

"Yes, sir," said Phipps. "Master Ching is Chinese, sir."

"Allee samee light!" agreed Yung Ching, nodding.

"I beg your pardon," said Archie. "Sorry, dear old sportsman, but I didn't quite catch the old utterance!"

"Allee samee light," repeated the Chinese boy. "Me comee flom China. My honou-  
lable father big mandalin in Ngan-chau-fu. I comee here for teachee things. Learnee much! Go back heap plentee clever!"

"Oh, rather," said Archie vaguely.

He looked at Phipps for guidance, but Phipps had had quite enough of Yung Ching, and steadfastly gazed in the opposite direction. Archie, extremely helpless, turned back to the visitor with much embarrassment.

"Deucedly pleased to see you, and all that, but what, might I ask, is the precise scheme?" he inquired. "That is to say, why the old visit? Kindly trot out the idea, laddie!"

"No savvy," said Yung Ching.

"What! Dash it all," said Archie. "I didn't quite catch that, old dear!"

"He means he doesn't understand, sir," explained Phipps.

"Absolutely!" said Archie. "He fails to grasp the argument. But that's queer, isn't it? He speaks English in a perfect priceless way. Surely the laddie can gather the trend?"

"Makee you welcome," said Yung Ching. "Plenty glad to see you."

"Thanks frightfully," said Archie.

"One piecee pleased you comee," went on the Chinese boy. "Sittee down in my disgustin, and miselable hovel!"

Archie's monocle dropped out of his eye. "Great absolute Scott!" he ejaculated blankly. "I mean to say, disgusting hovel! Deucedly awful, what? Hardly what one might describe as being an accurate statement! And pray allow me to point out, old dear, that this room is mine. Sorrow, and all that, no offence. Absolutely not!

But we might as well stick to the old facts. Don't you think so?"

"This my loom," said Yung Ching. "My studdy?"

"Eh? I mean to say, what?" exclaimed Archie. "Your study?"

"Allee samee, yes!"

"But, dash it all——"

"Master Ching has been speaking in that strain, sir, for some time," said Phipps patiently. "He seems to have the impression, sir, that this apartment is his. It is most awkward, sir."

"Oh, rather," agreed Archie. "Frightfully rotten, in fact! Makes a chappie go all queer, don't you know. I don't like taking the old firm stand, and all that, but something's got to be done. Absolutely! Something has positively got to be accomplished."

"So I imagine, sir."

"Well, Phipps, what about it?"

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"How about the old scheme?" asked Archie. "Pray get the brain department into operation and trot out the idea! Something gentle, Phipps, something that can be done without a large supply of violence!"

"I am afraid it is impossible to remove Master Ching without laying hands upon him, sir," said Phipps. "The young gentleman insists upon misunderstanding what we say to him, and will not realise that he is intruding."

"That's frightfully rotten," said Archie.

"Most awkward, sir."

"A dashed delicate situash., if you know what I mean," went on Archie. "Unless you can make some suggestion, Phipps, I am afraid I shall be compelled to give sundry yells for assistance."

"I think that is the only solution, sir," said Phipps.

"I don't like it, laddie. I don't like doing anything that might be beneath the dig. of the Glenthornes. Perhaps we'd better let the chappie remain? Wait until he trickles forth on his own, what?"

"I should hardly advise that, sir!"

"But we can't push him out, as it were," said Archie. "Utterly imposs., old walnut. The ejection stunt cannot be attempted. Totally rotten. It's a bally mystery how he arrived!"

"I found him here when I entered the study, sir," said Phipps. "I can only presume that he entered the apartment by accident——"

"Plenty 'long!" interrupted Yung Ching. "Me comee here to stay. This my loom—me makee you welcome. Me likee it plentee! One piecee fine! Me stay here allee time and not go!"

And Yung Ching curled himself up in Archie's favourite chair, and faced the fire. Without a doubt, he had taken full and complete possession. He was making himself thoroughly at home.

Archie looked at Phipps again, but Phipps was regarding the settee with close attention. Archie lounged up to him, and sunk his voice.

"Frightfully rude to whisper, but what the deuce is a chappie to do?" he murmured. "Rescue, Phipps! Kindly rally round, and do something! This, as you might say, is positively poisonous!"

"It is certainly unfortunate, sir."

"Absolutely putrid!" said Archie. "Invaded, by Jingo! And we can't shift the frightful boulder! Just when I was keen on forty of the old dreamless! Phipps, you simply must get the old bean into working-order and trot out a scheme!"

"I can only suggest, sir, that I should inform one of the masters—preferably Mr. Nelson Lee—of the situation," said Phipps. "Possibly Mr. Lee will be able to take some action."

Archie regarded Phipps wonderingly.

"Amazing, old thing!" he said. "Absolutely priceless! That, I mean to say, is positively the one and only! The absolute stunt! Proceed to stagger forth in search of Mr. Lee! Signal the old S.O.S. in large quantities!"

"Yes, sir," said Phipps promptly.

He was only too pleased to get out of the study, and he hurried off. Archie turned back to the visitor, and eyed him uncertainly. He didn't mind Yung Ching being present. But it certainly upset him a little bit for the Chinese boy to blandly state that this was his study, and that he was going to stay in it. Worst of all, it was the reference to the apartment as "a miserable hovel." That was what cut Archie to the quick, and made him wince.

"Man, he go?" asked Yung Ching. "Allee samee good. No wantee him. He velly unpleasant man. Makee much talk, and do not'ing! My honourable father's servants no actee like that, or chopee off head!"

"Absolutely!" exclaimed Archie. "Chop off the old knob, what? A cheery old Chinese custom, I believe. Absolutely! A pleasant way of administering the old rod of iron!"

"No chopee off head in England!" said Yung Ching. "Plentee safe here. Me likee St. Flank's heap much. Allee samee plentee comfort!"

"Oh, yards of it!" agreed Archie, as he watched Yung Ching in his pet chair. "Comfort in chunks, so to speak. You appear, old top, to be making yourself deucedly at home, what?"

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching blandly.

And then Archie was saved from further torture by the welcome arrival of Nelson Lee, with Phipps close behind. Archie bowed with dignity as Lee entered. Yung Ching got to his feet, and fairly grovelled.

"One chopee glad you come!" he said. "Servant heap plentee do not'ing! No takee orders! Plentee bad man!"

"That's rather stiff, what?" asked Archie. "Phipps, sir, has been having the very deuce of a time with the Ching chappie. Kindly proceed to tell the frightful young boulder that he's doing the old intruding act!"

"Leave it to me, Glenthorne," said Nelson Lee. "Did Ching come here of his own accord, or was he brought?"

"Absolutely not!" said Archie. "That is to remark, old darling, we don't know! We're groping, as it were. Phipps simply found the laddie in possession! Fairly on the spot!"

Nelson Lee nodded, and turned to Yung Ching.

"How did you get here, my boy?" he asked.

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching, smiling.

"Come, come! You understand perfectly!" said Nelson Lee grimly. "How did you get into this study?"

"Me comee here!" said the Chinese boy. "Allee samee plentee nice! Me stopee here. My loom—my study! Me likee it plentee!"

"I dare say you do!" said Nelson Lee. "But this is not your study, Ching, and you ought not to have come here. You surely must know that you have no right in this room."

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching blandly.

Nelson Lee compressed his lips.

"You need not think that you can take refuge behind that subterfuge, Ching!" he exclaimed. "Pretended ignorance will not help you. But it is not my intention to argue. You have come to the wrong study, and you must leave it at once. Follow me!"

Yung Ching made no attempt to do so.

"Do you hear, Ching?" asked Lee. "Come with me at once!"

"No savvy!" said the Chinese. "Me stayee here!"

"That clearly indicates that you do understand!" exclaimed the detective-House-master. "Don't be foolish, my boy. Your own study is next door, and I intend introducing you at once to your companions. Come!"

But Yung Ching made no move. Throughout the whole time he had been smiling, bland, and absolutely unaffected. It was impossible to tell what was going on in his Oriental mind. But, as a sticker, he was about the limit. Nelson Lee strongly suspected that Chambers of the Fifth had deliberately brought Yung Ching to this study, as a kind of joke.

And the detective wasted no further time.

**ANSWERS**  
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:



It was clear that the Chinese boy was deliberately failing to understand. And there was only one method of dealing with him. Lee couldn't be angry—Ching's smiling face made such a thing impossible. Besides, the Chinese boy was new to the school and its ways.

Nelson Lee strode across the room, and seized Ching by the arm. He pulled gently, and the yellow-skinned junior was compelled to follow. Nelson Lee's grip was tight, in spite of the gentle touch.

"Me no wantee go!" said Yung Ching. "Me stayee here."

"No, you will come with me, Ching," said Nelson Lee. "That's the way—I'm not going to hurt you, my boy. There has been a mistake, and this is not your room. You will have another study close at hand."

"Me not undelstand!" murmured the Chinese. "Muchee solly go 'way!"

"Not so, dear laddie—absolutely!" said Archie softly. "Sorry, what? I rather think, Phipps, that the sorrow is one-sided, as you might say."

"Quite so, sir," said Phipps.

"Several furlongs of gladness on this old section, what?" went on Archie. "In fact, a couple of dozen miles of relief! We breathe again, laddie—we hoist the flag of victory, and what not! The young master is lord of his own castle once more? The heathen enemy is hurled forth!"

"It was a most difficult task, sir," said Phipps. "And Mr. Lee's appearance was most timely. I trust no further trouble will occur."

"Absolutely!" said Archie, sinking into his favourite chair.

In the meantime, Nelson Lee had taken Yung Ching next door—to the end study of the Remove passage. It was just round the bend, and when Nelson Lee entered the two rightful occupants were just getting busy tidying up their books, unpacking personal belongings, and such light tasks of that kind.

"Good-evening, boys!" said Nelson Lee pleasantly.

"Good-evening, sir!"

Solomon Levi and Dick Goodwin looked at the Housemaster curiously for a moment, and then transferred their attention to Yung Ching. This was the first time they had seen the Chinese boy, and they were rather interested.

They had heard about him, of course, and they knew that he had arrived. They wondered why Nelson Lee had brought the new boy to this study. It never struck them that Ching was to become their constant companion.

"Let me introduce you to your new study chum, boys," said Nelson Lee. "I have decided that Yung Ching shall share this room with you."

"By my life!" gasped Levi. "I—I— Sorry, sir! You—you mean that this lozer

— That—that this chap is to share our study?"

"Exactly, Levi."

"By gum!" exclaimed Goodwin. "Sithce here, sir, that's a bit thick! We've been getting on gradely by ourselves, and—I—I don't want to be impolite, sir, but I mean —"

Nelson Lee smiled as the two juniors regarded him in consternation.

"I can quite understand your natural concern, my lads," he said. "But you need not be alarmed. Yung Ching is a most harmless little chap, and I do not think he will cause you any trouble. I have chosen this study for him because I want his companions to be thoroughly reliable and honourable."

The juniors were flattered, but still startled.

"Thanks, sir," said Solomon. "Believe me, things have been going along nicely in this study for a long time. We're not looking for any troubles, sir. And if you could possibly find some other study for Ching —"

"I have decided that Yung Ching shall remain here," interrupted Nelson Lee. "Perhaps I was wrong. I am beginning to fear that my judgment was misplaced. I am not gratified by your attitude, boys. It is scarcely gentlemanly to express such pronounced animosity towards a boy who is unknown to you—"

"Ay, look at that!" interrupted Goodwin quickly. "By gum! I'm sorry, sir—I didn't want you to think anything of that sort, tha knows! Ay, Solly, we've been a bit caddish!"

"Sure!" agreed Levi, nodding. "You're right, Dick. It didn't strike me like that until Mr. Lee pointed it out. Yung Ching is welcome to come in, sir," added Solly readily. "We'll make him feel at home, believe me!"

"That's the right spirit, Levi," said Nelson Lee approvingly. "I thought you boys were made of different stuff. At all events, give Yung Ching a fair trial. See how you get on with him. I will come to you at the end of the week, and ask how matters are progressing."

"Thank you, sir!"

"Do you understand, Ching?" asked Nelson Lee.

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching blandly.

"Then I'm afraid you must learn the facts from your new study-mates," said Lee. "I have no more time to waste on you, my boy. These young gentlemen will be your constant companions in future, and they will tell you why you have been brought here."

Nelson Lee nodded, and passed out of the study. And Yung Ching, after looking at the closed door for a moment, turned and surveyed Dick Goodwin and Solomon Levi.

They, for their part, were regarding the Chinese boy with a very careful scrutiny. He was rather small, but well built, airy,

and quite European in general appearance. He wore well-cut Etons; his feet were encased in smart shoes, his linen was spotless, and there was a smile on his yellow face which wouldn't come off.

"Alee samee velly good!" said Yung Ching. "Heapee nice!"

"What?" said Levi, staring.

"Notee so lich as other loom, but plentee comfo'table. Me getee on alle light in this loom! Velly pleased to meetee you!"

Ching bowed low, advanced gravely, and then proceeded to shake hands with himself. Having done this, he grinned with his open, cheerful grin. Solomon Levi and Dick Goodwin found their consternation dying down. After all, there was something rather taking about this little Chineese.

"So you're booked to stay in here, eh?" said Levi. "All right, sonny—we'll make you welcome. You've only got to behave yourself, and there'll be no trouble. What about your books and belongings?"

"No savvy!" said Yung Ching softly.

"What!"

"Notee undlestand!"

"All right—do the other thing!" exclaimed Solomon cheerfully. "I expect you'll understand soon enough when it's necessary. Now then, Dick—chuck across those books of mine! We want to get straight."

They proceeded with their unpacking, and studiously ignored Yung Ching. And the Chinese boy found things very different here to what they had been in Archie's apartment.

Finding himself left to his own devices, he rapidly became intelligent.

"Me goee!" he said suddenly.

"Good!" replied Levi, as he piled some books on the shelf. "So long! Give my love to mother!"

"You not savvy!" said Ching. "Me goee to fetch books and allee samee belongings. Me livee here, and me likee it one piecee good."

"That's all right, then," said Levi. "I think we'll leave you in charge for the time being, Chinky. Come on, Dick, we'll buzz down to the common-room, and see how things are going. Believe me, I haven't met half the fellows yet."

And Dick Goodwin and Solomon Levi walked out of the study, leaving Yung Ching in sole possession. The Chinese boy looked very disappointed and forlorn. Without any doubt, he was very fond of company, and he liked to make out that he couldn't understand what was being said. The chums of the end study had adopted just the right tactics to sharpen Yung Ching's wits.

*(Continued on next page.)*

## COMMENCING NEXT WEEK!

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NEXT WEEK'S  
STORY:

# THE YELLOW GRIP!



(Continued from page 28.)

Arriving in the Common-room, Goodwin and Levi became aware of Handforth's voice. They had heard it from afar, in fact. And, just as they entered, Handforth was pushing his fist beneath Teddy Long's nose.

"Another word, my son, and I'll swipe you!" he said darkly.

"Oh, but I say, it's true!" gasped Long. "I saw him as clear as anything—out in the lane! A queer-looking chap, with a yellow face! And, before I could take another look, the face vanished."

"You're sure about this?" I asked, pushing Handy aside.

"Positive!" said Teddy Long. "A horrible-looking face, too! All yellow and creased, you know! It gave me a tremendous start. I can tell you! And then, all at once, it vanished into thin air!"

"Rot!" snorted Handforth. "Don't be a young ass!"

"But it's true!" shouted Teddy indignantly.

He was shouted down, and the matter dropped. For Teddy Long was well known to be the greatest little liar in the Ancient House. He also had a vivid imagination, and his word could never be regarded as reliable.

I had come into the Common-room just as the matter of the mysterious yellow face was being discussed. And, notwithstanding Teddy Long's reputation, I had an idea that this time there was some truth in his story.

A yellow face in the dusk of the evening out in the lane! Was it pure imagination on Long's part, or had he really seen such a face? A Chinaman! That was the obvious explanation.

And I could not help thinking of those Chinese watchers outside Nelson Lee's house in Gray's Inn Road. Had they followed Yung Ching down to St. Frank's? And, if so, what did it portend?

In spite of myself, I felt slightly uneasy.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE DORMITORY MYSTERY!



**I** DON'T exactly know what the scene was like at the Tower of Babel, but I imagine that the Remove dormitory that night must have been very much like it. At all events, the

air was "positively foul," as Archie would have put it.

It was the first night of the new term, and all strict rules were greatly relaxed. Noise went on in every part of the school, and no objections were raised. It was a flat-night privilege.

In the Remove dormitory all the fellows were chatting, talking, shouting, and even scrapping. Yarns about the holidays were

being exchanged by the dozen—the majority of them unwarrantably exaggerated.

Handforth was on the point of fighting Armstrong and Griffith and Doyle and Hubbard and Owen major, and just a few others. As he said himself, he was quite prepared to take on the whole crowd with one fist. He had no quarrel with them—he simply liked this sort of thing.

Church and McClure kept discreetly in the background. With Handforth in such a mood, he was quite ready to lunge into them at any moment, just for the sake of doing something.

And nobody seemed to think of undressing—with the possible exception of Yung Ching. The Chinese boy had come up with Levi and Goodwin. Having steered him successfully into the dormitory, the chums of the end study considered that they had performed their duty.

And Yung Ching, having been pointed out his own bed, lost no time in preparing for sleep. A number of the juniors had attempted to question him. They had talked to him until they were fed-up. For practically all they could get in reply were the two words "No savvy."

Yung Ching had a most effective way of choking off the curious ones. And he evidently wanted peace and quietness. He got it. After five minutes had elapsed, he was totally ignored.

Then he got into bed.

Just for a moment or two the Chinese boy had a kind of pained expression on his face. He lay down between the sheets, put his head on the pillow, and then he writhed about in a peculiar way.

"Allee samee bad!" he murmured, sitting up.

"Anything wrong, Ching?" I asked, looking at him.

"Velly plicky," replied Ching, screwing up his face.

"Very what?"

"Bed allee samee plicky!"

"Plicky!" I repeated. "Oh, prickly!"

"Plenty much!" said the Chinese. "Makee skin hurtee!"

"Of all the nerve!" exclaimed Handforth indignantly. "Why, our beds are first-class. Better than any beds in other public schools! And this blessed Chink comes here and runs 'em down!"

"Hurtee much!" repeated Ching, screwing up his face. "Ow! No likee it! Me plefer sleepee on floor! Muchee better!"

"Sleep on the floor!" exclaimed Levi, "By my luck! This meshugener is about the limit. I reckon he was a bit touched when he first came. You can believe me, he's real meshuger!"

"Sugar!" said Handforth, staring.

"Solly is using one of the words of his own magnificent language," I grinned. "I know a few myself, a meshugener is a chap who's up the loop, rather touched."

"I know a few others," said Handforth, with a sniff, and gazing significantly at Solly. "Language you call it? Great pip! It sounds like somebody with lockjaw!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The matter was not pursued, or Handforth would have been fighting half the form in another two minutes. We gave our attention to Yung Ching. The Chinese boy had taken off his blankets and quilt, and was calmly proceeding to roll himself up on the floor. And this spectacle entirely drove all thoughts of battle out of Handforth's mind. He fairly paled as he stared at Yung Ching.

"Look at him!" he roared. "Just look! Going to bed on the floor! Did you ever see such an insult? Grab him!"

The other juniors were quite ready, and Yung Ching was instantly seized, whirled out of his blankets, and dumped upon the bed.

"Ow—wow—wow!" he squealed wildly.

He was held down firmly, and the blankets were put over him again, and he was tucked up. And all the while he lay writhing.

"Blessed little coward!" said Handforth. "Howling because you are just touched. You can't make out the bed hurts you when you fall into it!"

"Plentee much pain!" groaned Yung Ching. "Allee samee plicky!"

"Rats!" said Handforth gruffly.

He finished his undressing, and, attired in a new suit of pyjamas—which he had not even mentioned—he proceeded to walk up and down the dormitory. He had no earthly reason to do this. But it was quite clear that Handforth was just allowing the fellows to have a good view of his new pyjamas. They were bright yellow with green stripes, and several juniors complained of blindness as he passed. Fortunately for them, they did so in whispers, or trouble would have followed. Finally, Handforth arrived at his bed, flung back the clothes, and leapt in. He always did this, and his bed, in consequence, was getting rather weak on its pins.

"Ow-yaroooooh!" howled Handforth violently.

Quickly as he got into bed, he emerged in about half the time. He shot out, and landed in a heap on the floor. The rest of us looked at him in absolute astonishment.

"Yow!" groaned Handforth weakly.

"What's bitten you, you ass?" inquired Pitt.

"The—the bed!" said Handforth, pointing. "It—it felt like bits of granite! And I flopped into it with all my weight! Oh, my only hat!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Yow-ooooooooop!"

"Ow—ow!"

These peculiar sounds came from three different parts of the dormitory precisely

at the same moment. I turned round, and found Gulliver, Owen major and Armstrong hastily leaving their beds. It seemed that they, too, had suffered from some mysterious pain.

I hurried forward, and felt Handforth's bed. It looked quite all right, with a beautiful sheet covering the mattress. The top bedclothes were rolled back. And as I felt the bottom sheet, I discovered that appearances were very deceptive. Instead of being smooth and soft, the bed was simply one mass of hard projections.

In a moment, I tore back the sheet. Then I gasped. There, lying on the under-blanket, were hundreds of dried peas! They were as hard as lead bullets, and crinkly. Lying just under the thin sheet, they had been invisible. But anybody who suddenly drops upon a bed of hard peas knows exactly what it means!

"Well, I'm blessed!" I exclaimed. "Look at this!"

"Mine's just the same!" gasped Church.

"And mine!" roared Jack Grey.

"Same here!"

Sheets were being pulled back by the startled juniors, and in every case the result was the same. Then, suddenly I looked at Yung Ching. He was sitting up, in his own bed, gazing round with a forlorn expression on his usually bland face.

"Muchee pain," he murmured, as he caught my eye.

"Poor old Ching," I grinned. "I say, you chaps! No wonder he howled when you chucked him back into bed. And he was right all the time. I reckon his bed must be 'velly plicky!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The laugh was not a very hearty one, however, for the juniors were extremely indignant, and most of them were busily engaged in the task of collecting the peas and putting them safely away. At first Handforth threw his on the floor, until he trod on a couple with his bare foot.

According to Handy, he would now be a cripple for life, and he hobbled about painfully. But, at last, all the beds were cleared of their unwelcome intruders, and the peas were put in a big heap up one corner. There were pounds and pounds of them.

"Christine, of course," I said grimly. "This is the work of our cheerful rivals of the College House. Bob Christine has started early, and I can just imagine how he's cackling now!"

"By George," said Handforth. "He won't cackle to-morrow, when I get at him."

"I ought to have been on the alert, too," I went on. "I noticed that Christine and Cole were grinning a bit when I passed them in the Triangle, half an hour before bed-time. I expect they'd just finished their deadly work."



"A fine leader, ain't you?" said Handforth bitterly. "You knew about it all the time, and you let me go and jump into bed!"

"You silly ass!" I snapped. "How did I know?"

"Anybody with brains would have found it out in a tick," said Handforth scathingly. "If I had had a clue like that, I should have known something was in the wind——"

"I seem to have a hazy idea, that you were with me at the time, Handy," I said.

Handforth dropped the subject, and proceeded to outline exactly what he meant to do to Christine and Co. on the following morning. If he carried out his threat, the

shining brilliantly, and it was possible to dimly see across the dormitory.

The school clock chimed out the hour of ten, and I was still awake. A few others were awake, too. But the dormitory was now settling down for the night, and those fellows who were still talking did so in a sleepy, yawning kind of way.

Teddy Long was one of those who had not dropped off. His bed was situated at the extreme end of the dormitory, and as he turned over to settle himself for the night he heard a distinct sound, a most mysterious sound. And it proceeded from the cupboard which was let into the wall at the end of the big room. Teddy Long's bed was next to it.



**He sat upright in bed, stared at the cupboard, and panted heavily. The sound was a low, whining noise, accompanied by a kind of fluttering.**

heroes of the College House would be just about ready for burial. And Handforth wanted to dash straight off on the warpath. The fact that it was nearly time for lights out didn't seem to worry him.

"Besides," I pointed out, "Christine may not be the culprit at all. I'm pretty sure he is, but there's no actual proof. By tomorrow we shall know, and then we can make the necessary reprisal. We certainly shan't allow this to stand."

Handforth was still talking about his plans when Morrow, of the Sixth arrived. And Morrow proceeded to put the lights out. All the juniors were in bed by now, and Yung Ching was comfortable at last. He announced that his bed was "allee light now." And Morrow departed, leaving the dormitory in darkness.

At least it seemed to be in darkness at first. But when our eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, we found that the stars were

He sat bolt upright in bed, stared at the cupboard, and panted heavily. The sound was a low, whining noise, accompanied by a kind of fluttering. And the whining was all quivery. And then it died down into complete silence.

The spell seemed to be broken, and Teddy Long screamed.

He let out a terrific howl of fright, dived under the bedclothes, and covered himself up. Many fellows who had just dozed off sat up in bed, startled. And I was already out on the floor.

I, too, had heard that same whining noise; but it had not seemed much to me, for I was a greater distance away. At the same time, the thing was most unaccountable, and I was intent upon making an immediate examination. First of all I pulled back Teddy Long's bedclothes, and exposed him.

"Oh, oh!" he wailed. "Don't! There's

--there's a ghost in that cupboard! I heard it moaning, you know! It—it—" "Don't be a frightened young ass!" I interrupted curtly. "There aren't such things as ghosts. What you heard was something altogether different, and we'll soon find out the truth."

Several other fellows collected round me, and one or two struck matches. But when I went to open the cupboard, I found it was locked. And the key had been removed. It was, therefore, quite impossible to see inside.

"That's queer," I said, frowning. "I've never known this cupboard to be locked before. It's only used for odds and ends, and there's no earthly reason why it should be secured. I don't believe the sound came from that cupboard at all—"

"It—it did!" panted Long faintly. "I—I heard it! An awful whining howl! I tell you it wasn't human, it was a ghost—"

"Rot!" said Handforth sourly. "Get back to bed, you young fathead!"

"I—I can't sleep any more—"

"Nonsense!" I broke in sharply. "Don't get the wind up over nothing, Long. That sound was probably caused by a rat, or a mouse."

"It wasn't," persisted Long. "It couldn't have been!"

"I didn't think so, either. I'd only made the remark in order to quell the sudden

outbreak of nervousness. For Teddy Long was not the only fellow who shivered. Other juniors had heard that sound, and although they did not say much, they were affected. But the main body of the Remove had been asleep. They had only awakened when Teddy Long screamed out.

"What's all the blessed fuss about?" demanded Tommy Watson sleepily. "Why don't you asses get back to bed? What rot! Talking about ghosts! I'm not going to take any notice, anyhow."

Nearly all the juniors returned to their beds, but Teddy Long hesitated before entering his. Then, just as he was standing there, that sound came again, without warning, and now sounding louder.

It was not actually louder, it only seemed so because the dormitory was quieter. And the peculiar quivering, wailing sound had a most eerie and weird effect. It was like nothing on earth.

"Help—help!" shrieked Teddy Long wildly. "It's a ghost!"

The noise he made was tremendous, and he pelted down the dormitory as though hundreds of demons were at his heels.

"Hold on, Long!" I shouted. "Come back—"

But he was at the door, and he wrenched it open and literally hurled himself out into

(Continued on page 33)

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the corridor. He was screaming at the top of his voice.

Overcome with terror, he clutched at the wall, and sobbed for breath. And by now almost every junior in the dormitory was alert, and either out of bed, or sitting up. Long had awakened the heaviest sleeper.

He had also awakened sundry prefects, and one or two masters. They came hurrying to the spot, filled with alarm and uncertainty. The prefects were in their pyjamas. But Mr. Crowell, who was the first master to show up, was practically dressed. To get any story out of Teddy Long was impossible.

And while all this was going on, I had another look at the cupboard, and made a determined attempt to open the door. But, in spite of all my efforts, it would not budge.

For a brief instant I remembered Teddy Long's story of a yellow face in the lane. Could one of Yung Ching's enemies have got into the cupboard? But I put the thought aside as ridiculous and impossible. There was really no necessity to allow conjecture to get beyond the bounds of reason.

In the first place, an outsider couldn't have got into the dormitory. In the second place, even if he had accomplished that difficult feat, he would never have given himself away by presenting a cheap imitation of a ghost. He would have remained as silent as a mouse until we were all sleeping.

At the same time, I was greatly puzzled. Then the lights of the dormitory were suddenly switched full on. Turning, I found Mr. Crowell in the doorway, with Morrow and Fenton and Wilson. The three prefects were looking rather grim.

"Who's been scaring this kid?" demanded Morrow, looking round sharply.

"There's—there's something in the cupboard!" faltered Bell.

"Something in the cupboard?" repeated Mr. Crowell. "What are you talking about, my boy? All I can get out of Long is that he has seen, or heard a ghost. That is arrant nonsense—"

"But we all heard it, sir!" wailed Enoch Snipe. "It's true, sir! A—a sound like somebody dying—"

"Be silent!" commanded Mr. Crowell curtly. "That sort of talk won't do any good, Snipe! Isn't there anybody here who can give a sensible account of what took place? I have not the slightest doubt that the whole thing is an absurd exaggeration, with no foundation in fact."

I came forward.

"It's rather strange, sir," I said. "You see, Long sleeps next to that cupboard at the end of the dormitory, and he's a nervous sort of kid at the best of times. Well, a few minutes ago there was a most peculiar sound in the cupboard—"

"A peculiar sound?"

"Yes, sir!"

"What kind of a sound?"

"It's very hard to describe, sir," I said. "It was rather quivery and wailing, and it certainly seemed a bit uncanny. I'm not surprised that Long was scared out of his wits."

"Hadn't any of you sense enough to open the cupboard?" put in Fenton.

"Yes," I replied. "But it's no good having sense if the door's locked, and there's no key! We can't get in. It's jolly peculiar, and I'm keen on finding out the truth as soon as possible—"

"Listen!" broke in Church, in a hushed voice.

On the instant everybody in the apartment became as still as mice. We all stood stock still, listening intently. Then, clear in the strange hush, came that wailing note, quivering on the air like the note of a dying gale. Only it seemed exactly the same as before, with no variation in note.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Crowell, startled.

"It—it does sound rather extraordinary, sir!" said Fenton. "We ought to look in that cupboard without any delay, and—"

"Certainly," agreed Mr. Crowell. "Go at once out on the landing, and fetch the key from that cupboard, all the locks are of the same pattern, and the key is bound to fit."

Fenton hurried out, and when he returned with the key the strange sounds had died away. They hadn't seemed half so eerie in the full electric light. Those kind of noises are suitable to the darkness.

Fenton went straight across to the cupboard, put the key in the lock, and turned it. There was a great deal of excitement, and the juniors crowded round eagerly and curiously. They were brave enough now.

Fenton opened the door, flung it back and gazed inside.

"Well, I'm hanged!" he ejaculated blankly.

The cupboard was empty, except for an old, dilapidated looking clock. In spite of its condition, it was evidently a good one, for the tick was practically imperceptible, and not noticeable at all when the door was closed. And it was fixed in a kind of frame, with all sorts of contrivances.

"A jape!" I shouted indignantly. "Look at this, you chaps!"

They crowded round excitedly. And in a few minutes we found out the secret, and it was certainly very ingenious. The clock was one of those with an intermittent alarm. That is to say, it rings a bell for a few seconds and repeats this every two or three minutes for perhaps half an hour. They are made expressly for people who believe in lying in bed after the first warning.

Christine and Co. were obviously the culprits. After putting the peas in the beds, they had put this contrivance in the cupboard—set it to go off at ten—just when

the fellows were dropping off to sleep. Fixed to the hammer was a long piece of thin wood, very light, with a knob at the top. And, stretched across the framework was a taut string, which turned out to be a well-rozined violin string. The bell of the clock being removed, the result was surprising. When the hammer vibrated, it caused the wooden extension to quiver up and down on the violin string, producing a strange, shrill wailing sound. And this, of course, had been repeated every two or three minutes!

"A sheer absurdity!" said Mr. Crowell sourly. "Take the thing away, Fenton, and have it destroyed! I thought the whole matter was something ridiculous!"

He retired, after ordering us all back to bed. And as we snuggled between the sheets, Teddy Long was chipped a great deal, and all sorts of threats were uttered regarding Christine and Co. Without a doubt, the College House fellows had scored.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ALARM IN THE NIGHT.



**D**ING-dong-ding-dong! I half sat up in bed as the chimes sounded —on the still air. Then came a single boom. "One o'clock!" I murmured, as the solemn sound of the old clock died away. "Now, I wonder what the dickens caused me to wake up? It's not usual for me to have fitful sleep— Why, hallo! What the— Oh, my hat!"

I grinned in the gloom of the dormitory. For at that moment I had discovered the cause of my unaccustomed awakening. Shifting my position slightly in bed, I felt something hard and extremely uncomfortable just where I was lying.

"One of those giddy peas!" I muttered indignantly.

This was the truth of it. In clearing the peas out of the bed I had evidently missed one of the little beggars. They are elusive articles at the best of times. One of them had probably remained hidden in a ruck of the blanket, and had then worked its way out, for the express purpose of causing me irritation and discomfort.

I quietly hopped out of bed, and turned down the bottom sheet. And there, sure enough, was the pea, possibly feeling quite pleased with itself for having done its nefarious work so thoroughly.

"Little nuisance!" I muttered warmly. "I'll shove you down Christine's neck to-morrow, just for luck!"

I placed the offending article of vegetarian diet on the chair by my bed, and prepared to hop between the sheets. And just at

that moment a faint, tiny little crack came to my ears. It was like the breaking of a small twig, and it sounded strangely close.

It was not like an animal to cause that sound. And, anyhow, what animal would come into the Triangle at one o'clock in the morning? Furthermore, I was impressed by the fact that the crack had seemed to be quite near.

It came from the direction of the window—I knew that much. I glanced out into the starry night. It was by no means dark. The stars were twinkling brilliantly, and, although there was no moon, it was possible to see down into the Triangle.

I padded softly in my bare feet to the nearest window—there were two in the Remove dormitory. They were both open, too, top and bottom. The night being rather still and close, the prefect on duty had thought fit to give us plenty of fresh air.

Cautiously, I pushed my head out of the window. I glanced downwards to the ground. Then, with a quick, silent intake of breath, I drew my head in. I was tingling from head to toe.

A dim figure was stealthily climbing the ivy-coloured wall!

In that one brief instant I had seen his figure, moving inch by inch up the ivy. The figure was taking the climb easily and steadily. Fortunately for me, he had not looked up, and so he had no knowledge of my presence. And he was still some distance below the window.

What could it mean?

The sound I had heard had obviously been caused by a twig of ivy snapping. If I had been asleep the sound would never have disturbed me, although I am a light sleeper.

But, by sheer chance, I happened to be awake and out of bed. It is by fateful trifles of this sort that big discoveries are made. Not that this was a big discovery.

I thought for a moment or two, then set my teeth rather grimly. Could it be possible that one of the College House fellows was daring to climb the ivy in order to perpetrate another jape? Bob Christine, I knew, was capable of all sorts of recklessness once the mood took him. And he was evidently well on the war-path just now. We had had proof of that.

But at one o'clock in the morning?

It seemed steep, and I began wondering if this marauder could be somebody else. Anyhow, I decided that it would be better if I had a companion. I was not scared, but two of us could deal more effectively with the climber when he arrived at the window.

Just at first I had an idea of awakening Tommy Watson. But he was a heavy sleeper, and generally made all sorts of queer noises when he was awakened. If he made even a single mutter now, the unknown outside would be warned.

So I decided upon Reginald Pitt. He was a chap who would wake up silently, and



be on the alert, too. It was far better to be on the safe side. So I crossed like a shadow to Pitt's bed, and bent down over him.

"Reggie!" I whispered in his ear.

Pitt stirred slightly, and opened his eyes. The instant he did so I placed a hand softly over his mouth.

"Don't make a sound!" I breathed. "I'm Nipper, and there's some mysterious game afoot."

I took my hand away.

"All serene!" whispered Reggie. "I'm on!"

"Good man!" I murmured. "There's somebody climbing up the ivy outside—coming straight for this window. I want you to help me when the bouncer tries to climb in. We'll collar him red-handed."

"Good enough!" breathed Pitt. "Who do you think he is—a burglar?"

"Couldn't say—but we'll soon find out."

He slipped quietly out of bed, and, without troubling to put anything on, he came with me to the other window. We dare not lean out, but by going to the extreme end of the window, we could look out into the night, and see the face of the wall. At present it was quite bare.

We waited, tense and alert, and everything remained still and quiet. There was not the slightest sign that a marauder was about. At last Pitt nudged me, and placed his mouth against my ear.

"Do you often have dreams like that?" he breathed.

I pulled his ear round to my mouth.

"Fathead!" I said. "Don't be impatient!"

He grinned and nodded, but still seemed sceptical. And I could hardly blame him for thinking that I had dreamed the whole thing. There was not the slightest indication that trouble was about to come. And even I had no idea of the dramatic incident which was brewing.

Suddenly, Pitt gripped my arm, and, at the same moment, I knew the reason for his action. I caught sight of a dim shape edging its way up the face of the building, inch by inch, and as stealthily as a shadow.

Then I found myself wondering. Who was this intruder?

Not Christine—not any member of St. Frank's, in fact. There wasn't a fellow who could perform this feat in such a miraculous fashion. For it certainly was miraculous. The ivy was not particularly thick, and foothold was difficult. But, most amazing of all, was the fact that this unknown was performing the climb without a perceptible sound. That one cracking twig was the only indication he had given.

At length his fingers gripped the window-sill, and then he pulled himself up until he was in a kneeling position. And now, venturing to look more closely, I felt my heart thudding heavily against my ribs.

The intruder was a Chinaman!

I was sure of it, although I could not see him with any degree of distinctness. And he was wearing practically nothing! Except for a pair of short knickers, which resembled running shorts, the man was bare. But over his shoulder there was slung a little basket, and apparently held in position by a string.

I returned Pitt's grip, and for a second I wondered what we should do. This fellow looked a pretty tough customer to tackle, and he probably had a knife somewhere. Finding himself caught, he would not hesitate to use his weapon. That he had come after Yung Ching was perfectly clear.

As it happened, it was not necessary for me to arrive at any decision. For just as the Chinaman was preparing to enter, a startling thing occurred. I saw the man withdraw a knife from his middle, and he placed this between his teeth—in readiness for sinister work.

Then, suddenly, he gave a most peculiar sound. It was a kind of subdued scream, sounding enormously loud to us after the intense silence, but not sufficient to awaken any of the sleepers in the dormitory. The scream was choked back almost before it was uttered, and my skin felt all creepy at the sound. And it was so utterly unaccountable, too.

"Good heavens!" I gasped thickly.

For, immediately following that stifled scream, the Chinaman seemed to go limp in every limb. He toppled over backwards, and vanished. Reginald Pitt and I stood there, horrified.

Thud!

We heard it distinctly—the horrible sound as the Chinaman struck the ground. The distance was not very great, and any wiry person could drop it, and probably escape broken bones. But this man had fallen in a limp heap. What had caused him to do so was an utter and absolute mystery.

"He—he's fallen down!" muttered Pitt. "My goodness! The chap must have killed himself—"

"We'll soon see!" I said tensely. "Come on!"

"You're going down?" asked Pitt, grasping my arm.

"Yes!" I replied grimly. "That chap was a Chinaman, or I'll eat my hat! And he came here for the purpose of killing Yung Ching! He either fainted, or his nerves gave way. But we'll soon make sure."

With hardly a sound we left the dormitory, only pausing to throw a few clothes on and to don our slippers. Then we quietly and quickly descended the stairs.

It was too much trouble to unbolt the big door of the Ancient House. So we slipped into the first study in the Remove passage, and emerged by means of the window. We knew the exact spot where the Chinaman had fallen.

And there he lay, huddled up, and still.

As we approached we nearly hesitated,

for we instinctively knew that we should see something terrible. Then we went on, and I bent down on my knees before the motionless form.

One glance was sufficient to tell me that I had made no mistake. The man was yellow—a native of China. He had fallen loosely, appeared to have escaped all injury. There was not a scratch on him, and no wounds. His head lay on his crooked arm, just as he had fallen.

"Is he dead?" whispered Pitt huskily.

"Yes," I replied. "No sign of life whatever!"

"Great Scott!"

Pitt stood there, and I knelt by the Chinaman's side, and there was a tense silence. How had this marauder met his death? Not by falling from the window. In my opinion, he had been dead when he fell. Something had happened to bring the fellow's life to an end.

And then, as I bent closer, I started.

The truth was clear—I discovered the secret. For there, in the man's neck, at the rear, was something which any ordinary person would have taken for a splinter of wood. But I knew different—I had seen something of this kind before. That splinter of wood was a dart—and the end which was in the man's neck had probably been coated with a deadly poison.

I told Pitt, and he breathed hard.

"But—but who could have done it?" he asked hoarsely.

"I don't know—evidently somebody who wanted to stop the beggar from getting through the window," I replied. "It's an absolute mystery. And we've got to tell the gov'nor at once! This is too big for us!"

Pitt was only too ready, and we hastened back to the window, got inside, and hurried across the lobby to the staircase. But before we could even start mounting, a figure came swiftly and silently down.

"Look out!" I hissed quickly.

"It's all right, Nipper—don't get excited!" came Nelson Lee's smooth voice. "I am just coming down to see what is afoot!"

"Gov'nor!" I exclaimed. "How did you know?"

"I have not been napping, as you appear to imagine," replied Nelson Lee, who was fully dressed. "I heard the man fall, but I did not descend immediately, as I was watching the Triangle. But your impetuous descent has spoilt things, I'm afraid. I wanted to capture the men who caused that fellow to fall."

"Well, I'm blessed!" I said blankly. "I'm sorry, sir! I had no idea that you were up and awake. And you're right—it would have been better to watch!"

"Never mind," said Nelson Lee. "It cannot be helped."

We all hurried out into the Triangle again, and went to the spot where we had

left the body. We looked round in amazement.

The Chinaman had vanished!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MYSTERIOUS BUNCH OF FLOWERS.



NELSON LEE looked round grimly and searchingly.

"This is extraordinary!" he murmured. "The body was here less than three minutes ago, and now it has seemingly vanished into thin air!"

"But—but it's impossible, sir——"

"It cannot be impossible, Nipper, because it has happened!" broke in Lee sharply. "What a pity it was you interfered! Your intentions were good, I know, but if you had not entered into the affair, I should still have been watching, and I should have seen how this seeming miracle happened."

"Perhaps the chap recovered, and scooted, sir," suggested Pitt.

"How could he?" I asked. "He was dead!"

"I am not convinced on that point, Nipper," said Nelson Lee. "In fact, I strongly suspect that the man was alive——"

I interrupted here, and told the gov'nor of the little dart which I had seen sticking in the back of the Chinaman's neck.

"Ah! Then my conjecture was correct," said Lee. "Perhaps that dart did kill him, Nipper, but we have no guarantee of that. It may have been merely a drug which took instant effect. There can be no doubt that the fellow was carried away by some others who were watching—his confederates."

"But there weren't any——"

"I saw two, at least!" put in Lee grimly. "But they did not send the dart, Nipper. There is something about this which is very mysterious and unaccountable. But you boys had better go to bed——"

"Not likely, sir!" I exclaimed. "I want to be in this thing!"

"Rather," said Pitt. "Can't we search the Triangle? Perhaps they've only shifted the chap into the shrubbery, or just beyond the school wall, or under the old chestnuts? We'd better make a search, sir!"

Nelson Lee shook his head.

"No, boys, I cannot allow it," he said. "With poisoned darts about, it is altogether too dangerous. I should never forgive myself if anything happened to either of you. Go back indoors as quickly as possible. You may wait at the window if you like—but you must not remain out here."

I made no attempt to argue. I knew the tone in which Nelson Lee had spoken. It was final.

And, after all, he was right. He couldn't afford to take any risks with us. I was quite prepared to be with the gov'nor, but



it was different with Pitt. And I couldn't let Pitt go in alone. We went back to the study window, and climbed through.

"It's rotten, but we've got to stick it," I said. "We'll stay here, and keep watch. If anything happens to the guv'nor, we shall be ready."

"Rather," said Reggie. "What a beastly frost!"

In the meantime, Nelson Lee was making a systematic search in the Triangle. He went cautiously into the shrubbery, just against the monastery ruins, but the result of his search was blank. He found nothing suspicious, and it was the same in every other place that he searched. There was not the slightest sign or indication that Chinamen had been within a hundred miles of the place. These mysterious yellow night-birds had disappeared as unaccountably as they had come. We had only seen one but Nelson Lee had been more fortunate.

Nelson Lee worked his way back gradually to the spot where the Chinaman had fallen—immediately under the dormitory window. And he was just on the point of giving up all further effort when he suddenly bent down and picked something up. It had been lying close against the wall.

He stood quite still for a moment or two, looking intently at the object he had found. Then he came slowly towards the study window, and entered. Having done so, he closed the window, and pulled down the blind.

"Switch on the light, Nipper," he said quietly.

I did so with alacrity, and the study became flooded with electric light. It was dazzling after the intense gloom which had prevailed earlier. With much curiosity, I looked at the object in Nelson Lee's hand.

It was a small bunch of flowers.

"Why, I thought you'd found something important, sir!" I said, disappointedly.

"Unless I am mistaken, Nipper, this little bunch of flowers is of paramount importance," he said. "They were dropped by the falling Chinaman, and missed by his comrades when they picked him up."

Lee examined the flowers more closely in the electric light, and both Pitt and I looked at them, too. They were of a peculiarly small variety, red in colour, with slight traces of blue on the petals. I had never seen flowers like them before, and they rather reminded me of tropical herbs of some kind.

"What are they, sir?" I asked curiously.

"I cannot tell you, Nipper," replied Lee. "I can only say that they are of an Oriental character, and were certainly produced in a hothouse. They are badly faded, but none the less interesting for that."

The guv'nor placed the bunch to his nose, but I grabbed his arm, and pulled it down.

"Don't, sir!" I exclaimed quickly. "They may be poisoned!"

Nelson Lee smiled.

"Your supposition is justifiable, perhaps," he said smoothly. "But these flowers are not poisoned, Nipper. That was not the object of bringing them here. They possess a strangely pungent smell, and they remind me——"

The guv'nor paused abruptly.

"They remind you of what, sir?" asked Pitt.

Nelson Lee made no reply. But, just for a flash I saw a look of horror creep into his eyes. I knew, in that moment, that he had remembered. He knew why these flowers had been brought, and what they portended.

"Well, sir?" I asked quickly. "What do the flowers remind you of?"

"I cannot tell you, Nipper," said Nelson Lee quietly.

"Do you know?"

"Yes."

"Then why can't you tell us, guv'nor?" I asked. "You've already said that the flowers aren't poisoned——"

"They are not poisoned."

"But you suspect something else, sir?"

"I do not suspect, Nipper—I know," replied Nelson Lee. "However, I cannot tell you what is in my mind. It would be unwise for me to do so at this moment. Later on, perhaps, you will know the truth. But, my boys, you were very lucky."

"Lucky?" I asked, in surprise. "When, sir?"

"When you went into the Triangle and bent over the Chinaman."

"I'm blessed if I can see how we were lucky, sir," I exclaimed. "The whole thing is simply an impenetrable mystery to me. I can make neither head nor tale of it. What does it all mean?"

Nelson Lee took me by the shoulders.

"Now, boys, you must go back to bed," he said smoothly. "Go to bed, and say nothing to the other boys of what has happened to-night. Most particular of all, do not breathe a word to Yung Ching. I would not like him to know of these happenings."

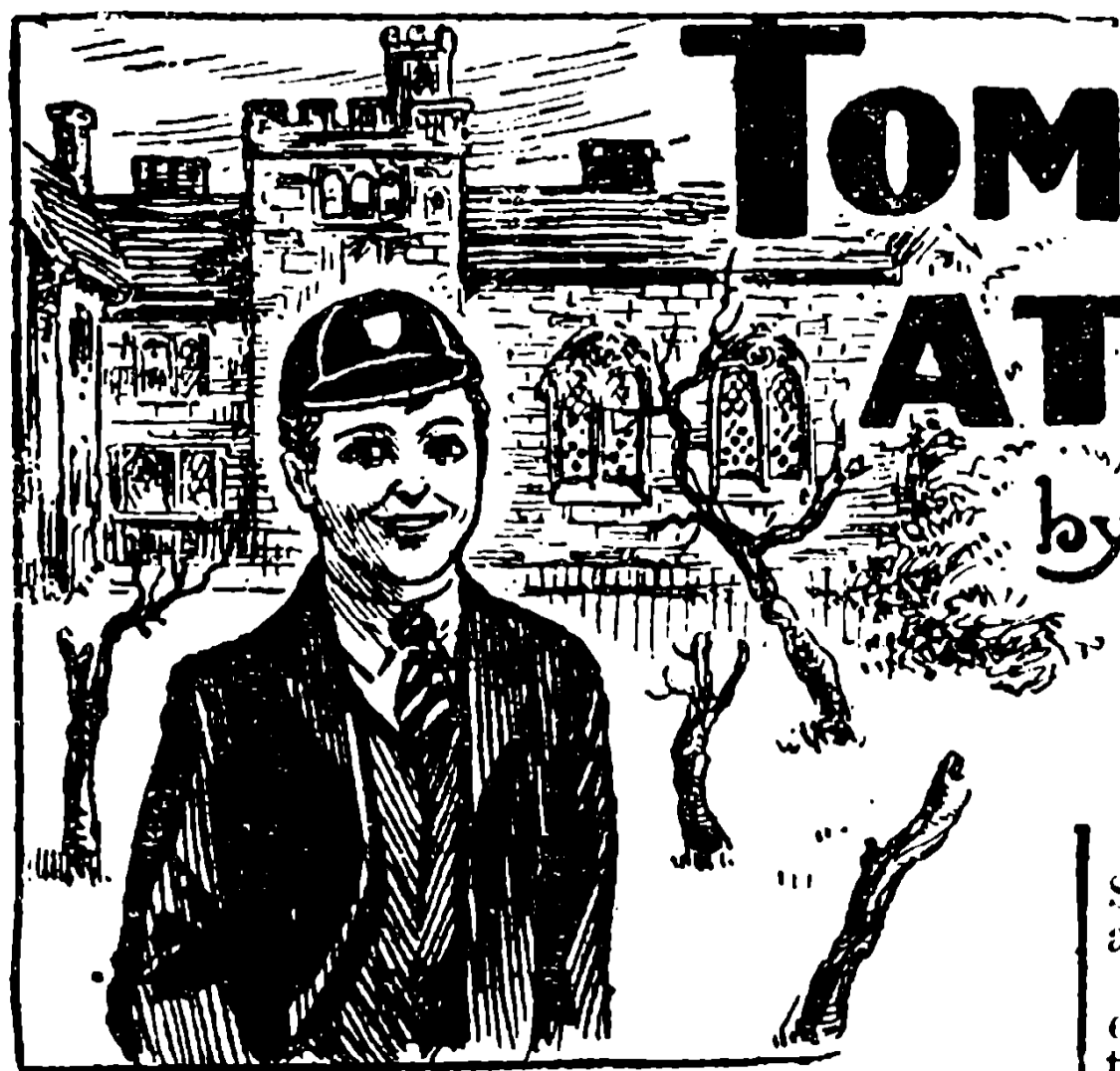
"You can trust us to keep mum, sir," said Pitt.

"I know that, my boy," exclaimed Lee. "In future Yung Ching will not sleep in the dormitory—I will make special arrangements, and have him with me in my own bedroom. After what has happened to-night, such an alteration is absolutely essential."

And so, shortly afterwards, Reginald Pitt and I went back to the Remove dormitory. The incident was over, and we slept soundly for the rest of the night. In the morning it all seemed unreal and nightmare-like. We could hardly believe that it had really happened.

But Yung Ching, the Chinese, was beset by unknown perils, and it was only too obvious that we were in for some sinister adventures and remarkable thrills in the near future.

THE END.



# TOM TARTAR AT SCHOOL

by **HARCOURT BURRAGE**

(The World's Most Famous  
School Story).

## THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

Since Tom came to Mr. Wrasper's school, both the principal and Foster Moore—the usher—have tried to get rid of the boy. Solitary confinement takes the place of corporal punishment. By scheming, Moore takes the place of the Head, who remains on at the school as the usher. Tom learns a few unsavoury facts about Moore, and the ex-usher tries every desperate means to get the boy out of the way.

(Now read on.)

## CHAPTER LII

### The Marked Cards.

**T**WELVE good men and true sat upon the body of Diggles, in a legal sense, and returned a verdict of "wilful murder against some person or persons unknown."

It was the only possible verdict they could return, for not a particle of evidence incriminating anyone was forthcoming.

Among those who attended the inquest was Foster Moore. He kept well in the background during the proceedings, his sallow face twitching nervously, and a furtive look in his eyes.

Within a few yards of him was Detective Clark, making mental notes of everything and everybody that came under his keen eye. Foster Moore's anxious demeanour did not escape the officer's notice.

The inquest was held in an upstairs room of the little village inn, and when the verdict had been returned Moore at once went down to the bar and ordered a stiff dose of neat brandy. Having swallowed the spirit, he departed.

Outside, among the spectators awaiting the issue, was Rosy Ralph, no longer rosy, alas! in an old battlechair, drawn by one of the bigger lads of the village.

It was one of the luxuries provided for him by Sir Claude Freshley, and this was his first public appearance since his illness.

Few people would have missed his eager, expectant face, and Detective Clark, who knew the boy's story, went up to him.

"How are you, my lad?" he said.

"What do t'jury say?" asked Ralph.

"Oh, they've nothing against anybody."

"Then feyther be all right," said Ralph, with a sigh of relief.

"Your father!" said Detective Clark. "What has he to do with it?"

"Nothing, nothing," was the answer.

Ralph told the boy to go on and pull him past the school. He had no hope of seeing anyone he knew, but he wanted to see the old place.

Ralph was very quiet, and it was said that he looked a different boy. All the roughness, at least, was knocked out of him.

Some of the old people who saw him shook their heads.

"He be about again," they said; "but, for all that, he——"

And then they shook their heads again in a portentous manner, which augured ill for Ralph's worldly future.

The boys did not see him as he went by in his bathchair, but Wooden Jerry did, and favoured him with a scowl.

"So you've got about again, young feller?" he said.

"Yes," replied Ralph.

"Ah, well!" said Wooden Jerry, shaking his head. "It's a bit o' luck, and you hardly desarved it, going agin your father as you did."

"Who went agin my father?" demanded Ralph.

"You, of course," said Wooden Jerry. "He says so—at least, I heerd so—I—I——"

Jerry stopped, and Ralph, who had been looking closely at him, said:

"You've seen my feyther since I have, then. Where be he?"

"I see your father?" said Wooden Jerry indignantly. "Not me! I've nothin' to do with such a murderous villain."

"Lies won't help you when your time comes," said Ralph.

"What do you mean by my time coming?"

"Why, the time when you will be punished," replied Ralph quietly. "You've got the mark there," pointing to Jerry's brow.



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(Continued from page 38.)

"What mark?" asked Jerry, rubbing his forehead with his coat sleeve.

"Oh, you can't rub it off!" said Ralph, "it's burnt in. I can see it on many people. Diggles had it. I've seen it on Mister Moore. Oh, it's not to be wiped away!"

He held up his thin hand in a strange, weird way, and Wooden Jerry stepped back a pace, shivering.

"You know you deserve it," continued Ralph, "although you are as much a fool as a rogue. You be a fool, Mr. Jerry, doin' all sorts o' work for people; evil work, wicked work."

He motioned to the boy, and the bath-chair went on.

"That 'ere boy have got a evil eye," muttered Wooden Jerry, wiping his brow. "If he'd lived years ago he'd ha' been burnt for witchcraft. Got the mark! What mark?"

He felt so uncomfortable that when he got back to the house he stopped at a small looking-glass in the hall and had a good look at his narrow forehead.

No mark was there that he could see, but the non-discovery was very little relief to him.

While he was surveying himself he heard a familiar buzz that told him school was over. Experience had taught him to recognise it from all other buzzes in connection with study. It had an undercurrent of joy in it, just as if the boys were saying, "Thank goodness!"

He stepped into the study to avoid them.

Before they had gone out of the hall Foster Moore appeared, and stared at him savagely.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"I came in to get out of the way of the boys," replied Jerry.

Foster Moore sat down and glanced at the drawer of the table. A bunch of keys was dangling from the lock.

"I was not aware I left them here," he muttered.

Opening the drawer he glanced at its contents, and then wheeled sharply round.

"You thief!" he cried.

"What did you say, sir?" asked the startled Jerry.

"You are a thief!" cried Foster Moore.

"You have taken something from this drawer."

"No-ot to-day," stammered Wooden Jerry.

"About a we-ek ago I took something."

"Cards and dice, you scoundrel!"

"Ye-es, sir. I took them to see—"

"Go, get them at once," said Foster Moore, "or I will—I will— Now what did you do with them?"

"I put them in my drawer in my room. I saw the cards were marked and—and—"

"Get them!"

"I don't see why I should," said Wooden Jerry, with sudden resolution. "They were the things you robbed Mr. Wrasper with, and the law—"

"Hang the law!" said Foster Moore.

"Come with me and give them up."

The stronger will prevailed, and Wooden Jerry accompanied Foster Moore to his own room.

"I put them in there," he said, pointing to the top of a chest of drawers.

"Is it locked?"

"Yes."



"Unlock it then!"

Jerry, with a shaking hand, did so, and opened the drawer.

There was absolutely nothing in it.

The cards and dice were gone!

"Somebody's robbed me!" gasped Wooden Jerry.

Foster Moore said nothing, but dealt him a blow that sent him reeling; then stalked from the room.

### CHAPTER LIII.

#### Tom Talks to Mr. Wrasper.

THE change in Mr. Wrasper was indeed amazing. Day by day he grew more cheerful; more considerate and friendly in his attitude towards the boys.

As a matter of fact, his bitter experience at the hands of Foster Moore had done him good. The shock of his fall had shaken all the folly out of him, and now that the worst had befallen, and he was no longer a gambler, a great weight seemed to have been lifted off his mind.

If ever he got the school back again, he was resolved to be a better and a kinder master—to really act up to the glowing terms of his prospectus.

On the evening following the inquest on Diggles, Mr. Wrasper went out for a walk, and in a quiet lane about a mile from the school came upon Tom Tartar, Sam Smith, Turrell, and McLara.

The four boys were seated upon the ground, conversing together in low tones.

"Hallo, boys!" greeted Mr. Wrasper, with a smile, noticing that they seemed to start half-guiltily at sight of him. "Holding a council of war, eh? Plotting some new prank against Jerry Wood, I expect."

"No, sir," said Tom frankly, but looking a trifle uncomfortable, all the same. "We were talking about you, sir."

Mr. Wrasper raised his eyebrows in surprise, then said laughingly:

"In that case, Tartar, I hope your comments have not been too severe. May I ask what particular side of my character you were discussing?"

Tom glanced quickly at his chums. Sam Smith nodded.

"Speak out, Tom," he said. "I'm sure Mr. Wrasper won't be offended."

"I think it will be better if we leave Tom and Mr. Wrasper alone together for a few minutes," suggested McLara.

"Is it so very important, then?" asked Mr. Wrasper, looking from one to the other.

"I—I think I can speak out better alone, sir," said Tom.

"We'll wait for you at the end of the lane," said Sam Smith; and he and the other two sauntered off.

"Now, Tartar, what is it you wish to say?" asked Mr. Wrasper, looking very puzzled.

"I hardly know how to begin, sir," answered Tom. "You see, I'm only a boy, and it may seem awful cheek of me, but—but——"

Tom broke off abruptly, and putting his hand in his pocket, drew out a small packet.

"I received this from a humble friend of yours," he said. "Will you look at it, please?"

Mr. Wrasper unfolded the parcel, disclosing a well-worn pack of cards, a dice-box, and dice.

Slowly the colour faded from his face, and his hands trembled.

"If this is meant as a reproach," he said, in quivering tones, "all I can say is, Tartar, that it is not worthy of you. I have learnt to look upon you as a noble, manly boy, generous to your friends, more than just to your foes, but——"

"Mr. Wrasper, surely you do not think I mean to insult you?"

"No, but is it kind to bring to my notice evidence of my folly? How can I hold up my head again among you boys?"

"What you have done in the past," said Tom, "is known to four of us. You have seen all who are in your secret, and they will keep it. You need not fear anything from us. I will tell you the reason I have in showing you these things. You know them?"

"Too well!" almost groaned Mr. Wrasper.

"Could you swear to them?"

"Indeed, I could. Unhappily, with too much certainty."

"Don't say that," said Tom, "for if you are sure about the things, it is only a question of time when the school will be your own again."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that the cards are marked, and the dice loaded. Foster Moore is a cheat," said Tom.

Mr. Wrasper's eyes lighted up with sudden fire.

"I always thought there was something strange in his constantly winning; but, Tartar, this alone will not do."

"No," said Tom, "I know that; but I have given you something to go on. Where did Foster Moore come from?"

"I do not know."

"Does he never get any letters from friends?"

"None that I know of; but he speaks like a man who knows London very well."

"It's a large place," Tom returned, "but, for all that, you might find out something about him. Mr. Wrasper, I've got it into my head that this man Foster Moore has a very dark side to his history. I am only a boy. You are a man, sir, and surely will be able to get to the bottom of his story."

"I'll try to," said Mr. Wrasper, between his teeth.

"That he has a very dark side to his life here I am sure," continued Tom, "and I am speaking of things outside the school. He linked himself, as you know, with Powner the Poacher. That was bad enough, but he has done more than that."

"Tartar! What do you mean?"

"Who do you think murdered Diggles?"

"My suspicions," said Mr. Wrasper, "naturally point to Powner."

"And mine to Foster Moore," said Tom. "But I cannot prove it, nor is there an atom of evidence to support my belief, but I feel sure he did it."

(To be continued.)

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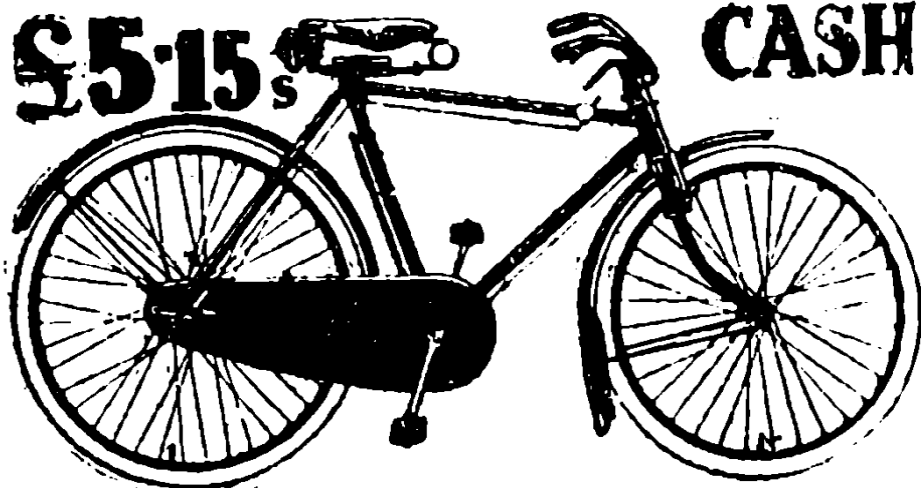
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