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THE PLOT TO MISS THE MATCH! (See Our Grand Tale of School Life.)

## LEFT IN THE LURCH!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

### The 1st Chapter.

**The Captain of Rookwood.**  
 "What do you want, Silver?"  
 "I don't know," replied the boy, of the Sixth, rapped out words sharply.  
 The captain of Rookwood School, sitting to and fro in his study, was driven deep into his chair, and a deep wrinkle showing on his brow, when Jimmy Silver entered at the open door and entered. He frowned at the junior as he asked the question.  
 "Why did not answer for a

moment. He blinked at Bulkeley in astonishment.  
 "Old Bulkeley," as the juniors affectionately termed him, was usually the best-tempered of fellows, and it was extremely uncommon for him to "snap" at anybody.  
 So Jimmy was surprised, and he showed it.  
 Bulkeley's brow cleared, and he coloured a little as he caught the junior's glance.  
 "I—I don't want to be bothered now, Silver," he said, more mildly.  
 "What do you want, kid?"

"Well, I've only come to bring my lines," said the Fourth-Former. "I'm sure I didn't want to do them, Bulkeley. You insisted, you know!"  
 Bulkeley grinned.  
 "Put them on the table, and clear," he said.  
 "Certainly. You needn't bite a chap's head off, you know."  
 Bulkeley made a gesture towards the door, and Jimmy Silver retired. In the doorway, however, he paused.  
 "I say, Bulkeley—"  
 The Rookwood captain looked at him

"Well?"  
 "If you're bothering about the senior match with St. Jim's, I can give you a dip," said Jimmy coolly.  
 "What?"  
 "Don't put any rotten Moderns into the team," said Jimmy Silver. "And if you're short of players in the Sixth, you can call on the Fourth. I'd play with pleasure, if you ask me nicely."  
 Jimmy Silver beat a strategic retreat, without waiting for a reply from the captain of Rookwood.

Bulkeley was reaching for his ash-plant.  
 Jimmy retreated so hurriedly that he ran into a Sixth-Former who was coming along the passage. It was Knowles, of the Sixth, the head prefect on the Modern side at Rookwood.  
 "Oh!" gasped Jimmy, as he collided with Knowles.  
 "Ow!" ejaculated Knowles. "You clumsy young idiot, why don't you look where you're going. Take that!"  
 "That" was a savage shove, which sent Jimmy Silver spinning against the wall. The junior bumped on the wall, giving his head a very unpleasant crack, and he uttered a yell. Knowles strode on, and entered Bulkeley's study.  
 Jimmy Silver straightened up, and rubbed his head ruefully.  
 "Modern better!" he murmured. "If he wasn't a prefect, I'd—"  
 Jimmy Silver shook his fist after Knowles, and went on his way, still rubbing his head.  
 Lovell and Raby and Newcome, his chums, were waiting for him in the doorway.  
 "Hallo, what's wrong with your napper?" asked Lovell, with a stare.  
 "That beast Knowles," grunted Jimmy Silver. "I fancy there's going to be some trouble. Bulkeley was like a bear with a sore head when I took in my lines. I see now it's because he was expecting Knowles. That Modern cad is giving him trouble—about the St. Jim's match, I suppose."  
 "Silly ass to play any Moderns in the First Eleven!" commented Raby.  
 "Well, the captain of the school must hold the giddy balance even," said Jimmy Silver judiciously. "Same with us in the junior club. I have to play Moderns in our team. But I wouldn't play a worm like Knowles."  
 "He's a good cricketer," remarked Newcome.  
 "And a rotten everything else," said Jimmy Silver. "I don't feel so jolly certain that Bulkeley will beat St. Jim's seniors. We can beat St. Jim's juniors, but we're—us! I offered Bulkeley to play for the First Eleven, if he liked."  
 "Ha, ha! What did he say?"  
 Jimmy Silver grinned.  
 "I didn't wait for his answer. I think it would have been emphatic. Still, he might do worse, all the same. A bat like you, Lovell, and a bowler like—ahem!—myself would buck up any team, senior or junior

"Or county?" chuckled Lovell.  
 "Or All-England!" chorled Raby.  
 "Bow-wow! Let's get down to the cricket, now I've done my blessed lines," said Jimmy Silver. "Hallo, Tubby, clear off!"  
 Tubby Muffin, the fattest junior at Rookwood, came up to the Fistical Four as they were heading for Little Side.  
 Tubby's fat face was portentously serious.  
 "Hold on a minute, Silver! I want your advice!" said Tubby impressively.  
 "Buck up, then!" said Jimmy Silver.  
 "Suppose a chap heard that a chap  
 "Eh?"  
 "That a chap was keeping sugar in his study," said Tubby. "Suppose a chap told a chap that a chap was doing that, Silver, against the grub rules, you know!"  
 "Well?"  
 "Would a chap be justified in chipping in, and stopping a chap acting in such a rotten way?" pursued Tubby.  
 "What are you driving at?" demanded Jimmy. "Do you mean to  
 (Continued on the next page.)





# LEFT IN THE LURCH!

(Continued from the previous page.)

say you've dropped on a hoarder at Rookwood?"

"Well, Leggett—that Modern chap, you know!—he's told me that a chap—"

"What chap?"

"Knowles, you know! Leggett says Knowles has a lot of sugar in his study—"

"Leggett's a—fabricator," said Jimmy Silver. "Knowles is a worm, but he isn't a hoarding worm. Besides, where could he get it from?"

"Well, I don't know," said Tubby. "But we get hardly any sugar now, and it isn't fair if Knowles has got a lot hidden away. Wouldn't a chap be justified in routing it out, you know, and—and—"

"Scoffing it?" snorted Lovell.

"Not exactly scoffing it," said Tubby cautiously. "But—but—confiscating it as a warning to a hoarding rotter, you know."

"You'd better keep clear of Knowles' study," said Jimmy Silver. "Knowles would skin you if he caught you nosing about there. And ten to one Leggett was lying. He's a regular Prussian! Scat!"

"But I say—"

"Oh, shift off!"

"Look here, suppose you go, Silver," suggested Tubby. "You go and see, you know, and if you find any sugar, we go halves! Yaroooooh!"

Tubby Muffin found himself sitting on the cold, unempathetic quadrangle, and the Fistical Four walked on, and left him there.

"Yow-ow!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "Wha-a-at did the rotter do that for! Ow! I was willing to go halves. The beast! Grooh! I suppose I'd better go myself. I'm down on hoarding. Yow-ow! And I jolly well shan't go halves with Jimmy Silver if I find the sugar! Ow!"

And the fat classical rolled away to Mr. Manders' House on the Modern side, determined to scout in Knowles' study—not because he wanted Knowles' sugar, but because he was down on hoarding.

Tubby did not believe in hoarding, and certainly he never practised it. Anything eatable that came his way disappeared down his capacious gullet at once.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### The Rivals of Rookwood.

Cecil Knowles, of the Modern Sixth, was not looking agreeable as he came into Bulkeley's study.

His hard face was grim in expression, and his close-set eyes had a somewhat unpleasant glint in them.

There had never been any love lost between the captain of Rookwood and the Modern captain.

Bulkeley had always tried, with almost inexhaustible patience, to pull with Knowles, for the sake of Rookwood generally. But he found in Knowles a cold and suspicious nature that was difficult to pull with.

Bulkeley, as captain and head of the games, had the cricket in his hands, and it was Knowles' favourite belief that he favoured his own side—the classical side—and left the Moderns out in the cold as much as he could.

And Knowles did not want any evidence of that, excepting what was supplied by his own restless and suspicious mind.

"You asked me to give you a look in, Bulkeley," he remarked coldly.

"Yes, Knowles," Bulkeley paused in his walk to and fro, and looked at the Modern senior. "It's about the St. Jim's match."

"Oh, good!" said Knowles. "You've decided to give us a bit better show in the eleven? I'm glad to hear it. There's been a good deal of dissatisfaction on our side."

Bulkeley bit his lip.

"Not exactly," he said. "The fact is, I want to have a little friendly talk about it, Knowles. I know there's been some grumbling among the Modern seniors, because there are only three in the first eleven, and eight Classicals, for this match."

"It's rather disproportionate, isn't it?"

"Not the way I look at it. In

making up the team, I don't consider Classicals and Moderns as two sides, but Rookwood as a whole."

"But it's a little odd that all the players should be discovered on the Classical side—your own side—don't you think so?"

"It happens that way just now," said Bulkeley patiently. "The fact is, the Modern members of the club have been a bit slack in practice. We've got to beat Kildare's team at St. Jim's, if possible, and we've got to play our best men to do it. I'm playing you, Frampton, and Catesby from the Modern side."

"And eight Classicals!" sneered Knowles.

"Yes. I'm sorry the proportion falls as it does, but it can't be helped. I've been over the team carefully; but there isn't another man on your side I could put in without leaving out a better man to make room for him. I'd like you to put it to the fellows on your side—"

"I can't put it to them like that."

"Why not?"

"Because I don't agree with you. I claim at least five places in the eleven for Moderns. That leaves you with a majority."

Bulkeley made a gesture. "It isn't a question of this side or that," he said. "It's a question of putting a winning team into the field."

"We sha'n't agree, that's clear. But, as you're captain, you have the casting vote. You will have your way, I suppose."

"I'd rather we agreed, Knowles."

"We can't agree unless you give us what we consider fair play."

"You don't think you're getting fair play?" exclaimed Bulkeley, a blaze coming into his eyes.

"Well, to be quite frank, we don't," said Knowles coolly. "Of course, we know you mean well. But we think you're prejudiced in favour of your own side, and you want to play your own friends. I could point out three or four Modern members as good as any of your men."

"If you were skipper, wouldn't you follow your own judgment?"

"Of course."

"Then you can't blame me for doing so."

"I'm not blaming you," said Knowles icily. "You asked me what I thought, and I've told you."

"Well, if we can't agree, we can't," said Bulkeley. "I feel bound to play the team I've selected, and I'm sorry I can't meet your views, Knowles."

"Then there's nothing more to be said."

Bulkeley was silent, and the Modern prefect quitted the study. He left the captain of Rookwood in a thoughtful and troubled mood.

Knowles crossed the quadrangle to his own side, and met his chum, Catesby, in the doorway of Mr. Manders' house.

Catesby gave him an inquiring look. "Well, what's the verdict?" he asked.

"What I expected," said Knowles, with a sneering smile. "Soft sawder, and no concession. It's practically going to be a Classical team, and I'm going to have our fellows jawing me for not sticking up for their rights."

"Blessed if I don't feel inclined to resign from the eleven!" said Catesby sourly.

"If you did, Bulkeley would have in another Classical, and be glad of the chance."

"Well, I won't give him that chance, anyway."

"I've got a better idea than that," said Knowles in a low voice. "Bulkeley isn't going to have it all his own way as he thinks. Come up to my study, and bring Frampton."

Catesby gave him a quick look, and nodded.

"Right-ho!"

Cecil Knowles went on to his study, his eyes glinting. There was a scheme working in his keen, unscrupulous mind which would have startled George Bulkeley if he could have guessed it.

## The 3rd Chapter.

### What Tubby Heard.

"Oh, dear!"

Tubby Muffin uttered a gasp of dismay.

The fat Classical had penetrated to Cecil Knowles' study in Mr. Manders' house. Most of the Modern fellows were out of doors, and Tubby had "sneaked" in unawares.

He knew that Knowles was over in the School House, and he believed

that the coast was clear, and he was busily engaged in searching for the supposed "hoard."

The hoard had not come to light yet. And Tubby suddenly ceased his prying and peeping, and stood rooted to the floor in dismay as he heard a quick step in the passage outside.

Tubby knew that step.

"Knowles!" he gasped.

The fat junior shivered all over at the thought of being caught there by the bully of the Sixth. Already, in anticipation, he could feel the prefect's cane lashing all round his plump person.

He looked wildly round for a hiding-place.

There was a screen in a corner of the study, shutting off the corner, and as Tubby's terrified eyes lighted upon it he made up his mind. In a second he had squirmed behind the screen.

There, with his back in the corner, and his knees hunched up against the screen, he almost collapsed, scarcely daring to breathe.

He was none too soon. The study door opened, and he heard Knowles come in. He wondered dully whether the Modern prefect had come in to tea.

A scent of tobacco-smoke greeted his nostrils.

Knowles had lighted a cigarette.

That incident increased Tubby's terrified uneasiness. He had discovered a Sixth-Former—a prefect, too—smoking! There would be no limit to Knowles' fury if he found him now.

It was Knowles' duty to put down that kind of thing among the juniors, and here he was smoking a cigarette in his study, like Mornington, the black sheep of the Fourth!

It was evident that Knowles did not suspect that there was a junior in the study. Tubby breathed as silently as he could, only hoping that Knowles would go when he had finished his smoke.

There were footsteps in the passage, and the door opened again. Frampton and Catesby came in, and again the door closed.

Tubby Muffin groaned in spirit. He did not dare to groan aloud. It was a meeting of Knowles & Co., and goodness knew how long it was going to last!

Knowles nodded to his two chums, and handed them his cigarette-case. "I've seen Bulkeley," he began.

"Catesby told me," said Frampton. "His lordship is kind enough to leave us our places in the eleven, it seems."

"Us, three," said Knowles, "and eight Classicals! The question is, are we going to stand it?"

"I don't see what else we can do," said Catesby doubtfully. "Some of the fellows—especially Hoke and Tresham—think we ought to resign. Hoke says we're leaving our friends in the lurch for the sake of keeping our own places."

"Some are against our resigning, though," said Frampton. "We don't want a match with the Modern side quite unrepresented. And—and some of the fellows seem to think that Bulkeley knows best."

Knowles sneered. "Well, we're not going to resign," he said. "I know a trick worth two of that. Bulkeley is very keen on winning at St. Jim's. Suppose he turned up at St. Jim's with three players short?"

"What!"

"Nobody's going with the team, owing to the restrictions of railway travelling—you know that. Suppose we lost our train at Latcham, say, or Lexham?"

"Phew!"

"Bulkeley would arrive on the ground with his eight precious Classicals, and could pick up three substitutes," Knowles grinned. "You know what that would mean—a thorough licking!"

"But—but we don't want Rookwood licked," said Frampton, hesitating.

"Do we want Bulkeley to win with a team nearly all Classicals?" said Knowles, between his teeth. "Kildare's eleven is a strong one, and if Bulkeley beat them with what is practically a Classical team, how should we stand here? Over on the other side they'd be crowing over us; and next match, very likely, our places would be reduced to two, or one, or none. I might be the next to go. Bulkeley would be glad to drop me out of the eleven, I believe."

"But—but—"

"They're not going to win," said Knowles viciously. "It wouldn't be a Rookwood win, either; it would be a Classical win."

"Well, that's so."

"If they get licked, we can say they're licked because they were nearly all Classicals!"

"Good!"

"If they make out that they lost through us leaving them in the lurch,

that will be admitting that they need Moderns in the team."

"You've got a head, Knowles!"

"But—but if the fellows knew!"

muttered Catesby.

"It's got to be kept dark, of course. We change trains at Latcham, and there isn't a long wait. We three stroll off to the buffet for ginger-pop, and lose the train. Trains are few and far between now."

Knowles grinned.

"I've looked that out," he went on, "and we should have to wait over two hours for another to follow them, and that means arriving at St. Jim's too late to play. Of course, our missing the train would be entirely an accident!"

"Better be careful to keep that up, anyway."

"Of course! Bulkeley will be three men short at St. Jim's. If he picks up three substitutes there they won't be much good. And even if he wins, with St. Jim's fellows in the ranks, he can't call it a Rookwood win. But he won't win. The match would be touch-and-go in any case, and with three of his best men dropped out he must be beaten."

"It looks a dead cert," agreed Frampton. "But—"

"But what?" snapped Knowles.

"I'm blessed if I half like the idea!"

"You'd rather be walked over by the Classicals?" sneered Knowles. "You'd rather let Bulkeley and Neville and the rest walk roughshod over us, and make out that their side is the sporting side of Rookwood, and all we can do is German and mathematics and chemistry!"

"Well, no."

"Then it's a go?"

There was a short silence, and then Frampton and Catesby answered together.

"It's a go, Cecil!"

"Good!" said Knowles. He threw away the stump of his cigarette. "Now let's get down to practice. We've got to keep up an appearance of being awfully keen about the match."

The three Modern seniors left the study.

When their footsteps had died away Tubby Muffin crawled out from behind the screen, pale as chalk, and trembling in every podgy limb.

The fat Classical had overheard every word, and he was terrified by what he had heard. If Knowles should discover that he knew! Tubby shuddered at the thought.

His knees knocked together as he crawled out of the study.

He had forgotten all about the hoarded sugar now. Even food did not appeal to Tubby in his present, scared frame of mind. He fairly crawled out of Mr. Manders' house, and did not breathe freely until he was safe in his own study on the Classical side.

## The 4th Chapter.

### Tubby Muffin Feels Worried.

"What's the matter with you, fat face?"

Lattrey, the cad of the Fourth, asked that question as he came into his study, which Tubby Muffin had the honour of sharing with him.

Tubby was sitting in the armchair, gasping.

"Oh, dear!" he said.

"Been pinching somebody's grub and getting a thick ear?" asked Lattrey.

"Nunno!"

"Well, don't have a face like that about the study. It worries me!"

"I—I've had a shock, Lattrey!"

"You'll get another if you don't stop blinking at me like a fish!" snapped Lattrey.

Tubby Muffin rose and strolled disconsolately out of the study. He was heavily-burdened with the strange secret he had discovered on the Modern side.

He wanted somebody to confide in, but he did not intend to confide in Lattrey, the cad of the Fourth.

Tubby was a youth whose thoughts ran chiefly upon food, especially in the form of pastry. Food was his first thought, his second, and his third. But Tubby was not a bad fellow when he could get his mind off that all-important subject.

He was deeply worried by what he had learned of Knowles' dastardly scheme for betraying the senior cricket match at St. Jim's.

Tubby liked and admired Bulkeley, as all the Classicals and most of the Moderns did. It worried him to think of Bulkeley making all his preparations for a keen match at St. Jim's, only to be left in the lurch by three members of his team whom he never dreamed of distrusting.

He thought of telling Bulkeley,

and immediately decided against that step.

He knew that Bulkeley would not believe a word of it, especially as Tubby's reputation for truth-telling was not great.

Even if Bulkeley believed or half-believed it, he would tackle Knowles on the subject, and then Knowles would know that Tubby had played the eavesdropper in his study.

Tubby shuddered at the thought.

He knew the revengeful nature of the Modern bully. Knowles would make him smart for it, if he had to wait a whole term for his vengeance.

The bully of the Modern Sixth was a more fearsome personage to Tubby than the Kaiser himself.

But what was he to do?

He took a pride in the glory of the Rookwood First Eleven, though he was no cricketer. Every Rookwood fellow did, even fellows like Leggett and Lattrey.

Was he going to keep quiet about what he knew, and let Knowles & Co. give the match away by treachery?

But what was the use of spinning a yarn that would be disbelieved. And what about the most important consideration of all—the safety of his own fat skin?

Tubby wandered along the passage with an expression on his podgy face which hinted that all the troubles in the British Empire had suddenly descended upon him.

He was brought up by a slap on the shoulder as he nearly ran into Van Ryn, Pons, and Conroy, the Colonial chums of Study No. 3.

"Yow!" roared Tubby.

"What's the trouble?" asked Dick Van Ryn. "Have you lost a lamp of sugar?"

"I—I'm worried, Van Ryn."

"Food rules again?" asked the South African junior sympathetically. "Have you only been able to get enough for two at tea?"

"I'm not thinking about tea."

"You're not thinking about tea!" yelled Pons.

"Nunno!"

"But it's tea-time!" said Conroy in a dazed tone.

"Yes, I know."

"It's tea-time, and you're not thinking about tea!" gasped Van Ryn.

"No!" yelled Tubby.

"My hat! This is where we faint!"

The three Colonials staggered against the wall, apparently overcome. Van Ryn fanned himself feebly.

The fat Classical glared at them, gave an angry snort, and rolled on.

He wandered into the quadrangle to think it out. Tubby Muffin was not much given to thinking, but he tried hard.

Bulkeley and Neville came along from the cricket-ground, going towards the house, and Tubby blinked at them. The captain of Rookwood wore a satisfied look.

"The team's in topping form!" Tubby heard him say. "Knowles' bowling has never been better, too!"

"I fancied those Modern chaps were going to give some trouble," Neville remarked.

"Well, I had a talk with Knowles, and it didn't seem to get us much forader," admitted Bulkeley. "But that makes no difference to the cricket. Lucky we've got Knowles as a bowler. He's first-class! We couldn't spare him."

"Oh dear!" murmured Tubby.

"I rather think we shall win, too," said Bulkeley, who did not even see the fat junior under the beeches. "I want to, specially as it's a new fixture. I've taken a lot of trouble with the team. I fancy we shall uphold Rookwood's colours on the St. Jim's ground. Hallo!" He broke off as Muffin rolled out from under the beeches.

Tubby had made up his mind—almost.

He couldn't—he simply couldn't!—let old Bulkeley go on in this unsuspecting way, while he knew what Cecil Knowles was plotting and scheming behind his back.

"I—I say, Bulkeley!" he stammered.

"Well, what is it, Muffin?"

"I—I say—"

"Cut it short!" said the captain of Rookwood tersely.

"I—I say—" Tubby spluttered helplessly. The yarn he had to tell sounded so "steep," so unlikely, that his words died on his lips under Bulkeley's clear glance. "I—I say, I—I think I—I ought to tell you, Bulkeley."

"If you've got anything to say, buck up! Don't tell tales, if that's what's in your mind, though!" snapped Bulkeley.

"About—about the Moderns—"

"Somebody been ragging you, you young ass?"



"N-n-no!"  
 "Been over-eating yourself?" asked Neville, with a grin.  
 "Nunno! I—I know something..."  
 "Time you did," said Bulkeley. "Your Form-master will be glad to hear that."  
 And the two seniors laughed.  
 "I—I say—Knowles—Knowles, you know—" stammered Tubby. "Suppose a chap heard him say—suppose a chap was—was behind something, and heard Knowles say—say—"  
 Bulkeley's brow darkened.  
 "You slimy little cad!" he exclaimed. "Have you been eaves-dropping, and are you coming to tell me what you heard?"  
 "I—I—yes—you see— Yar-oooh!" roared Tubby, as the Rookwood captain took his fat ear between a finger and thumb.  
 The two great men of the Sixth walked on, leaving Tubby Muffin rubbing a crimson ear.  
 "Oh, dear!" mumbled Tubby. He drifted away disconsolately. Evidently it was not of much use approaching Bulkeley on the subject.

**The 5th Chapter.**

**Doubting Thomases!**

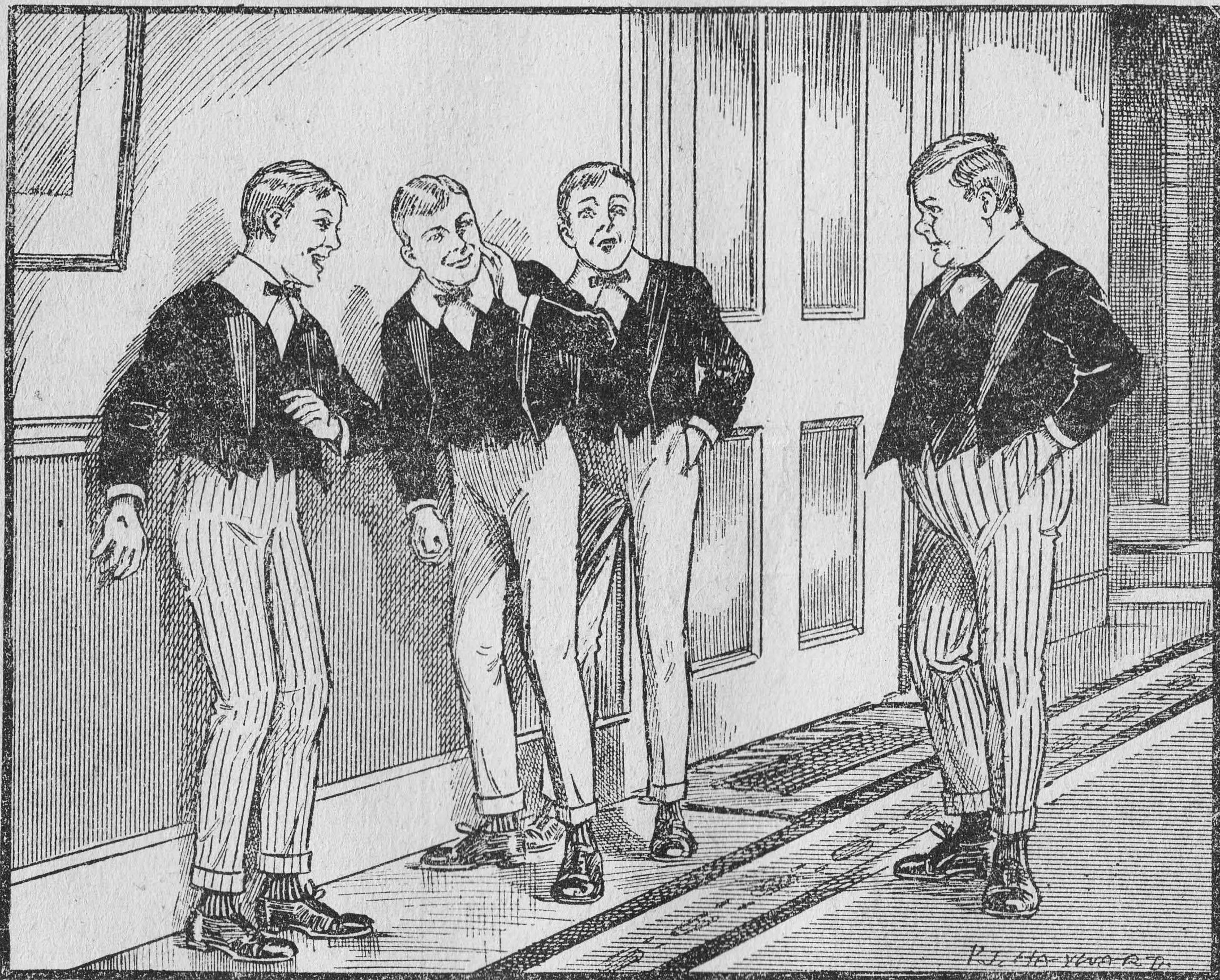
Jimmy Silver & Co. came in hungry to tea, and found a fat figure in the doorway of the end study. Lovell took Tubby Muffin by the shoulder, and spun him into the passage.  
 "If you've touched our grub—" he began.  
 "I—I haven't—"  
 "I'll scalp you if you have! Look in the cupboard, Raby."  
 "I tell you, I—"  
 "Dry up! Is the tommy all right, Raby?"  
 "All serene," said Raby, after a look in the cupboard in the end study.  
 "Good! You can cut off, Fatty."  
 Arthur Edward Lovell followed his comrades into the study. The Fistical Four were quite ready for their frugal war-tea.  
 Tubby Muffin followed.  
 "Buzz off, Tubby!" said Jimmy Silver. "Can't have a porpoise to ter on war rations. Scat!"  
 "I haven't come to tea."  
 "Then take your face away, old scout!" said Newcome. "Can't stand that along with war worry!"  
 "I—I say—"  
 "Where's that blessed kettle?" roared Lovell. "Dash it all, who's lost the kettle? Some ass has shoved that kettle somewhere! I suppose we can have tea, if we can't have any sugar in it. Where's that kettle?"  
 "There it is, under the table."  
 "Well, what silly ass shoved it under the table?" grunted Lovell.  
 "Why, you did!"  
 "H'm! So I did. I remember now. Chop up that war-bread while I get the kettle filled."  
 Lovell tramped down the passage with the kettle, and came back, and spilt a little over Tubby in the doorway, as a hint to depart. But Tubby Muffin did not depart. He came in and closed the door.  
 "Are you off your rocker, podgy?" demanded Raby, puzzled by the fat Classical's persistence.  
 "I—I've got something to tell Jimmy Silver!" said Muffin desperately. "I—I must tell somebody."  
 "Go ahead!" said Jimmy Silver, who was slicing up the allowance of war-bread. "Cut it short!"  
 "You know Bulkeley's lot are going over to St. Jim's on Wednesday."  
 "Yes, I fancy I've heard something of it."  
 "There's three Modern rotters in the eleven," said Tubby. "They're going to leave Bulkeley in the lurch!"  
 "Wha-a-at!"  
 "Don't tell anybody I told you!" gasped Tubby. "Knowles would slaughter me if he knew! You know what a beast Knowles is!"  
 "I'll jolly well slaughter you, if you pitch us silly yarns like that!" growled Lovell. "Keep to the truth, you fat Prussian!"  
 "It's the truth!"  
 "Oh, rats!"  
 "Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "Let Tubby run on. If he's making up one of his yarns, we'll stump him. But we know Knowles is cad enough for anything. He played Bulkeley a trick once before over a match, as I know. Get on with the washing, Tubby!"  
 "You won't repeat it?" gasped Tubby. "Knowles would—"  
 "He would skin you if he heard you telling a yarn like that about him," growled Lovell; "and serve you right!"  
 "We'll keep it dark," said Jimmy Silver reassuringly. "Go ahead!"  
 Tubby, in mysterious whispers, related what he had overheard in Cecil Knowles' study on the Modern side.

The Fistical Four listened, quite forgetting that they were hungry, for the time.  
 There was strong disbelief expressed in three faces when Tubby Muffin had finished.  
 Only Jimmy Silver's face was serious and thoughtful.  
 Tubby, in his usual exaggerative way, had enlarged upon some of the details, and that trick of his gave an air of unreality to his whole yarn—unlikely enough in itself.  
 "There!" concluded Tubby, swelling a little with the importance of his secret. "What do you fellows think of that?"  
 "I think it's all whoppers!" said Lovell at once.  
 "Same here!" remarked Raby.  
 "My sentiments, too," said Newcome. "Somebody get a cricket-stump!"  
 "Why, you rotters!" shouted Muffin. "It's all true—every word!"  
 "Rats!"  
 "Jimmy Silver! You believe me, don't you, Jimmy?"  
 "Of course he doesn't!" grunted Lovell.  
 "I say, Jimmy—"  
 "I'm blessed if I know whether to believe you or not, Tubby!" said Jimmy Silver at last. "It sounds jolly steep!"  
 "I heard every word they said, you know."  
 "Mean little beast to be listening at all!" snorted Lovell.  
 "I couldn't help it, could I? I had

—just like Morny and Townsend do in their studies. Knowles was awfully vicious. He wants Rookwood to lose the match, to show 'em that they can't win without the Moderns. Something ought to be done."  
 "Something ought to be done if it's true," said Jimmy Silver.  
 "Don't you believe me?"  
 Jimmy Silver hesitated.  
 "You're such a blessed Prussian, Tubby! I don't believe you know half the time whether you're telling the truth or not."  
 "It's all true, every word! Knowles was grinding his teeth like anything."  
 "Rats!" snapped Lovell.  
 "Well, perhaps he wasn't grinding his teeth," acknowledged Tubby. "He—he was looking frightfully vicious."  
 "And perhaps you weren't there at all, you fat spoofer!"  
 "I was!" yelled Tubby. "And I think Jimmy Silver ought to do something about it, as captain of the Fourth."  
 "If it's true it will leave Bulkeley in an awful fix," said Jimmy Silver seriously. "There won't be any other Rookwood fellows there. Knowles and Catesby are the best bowlers in the team. It will leave him awfully weak in bowling. Knowles has counted on that, of course."  
 "You don't believe Tubby's yarn?" asked Lovell, with a stare.

"I don't see what."  
 "Well, there might be some more Rookwood fellows on the ground, to play, in case Knowles & Co. don't turn up."  
 Lovell snorted.  
 "Going to tell some of the Sixth to spend a quid on a railway-ticket, on account of Tubby's yarns? I can see them doing it!"  
 "I'm not thinking of the Sixth," Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath. "Look here, we're on friendly terms with the junior chaps at St. Jim's—Tom Merry, and D'Arcy, and the rest. Why shouldn't we pay them a visit on Wednesday?"  
 "Oh!"  
 "We could get leave to go over, and cut dinner," said Jimmy. "We could catch an earlier train than Bulkeley's crowd, and Knowles wouldn't know anything about it."  
 "We were going up the river on Wednesday."  
 "Blow the river! We'd like to see the first eleven play at St. Jim's, anyway, if it only comes to that."  
 "Yes. But—"  
 "If we were on the ground, and Bulkeley was three men short, he'd play us. He'd rather play Rookwood juniors than strangers in the team," said Jimmy, who had thought it out. "It's bowlers he'll want chiefly, and I'm the best—ahem!—junior bowler at Rookwood—as good as most of the Sixth, if not better—"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Erroll's the next best, and Morn-

sneaking traitor, I suppose we ought to play up."  
 "Agreed, then."  
 And Jimmy Silver went along to Study No. 2, to speak to Kit Erroll. He came back in about ten minutes. "All serene!" he announced. "Erroll doesn't believe Tubby's yarn, but he thinks we might as well be there, in case of accidents."  
 "Well, that's sensible," agreed Lovell.  
 And so it was decided.  
 Excepting for Kit Erroll, the matter was not mentioned outside the end study.  
 Tubby Muffin, for the sake of his own fat skin, did not confide it to anyone else. He was haunted with the fear of what Knowles would do, if he learned.  
 And, having told Jimmy Silver, Tubby cheerfully shifted all responsibility in the matter off his own fat shoulders on to those of the captain of the Fourth.  
 If there was anything to be done Jimmy Silver would do it, and there was no need for him to worry his fat brain about it any more. That was how the Falstaff of the Fourth looked at it.  
 Jimmy Silver was quite content to shoulder the responsibility.  
 As a matter of absolute fact, Jimmy would not have been wholly sorry if Cecil Knowles had contemplated that treacherous trick and carried it out.  
 For if Bulkeley arrived at St. Jim's without his bowlers, and found the champion bowlers of the Rookwood Fourth there, he was certain to play them, juniors as they were, rather than pick up strangers.  
 And the honour and glory of playing in the First Eleven was dazzling.  
 For ever after it would be remembered that the end study had furnished recruits for the Rookwood First.  
 So Jimmy Silver looked forward to Wednesday with calm equanimity, prepared for either event—a run to St. Jim's to see his old friends, and to watch the senior match, or the glorious chance of playing in the First Eleven itself.  
 And on Wednesday it was easy enough to get leave from Mr. Bootles to start before dinner, to pay a visit to their old friends at the distant school on a half-holiday.  
 While the rest of Rookwood went into dinner, Jimmy Silver and Lovell and Kit Erroll walked down to the gates. Money was too tight for the whole of the Co. to join in the excursion. Railway fares were too steep for that.  
 But Raby and Newcome heroically stood out, contributing their cash towards the general expenses. Funds were a good deal in common in the end study, and the Co. could always be relied upon to play up.  
 The three juniors walked cheerily down Coombe Lane with their bags. They were taking their flannels and their bats, in case they were wanted.  
 In any case, they could get some cricket with Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's. Jimmy had already wired the previous day to announce that they were giving St. Jim's a "look in," and had received a cheery reply from Tom Merry welcoming them.  
 The train they caught from Coombe was considerably earlier than the one the senior eleven were travelling by. They turned out at last at Wayland, and walked by the woodland path to the school.  
 In Rylcombe Lane they were met by an elegant youth, who turned an eyeglass upon them with a benignant smile. It was D'Arcy of the Fourth.  
 "I came out to meet you, deah boys," remarked D'Arcy. "Very glad to see you at St. Jim's. Bai Jove, you've got your cwicket things!"  
 "Yes. Might get some cricket—what?"  
 "Yaas, wathah," said D'Arcy, though he was surprised. "Weally, a vevy good ideah. Twot in, deah boys! You're wathah late for dinnah, but that's all wight. Tom Mewwy's awvanged all that."  
 And Jimmy Silver & Co. trotted in with the hospitable St. Jim's junior.



"It's tea-time, and you're not thinking about tea!" gasped Van Ryn. "No!" yelled Tubby. "My hat! This is where we faint!" gasped the South African junior.

to get out of sight when Knowles came in. The beast would have licked me for being there!"  
 "Serve you right if he did!"  
 "Anyway, it's no good pitching that yarn to us," said Newcome. "Bulkeley's the chap you ought to tell, if it's true."  
 "I—I did begin to tell him, but— but— Besides, I don't think he would believe it."  
 "I'm jolly sure he wouldn't."  
 "Well, then he'd lick me for saying a thing like that about Knowles, if he didn't believe it."  
 "Just what you want!"  
 "Why, you beast—"  
 "Go and tell it to Bulkeley, or tell it to the Marines," said Lovell. "Hallo! The kettle's boiling. Where's the tea?"  
 "Well, I think you're a lot of silly asses and rotters!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin indignantly. "I'm risking a lot in telling you this. Knowles would skin me if he knew. He's a revengeful beast!"  
 Jimmy Silver was standing in deep thought. From what he knew of Knowles, he did not regard such a scheme as improbable. But he knew that Bulkeley would regard it as very improbable indeed. True or false, it was useless to think of spinning such a yarn to the captain of Rookwood.  
 "I—I say, you believe me, Jimmy Silver?" said Tubby, almost beseechingly. "It's all true, you know. The cads were smoking while they talked

"I'm blessed if I know!" confessed Jimmy Silver.  
 "Well, I've told you," said Tubby loftily. "I leave it to you, Jimmy Silver. Now I've told you, it's your responsibility, as captain of the Form. If you don't do something, you'll see Rookwood licked, that's all!"  
 And Tubby Muffin retired from the end study, slamming the door after him, to indicate his scornful opinion of the doubting Thomases there.  
**The 6th Chapter.**  
**Jimmy Silver Thinks it Out.**  
 Jimmy Silver was very thoughtful over tea.  
 The fact that he took Tubby's story seriously had some effect upon his chums.  
 After due debate, they agreed that it was possibly true. Certainly, it would be like Knowles of the Sixth! But they agreed, too, that it would be simply idiotic to spin such a yarn to Bulkeley, with the idea of warning him—a steep yarn, founded on the evidence of an eavesdropper.  
 "We can't tell Bulkeley," said Jimmy Silver at last. "He wouldn't believe a word of it, even if he listened to us at all. The fact is, I couldn't even tell him I believe the yarn myself. I think I about half-believe it."  
 "About a quarter for me," grinned Raby.  
 "But something's got to be done, in case it's true," said Jimmy.

ington the next," said Jimmy. "We'll get them to come over—"  
 "Mornington's booked up for a shady excursion with Towny and that lot. I've heard them jawing it over."  
 "Well, Erroll won't be with them. We'll take Erroll. Depend on it, if Bulkeley wanted bowlers, and he found Erroll and me on the spot, he'd play us like a shot. It won't hurt us to spend an afternoon at St. Jim's. The chaps there are hospitality itself."  
 "That's so," said Newcome.  
 "But—"  
 "Oh, bother your butts!"  
 "But the money, fathead! Railway fares have gone up. I believe it's about fifteen bob return to St. Jim's now."  
 "Oh, my hat!"  
 There was silence. Financial considerations had not yet entered into Jimmy Silver's reflections on the subject.  
 "Well, we can't all go," said Jimmy at last. "We can raise enough tin for two—among the lot of us. Erroll can pay his own fare. I know he'll be willing, when I tell him how the matter stands. If you chaps agree, I'll get along and speak to Erroll now."  
 Lovell looked dubious.  
 "I suppose it's all right," he said. "Looks to me like going over there on a wild-goose chase, though. Still, if there's a possibility of the Rookwood team being given away by a

snaking traitor, I suppose we ought to play up."  
 "Agreed, then."  
 And Jimmy Silver went along to Study No. 2, to speak to Kit Erroll. He came back in about ten minutes. "All serene!" he announced. "Erroll doesn't believe Tubby's yarn, but he thinks we might as well be there, in case of accidents."  
 "Well, that's sensible," agreed Lovell.  
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 And Jimmy Silver & Co. trotted in with the hospitable St. Jim's junior.  
**The 7th Chapter.**  
**Left Behind.**  
 Bulkeley and his men left Rookwood School immediately after dinner. They were looking in good trim, and a good many fellows walked down to Coombe Station to see them off, Raby and Newcome among the rest.  
 The train rolled out of the station with the eleven on board.  
 Bulkeley was in great spirits. Knowles, who was in the same carriage with him, was very agreeable.  
 The cad of the Sixth seemed to have forgotten all animosity.  
 Knowles had no scruple about the trick he intended to play, but he knew very well what all Rookwood, with the exception of his confederates, would think of it.  
 It was very necessary that the three





# LEFT IN THE LURCH!

(Continued from the previous page.)

deserters should be left behind by "accident." And, to disarm all suspicion, Knowles assumed a manner of hearty cordiality, and seemed as keen about the match as Bulkeley himself.

Bulkeley was relieved and glad. He would never have doubted that Knowles would play up his hardest for the old school, whatever he thought and felt. But it was agreeable to find the Modern prefect accepting the situation in this good-tempered way, and banishing all thought of rivalry or disappointment.

It was quite a merry party in the carriage as it ran on to Latcham Junction.

There was a change of trains at Latcham, and the party had to wait ten minutes before the express came in to carry them on to Wayland.

Knowles and Frampton and Catesby strolled into the buffet for refreshments.

Frampton and Catesby, to do them justice, looked and felt doubtful and troubled now. But they were too much under Knowles' influence to think of resistance to his schemes.

"Train's signalled!" said Neville, looking in at the door.

"Right-ho!" yawned Knowles.

The train came in. The Rookwood cricketers hurried to take their places. Knowles & Co. were still in the buffet. Bulkeley's voice was heard shouting from the platform.

"Knowles! Catesby! Buck up, you fellows! You'll lose the train!" The three Modern seniors rushed out.

Porters were slamming the doors already. Bulkeley, with an anxious face, was leaning out of an open door. "Come on, Knowles!" he shouted. "I'm coming!"

Knowles dashed across the platform, with Frampton and Catesby at his heels.

"Look out!" shouted Bulkeley. Knowles apparently did not see a trolley in his path.

At all events, he stumbled over it, and rolled over on the platform, and Catesby and Frampton rolled over him.

The engine shrieked. "Knowles!" yelled Bulkeley. "Hold on a tick, porter!"

But the door was slammed, in spite of Bulkeley. The guard was waving his flag.

"Right away!"

Knowles jumped up—several seconds too late—and ran towards the train. The porter pushed him back. The train was in rapid motion now, and it was too late, as the cad of the Sixth very well knew.

"Stand back there!" Bulkeley's face was seen at the window of the carriage as the train glided out of the station.

"Sorry, Bulkeley!" shouted Knowles. "You see how it is!" The train glided round a curve, and vanished.

Knowles watched it out, with a serious face, till he could no longer be seen from the train. Then he smiled at his companions.

"Rather a surprise for Bulkeley—what!" he drawled.

"I—I don't half like it!" muttered Frampton.

"Oh, rot! Let's get out. We can drop in at the Ship on our way home, and get a game of billiards."

And the three Modern seniors left Latcham Station.

Meanwhile, the express was rushing on towards Wayland Junction, many a long mile distant, and Bulkeley was sitting in his carriage with utter dismay in his face.

Three of his team had been left behind. He knew that it was impossible for them to overtake the eleven. He had to turn up at St. Jim's three men short.

"It's sickening!" muttered Neville. "Rotten!" said Carthew. "What utter idiots to miss the train!"

"Just like those Moderns!" growled Hansom of the Fifth.

Bulkeley was silent. He was bitterly exasperated, but there was not much use in complaining. Calling Knowles & Co. names would not undo what had been done.

The train buzzed on, and Bulkeley thought it out, while his comrades continued to "slang" the train-missers.

"We can't play three short!" said Bulkeley at last. "I wish I'd brought some reserves now. But, of course, one couldn't foresee a thing like this, and we're bound to travel as little as possible just now. We shall have to ask Kildare to lend us some substitutes."

"Three St. Jim's chaps in a Rookwood team!" grunted Neville. "It's good-bye to a win for us. Oh, those utter asses!"

"Blessed if I don't half think those Modern cads have left us in the lurch on purpose!" growled Carthew.

"Oh, rot!" exclaimed Bulkeley sharply. "That's not possible, and you'd better not suggest such things. The question is, what are we going to do? We've got to play the match, and we're three men short. Three unknown substitutes means a licking for us, I suppose. It would have been touch and go, anyway. But I don't see how it's to be helped."

"Can't be helped," said Neville. "Grin and bear it, that's all."

"Here's Wayland!" said Bulkeley at last.

The Rookwood First changed into the local train for Rylcombe. There they found a brake waiting to convey them to St. Jim's.

Eric Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, was there, too, and he greeted Bulkeley warmly. In the brake, the Rookwood captain explained the mishap that had occurred.

"We can find you three men quite easily," said Kildare. "Any number you wanted, in fact. I'll pick out three of the best for you."

"Thanks!" said Bulkeley. But it was not a happy prospect, and Bulkeley was very thoughtful when the cricketers arrived at St. Jim's.

### The 8th Chapter.

#### "How's That?"

"Heah comes Wookwood!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, had gathered on Big Side to watch the Rookwood match, and Jimmy Silver, Lovell, and Erroll were with them.

Jimmy and his comrades had re-

ceived a warm welcome from the St. Jim's juniors, whom they knew well, having a regular fixture of their own with the St. Jim's Junior Eleven. They were on Big Side with the St. Jim's crowd, which was increasing in numbers as the time for the match drew near.

As D'Arcy announced the arrival of Rookwood, Jimmy Silver looked round quickly. The matter was to be settled now, whether Tubby Muffin was right or whether the fat Classical's wonderful imagination had been at work.

"My hat!" muttered Jimmy. "Eight of them!" said Lovell. "All Classics! My hat! Jimmy, Tubby was right, after all!"

"Knowles isn't there," said Kit Lovell, "nor Frampton, nor Catesby. Tubby was right."

Jimmy Silver drew a quick breath. It was only too clear that Tubby Muffin's amazing story had been the frozen truth now that it was seen that the three Moderns were missing from the Rookwood team.

"Lucky we came!" grinned Lovell. "Lucky that Jimmy took notice of Tubby's yarn!" said Erroll. "That's why we're here."

"Good old Jimmy! What about speaking to Bulkeley?" Lovell looked doubtfully at his leader. "He'll play us, Jimmy—what!"

"Bound to!" said Jimmy. "But the end study doesn't ask favours. If Rookwood wants us, Rookwood can say so. Let's let Bulkeley see us. It's his move next."

"Good!" The three Rookwood juniors emerged from the crowd before the pavilion, so that Bulkeley could not fail to see them as he came up.

The captain of Rookwood started as his eyes fell upon them.

"Rookwood kids, here!" he exclaimed. "Come here, Silver!" Jimmy obediently advanced.

"What on earth are you doing here, Silver?"

"Came over for the match, Bulkeley," said Jimmy affably. "We want to see you stagger humanity, you know!"

"My hat!" said Bulkeley. He turned to Neville, a glimmer in his eyes. "This is real luck. What do you think?"

Neville nodded.

"You're not thinking of playing fags in a First Eleven match, I suppose?" said Carthew, with a sneer.

"That's exactly what I am thinking of," said Bulkeley coolly. "I've seen these kids play. Silver and Erroll are topping bowlers, and it's bowlers we want, as Knowles and Catesby got left behind. This is real luck. Lovell's a good bat for a junior, too—as good as a substitute, I dare say. Here, you kids, how would you like to play for Rookwood this afternoon?"

Jimmy's eyes danced. To do him justice, he was more pleased at having helped old Bulkeley out of the scrape than at his own luck in getting a chance of playing in Rookwood First. But he was very pleased upon his own account, too.

So were Erroll and Lovell. Their looks were an eloquent reply to Bulkeley's question.

"Topping!" said Jimmy. "Quite at your orders, Bulkeley!"

"Oh, rather, Bulkeley!"

"I dare say some of the kids here will lend you some flannels," said the Rookwood captain dubiously.

"That's all right!" said Jimmy at once. "We've brought our own flannels and our bats, too."

"The dickens you have!"

"We—we thought we might get some cricket here, you know," explained Jimmy.

"All serene! You'll come in and change with us, then."

"What-ho!" "We sha'n't want to borrow men, Kildare," said Bulkeley quite cheerily to the captain of St. Jim's. "I find there are three Rookwood

chaps here. Just the number we want, by chance."

"Juniors!" said Kildare, with a glance at the three.

"Yes, juniors, but first-rate at cricket, for their age," said Bulkeley. "I think they'll do very well."

Tom Merry & Co. congratulated their Rookwood friends when the three came out in spotless flannels, with their bats under their arms, looking as if they were walking on air.

"This is a stroke of luck for you," Tom Merry remarked, "and for your skipper, too! Odd that you should be here, three of you, when it's just three men he's mislaid somewhere!"

"As that Indian chap at Greyfriars would say, the oddfulness is terrific," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "But there you are!"

Not for worlds would the Rookwood juniors have revealed the wretched trick by which Knowles & Co. had schemed to leave their team in the lurch. The honour of Rookwood forbade that.

With great pride and satisfaction the three juniors joined the ranks of the Rookwood seniors.

Bulkeley's side batted first, and the three Fourth-Formers were left to the tail of the innings. That was only to be expected. But when they batted, Jimmy Silver secured 6 runs before being bowled out by Darrel, and Lovell and Erroll made 5 each.

The total for the innings was 60. And Carthew, who had sneered at the latest recruits, left off sneering, for he had been bowled for a duck's egg by Monteith of St. Jim's. The juniors had beaten his score, at least.

Bulkeley led his men into the field when the Saints' turn came to bat. He bowled the first over himself, and tossed the ball to Jimmy Silver for the second.

"Do your best, kid!" he said.

"What-ho!" said Jimmy.

The Fourth-Former went on to the bowling-crease in a mood of great determination. He was the champion junior bowler of Rookwood and he was at the top of his form.

Bowling against great batsmen like Kildare, Darrel, Monteith, and the rest was rather different from bowling in a junior match, of course. But Jimmy had great reliance on his own powers, and he was prepared to perform the impossible to defeat Knowles' plot.

And Jimmy Silver's bowling was very good.

Darrel was clean-bowled for 4, and a catch came from Monteith which gave Bulkeley a chance in the field. Bulkeley's face brightened up. This was as good as Knowles himself could have done against bats like St. Jim's.

Erroll's chance came next, and there was a buzz as the athletic junior knocked over two wickets in succession. It was not quite the hat-trick, but it was enough to cheer the Rookwood team very much.

St. Jim's first innings ended for 65, quite early in the afternoon.

"Five ahead on the first innings!" Bulkeley remarked to his men. "Not bad when we're playing three juniors. How jolly lucky those kids happened to be here!"

This remark made Jimmy Silver & Co. grin. There was not so much "happening" about it as George Bulkeley supposed.

Rookwood's second innings brought in exactly the same score as the first—60—the juniors again closing the innings fairly creditably. In the red western sunlight St. Jim's went in for their last innings.

Kildare and Darrel were batting, and the score jumped up. When Kildare was caught at point by Neville the board registered 30.

"All ovah bah shoutin', deah boys!" Arthur Augustus confided to his friends.

But Arthur Augustus was not quite on the wicket.

Erroll went on to bowl, and St. Jim's stared when Darrel's wicket went down to the junior. They stared harder when Monteith's followed it for a duck's egg, and harder still when Langton's followed suit. Bulkeley clapped Erroll on the

shoulder in huge delight when the field crossed over.

"The merry hat-trick!" he said. "Good for you, kid! We'll save the match yet!"

And, juniors as they were, Erroll and Jimmy Silver did most of the bowling for Rookwood after that, and the wickets went down at a good rate.

"Fifty for nine wickets!" said Tom Merry at last. "Last man in, and five wanted to tie, six to win!" "Lefevre's good for six, deah boy!"

Bulkeley tossed the ball to Jimmy Silver.

"Go in and win, kid!"

Jimmy went on to bowl against Lefevre of St. Jim's in the mood of a fellow prepared to do or die. And the Fifth-Former of St. Jim's knocked the ball away for 4.

Jimmy received it back from the field after the batsman had made good. The Rookwooders looked serious now. It was pretty plain that the next ball would be the last in the game, one way or the other.

Jimmy's lips were set, his eyes were glinting. The ball went down, and the batsman drove at it—where he thought it was. But the ball curled in under the bat, and there was a smack.

"How's that?" shrieked Jimmy.

"How's that?" roared the whole Rookwood team.

"Out!"

"Bravo, young 'un!"

"Rookwood wins!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, polishing his eyeglasses. "Wookwood wins, deah boy! I must weally point out to Kildah that it is wathah a wippin' ideah to play some juniahs in the First Eleven, and I shall offah him my services, bai Jove!"

Half Rookwood turned out to meet the returning team in the dusk of the summer evening.

"Awfully sorry, Bulkeley," said Knowles. "You saw how it was at Latcham."

"All serene, Knowles!" said Bulkeley cheerily. "You couldn't help it, of course!"

"I suppose you've lost?"

"Oh, no! We've won!"

"Won?" panted Knowles.

"Yes, by a single win. But a win is a win."

"You—you—you've beaten St. Jim's?" said Knowles almost dazedly.

"Hurrah!" roared the Rookwood crowd.

"Some juniors happened to be there, and I played them," explained Bulkeley. "Silver, Erroll, and Lovell. Here they are! They did rippingly for Rookwood, too, and in fact saved the match!"

"Hurrah!" roared Baby.

"Congratulate us, Knowles!"

grinned Jimmy Silver.

Knowles did not congratulate them. He turned away, his heart so full of bitter disappointment and rancour that he dared not let his face be seen.

And Catesby and Frampton followed him, and gave him their opinion of his scheming, and what it led to—an extremely unfavourable opinion, and expressed in very plain language, which Knowles swallowed as best he could.

All Rookwood was pleased by the victory; but it was the end study that rejoiced the most. They had saved old Bulkeley from a scrape, they had helped to beat St. Jim's, and they had frustrated Knowles' knavish tricks. The end study had reason to gloat, and they gloated.

THE END.

(Another magnificent long, complete tale in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND, entitled: "Mornington's Foe!" Don't forget that "Frank Richards' School-days!" will appear in three weeks' time! Tell all your chums about our forthcoming attractions!)

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