

HAVE A "FLIP" WITH ANGELO—THE SCHOOLBOY AIRMAN! (INSIDE.)

EVERY WEDNESDAY.

The GEM 2^d

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ANGELO'S SENSATIONAL FAREWELL TO ST. JIM'S!

(A breathless incident from the magnificent new long complete school yarn, featuring Tom Merry & Co., in this issue.)

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"I WANT!"

THOSE two words form a very good basis to my opening paragraph in this week's pow-wow, for I have in mind a very lengthy epistle from a new reader who signs himself "Disgusted." I must confess that this letter has given me a large-sized headache, for I was patient and fair enough to read it through from beginning to end. Briefly, "Disgusted" wants Tom Merry killed off; he wants the school yarns cut down to half their present length; he wants a different artist to depict our characters; he wants the GEM cover to be in yellow and black; he wants some Dick Turpin yarns; he wants to see old Gussy get the order of the boot for keeps; he wants— But there, you are doubtless beginning to see how hopeless "Disgusted" is. Now, as you know, I am always open to receive suggestions, but I don't bargain for suggestions of the type given above. Really, this new reader doesn't want the GEM at all. I doubt whether there is a paper in existence that would, in fact, appeal to him. He even goes to the length of suggesting that he should be given a chance of editing the GEM. Such is the egotism of this energetic youth. Little does he seem to care about what the other fellows "want." His letter is simply a number of "I's"—"eyes," if I may be so facetious, that will not see. As this unhappy correspondent doesn't choose to send his address I can't very well reply to him personally. But should he catch sight of this Chat he will recognise himself, so to speak. Let me give him a few words of advice. Don't run round this world, my friend, "I wanting"—you'll never be popular. Try and be satisfied with things as they are, and if there is a genuine and reasonable opening for improvement step into the breach. But do consider the other fellow's point of view. Self should not come first in everything, not by a long chalk. But there, I believe you know these things already. Of a certainty someone must have mentioned them to you, young as you are.

HE'S QUARRELLED WITH HIS PAL!

A very down-in-the-mouth chum from the South writes and tells me that he has quarrelled with his best friend. The events that led up to this split don't really concern this par. But apparently any number of hot and bitter words were exchanged during the quarrel. My correspondent feels that a reconciliation is hopeless in the circumstances, for both he and his chum declared that the last word had been said; that the friendship was over. In a calm moment, my correspondent realises that half the bitter things he said were not meant. Methinks, too, that half the nasty things the other chap said were not meant, either. Both the principals in this affair are proud—I can gather that from the facts as they have been told to me. But, really, if my friend wishes to make it up he must swallow some of that pride. The first advance he makes, I feel sure, will be sufficient to bring a friendly smile to the face of his erstwhile pal. And then these fellows will shake and forget that they have ever quarrelled. There will be no loss of dignity on either side, take it from me. Go up to your old friend, my correspondent, and do as I say. Then drop me a line and tell me how things go.

NEXT WEDNESDAY'S PROGRAMME:

"THE CHAMPION OF ST. JIM'S!"

By Martin Clifford.

This is an extra-long story of your old favourites, and you'll like it no end. Who the "champion" is I'm leaving you to discover next week.

"WHITE EAGLE!"

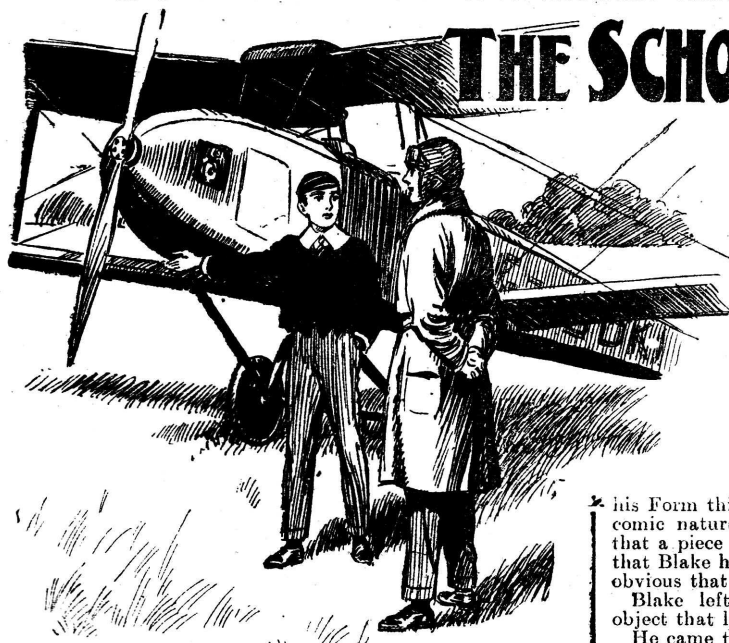
Then there's another long instalment of this fine serial, chums, included in next Wednesday's programme. Mind you read it. And don't forget, too, those

DELICIOUS TUCK HAMPERS.

They will be on offer again. The St. Jim's Rhymester also piles in with another natty poem. A strong programme, this, and one that you will enjoy. Make certain of your GEM now by giving the newsagent an order. Cheerio, chums!

Your Editor,

THE AERO FAN! Looping the loop, spiral turns, and spinning nose-dives are much more to the choico of Angelo Lee than mugging Latin and Greek in the Form-room on terra firma! Take a "flip" with—



THE SCHOOLBOY AIRMAN!

A Powerful New Long Complete Story of Tom Merry & Co., the Chums of St. Jim's, with Angelo Lee, the new boy of the Fourth, in the Limelight.

BY

Martin Clifford.

CHAPTER 1.

Cardew Catches It!

"HERE he is!"

It was a breathless whisper in the Fourth Form-room at St. Jim's.

Mr. Lathom, the master of the Fourth, heard it as he arrived at the Form-room door.

Mr. Lathom frowned a little.

He did not suppose that that eager whisper indicated that the Fourth were very keen to see their Form master, and to get on with Latin prose.

No doubt Mr. Lathom would have liked to suppose so. But he knew his Form too well for that.

The whisper indicated, in fact, that something was "on" in the Form-room. Mr. Lathom was just one minute late for class, and the Fourth were all in their places.

Mr. Lathom stepped in, his gown rustling, and his eyes blinking at the juniors over his glasses.

He was a rather short-sighted little gentleman; but one glance was sufficient to tell him that his Form were all on the qui vive—in a state of suppressed excitement.

All eyes were fixed on Mr. Lathom, and two or three of the fellows were grinning. Baggy Trimble was on the verge of a fat chuckle. Only Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was slightly frowning, apparently not approving of what was on—whatever it was.

That something was on was obvious to Mr. Lathom; but it was difficult to say what it was. He glanced over the Form, and he glanced round the Form-room. Nothing out of the common met his eyes, excepting the suppressed excitement in the faces of his pupils.

He crossed over to his desk.

Then his eyes fell upon a small white object that lay on the floor in the Form-room.

From his desk Mr. Lathom blinked at it.

The Fourth Form fellows fairly held their breath. Angelo Lee, the new boy in the Fourth, made a slight movement, betraying his deep interest in Mr. Lathom's proceedings.

"He's spotted it!" breathed Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!" whispered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"There will be a wow now!"

Mr. Lathom spoke. The Fourth Form hung upon his words, as they had never done when Mr. Lathom was imparting valuable instruction to them.

"Blake!"

"Yes, sir?" gasped Blake.

"Kindly pick up that piece of chalk."

Blake jumped.

"That—that what, sir?" he stammered.

"There is a piece of chalk on the floor," said Mr. Lathom.

"Kindly pick it up, Blake, and place it on my desk."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Blake.

There was a faint giggle in the class. Mr. Lathom glanced at the juniors and frowned. He could not quite understand

his Form this afternoon. There was absolutely nothing of a comic nature, so far as he could see, in the circumstance that a piece of chalk was lying on the Form-room floor, and that Blake had been told to pick it up. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the Fourth Form were highly entertained.

Blake left his place, and approached the small white object that lay in the middle of the Form-room.

He came to the Form master's desk and laid it down, and the whole Form watched him breathlessly.

"Thank you, Blake."

Blake retreated to his place.

Mr. Lathom's eyes were on the little white object placed on his desk.

His expression changed.

The little gentleman was shortsighted. But he could, as Cardew of the Fourth had expressed it, see the wall of a house if the house were near enough.

Now that the object was lying on Mr. Lathom's desk, under Mr. Lathom's spectacles, he discerned that it was not, as he had supposed, a piece of chalk. It was a cigarette!

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Lathom.

He picked up the object, and blinked at it more closely. The Fourth Form hung on his actions.

He sniffed at it, as if to make absolutely sure, by the sense of smell as well as the sense of sight, that it really was a cigarette.

It was!

There was no doubt about it.

Mr. Lathom had to be convinced, in spite of his shocked amazement, that he really held a cigarette in his fingers—a cigarette evidently dropped in the Form-room by one of his pupils.

Now he understood the tense excitement of the Fourth.

The owner of that cigarette had dropped it going to his place, and the juniors had spotted it, lying there, as the Form master was heard approaching.

They had expected Mr. Lathom to see it, as indeed he had done, though at first he had mistaken it for a piece of chalk.

Some member of the Fourth had smokes about him. Some member of that Form was breaking one of the strictest rules of St. Jim's. It was a rule of the greatest strictness. A fellow found with smokes in his possession was certain to be caned, and to have a suspicious eye kept on him afterwards.

Thunder gathered on Mr. Lathom's brow.

Latin prose, for the moment, was banished from his thoughts. The discovery of such bad habits in his Form was a matter that had to be dealt with before the lesson commenced.

Mr. Lathom held up the cigarette for all the St. Jim's Fourth to see.

"Boys!" he said.

"Now it's comin'!" murmured Cardew.

"This is where you get it in the neck, Lee, you fathead!" whispered Fatty Wynn.

Angelo Lee, the new junior, smiled.

"Boys, this is a cigarette!" said Mr. Lathom.

"Go hon!" murmured Cardew, and there was a chuckle.

"It belongs to some boy in this Form," said Mr. Lathom.

"It has been dropped here by the foolish, vicious, reckless boy who had it in his possession. All of you are aware that this is a serious matter. The boy who had this cigarette in his possession will step forward."

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"Will he?" murmured Cardew. "I don't think!"

Cardew was right.

No one stepped forward. Nobody in the Fourth seemed anxious to claim ownership of the cigarette.

"I am waiting!" said Mr. Lathom, in a portentous voice. He waited. But there was no movement in the Fourth. Some of the fellows looked at Angelo Lee rather expressively; but Lee sat quiet in his place, and made no sign.

"I have no doubt," rumbled Mr. Lathom, "that the boy who dropped this cigarette has other cigarettes in his possession. If the boy does not step forward, I shall order the whole Form to turn out their pockets!"

"Oh, gad!" breathed Ralph Reckness Cardew, and the grin faded from his face. His chums, Levison and Clive, looked at him. Cardew had not dropped the cigarette, they knew that. All the Fourth had seen Angelo Lee drop it, intentionally, as he heard the Form master coming along the corridor. But Cardew sometimes smoked, and his chums could guess, from his look, that he had smokes about him now. And there was an alarmed expression, too, on the face of Mellish of the Fourth. Mellish was rather a black sheep, and probably had a guilty conscience.

Mr. Lathom waited again.

More and more expressive glances were cast on Angelo Lee by his Form-fellows.

But the new junior sat quiet.

All the Fourth Form knew his game. It was common knowledge at St. Jim's that Lee of the Fourth had not wanted to come to the school, and that he wanted to leave, and that he was anxious even to get "sacked," if there was no other way.

More than one device had Angelo tried, to this peculiar end; but he had not been successful.

This was a new dodge.

All the Fourth knew that Angelo had intentionally dropped the cigarette for Mr. Lathom to find; and that he was anxious to be ordered to turn out his pockets; and that, when he did so, he would produce articles sufficient to land him in the blackest books of his Form master, His Housemaster, and his headmaster.

The fellow who wanted to be sacked had, in fact, stacked his pockets with packets of cigarettes, all ready for the ordeal. But he did not intend to own up. It was his game to be discovered in possession of the forbidden articles, as it were, by chance. The dodge would not have been of much use had Mr. Lathom known that it was planned in advance.

So Angelo sat tight.

Mr. Lathom waited—and while he waited he picked up his cane, and swished it in the air. There was no doubt about what awaited the secret smoker when he was discovered.

"Once more," said the master of the Fourth, "I order the delinquent to come forward!"

"No takers!" murmured Figgins.

There was silence.

"Very well," said Mr. Lathom, compressing his lips. "Every boy in the Form will come to my desk and turn out his pockets under my eyes. The Form will be taken in alphabetical order, one at a time."

Ralph Reckness Cardew made a grimace. In alphabetical order. Cardew came before Lee. Mr. Lathom proceeded to rap out names. There were no A's in the Fourth, and Mr. Lathom began with Bates.

"Bates!"

Harold Bates left his place, advanced to the Form master's desk, and turned out his pockets under Mr. Lathom's inspection. Bates turned out many articles—a pocket-knife, a pencil, a broken fountain-pen, to which several aniseed balls and a chunk of toffee lovingly clung, some old letters, and other things. But there was no sign of tobacco.

"You may go to your place, Bates. Blake!"

Jack Blake stepped out and went through the same process. Blake came through the ordeal unscathed.

"Cardew!"

"Oh, gad!" murmured Cardew.

He came elegantly out before the Form.

"May I assure you, sir, that I did not drop that cigarette?" he said respectfully.

"Quite so, Cardew," said Mr. Lathom. "I believe you, my boy; but it is not, of course, possible for me to make invidious distinctions. You will kindly turn out your pockets."

"Very well, sir!" sighed Cardew.

Quite calmly, the dandy of the Fourth laid a handsome Russia-leather cigarette-case on the Form master's desk.

Mr. Lathom jumped.

"Cardew!"

"Yes, sir!" murmured Cardew.

"You have cigarettes in your possession!" exclaimed Mr. Lathom, with rising indignation. "This case, and what it contains, will be confiscated, Cardew. And you will bend over that chair."

"Certainly, sir!"

Angelo Lee's face was a study.

In laying his little plan, it had not crossed his mind that there were foolish or reckless fellows in the Form who might have smokes about them for other purposes than pulling a Form master's leg. He stared blankly as Ralph Reckness Cardew bent over the chair, and Mr. Lathom swished the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

Angelo Lee jumped up.

"If you please, sir——" he exclaimed.

Mr. Lathom frowned at him.

"You may sit down, Lee."

"But, sir——"

"Silence!"

"But——"

"I command you to be silent, Lee! How dare you speak!" exclaimed the master of the Fourth angrily. "Take two hundred lines!"

Whack, whack, whack!

The cane fairly rang on Cardew's elegant trousers.

The dandy of the Fourth uttered no sound, though his handsome face set hard. It was not a light infliction.

"There!" said Mr. Lathom. "You may go back to your place, Cardew!"

"Thank you, sir!" said Cardew imperturbably.

"I have punished you, Cardew, and I warn you that if you are discovered in such a fault again, you will be reported to the Head. I am disgusted with you, Cardew! Go to your place!"

Cardew went back to his place, giving Angelo Lee an expressive glance as he went. That glance indicated that Cardew would have something to say to the new junior when classes were over.

There was a general grin all through the Fourth.

Cardew had caught it—and the Fourth, who, in general, did not approve of shady ways, considered that it served him right. Angelo Lee looked rather dismayed. There was no more turning out of pockets. Mr. Lathom had—as he supposed—discovered the delinquent, and the incident was closed. Latin prose was now the order of the day.

Angelo had no choice but to leave his little stunt over for another occasion. To own up unquestioned was to spoil it in advance. So Angelo, with his pockets full of cigarettes, gave his unwilling attention to Latin prose—and Ralph Reckness Cardew, shifting with extreme discomfort on his form, promised himself the solace of punching Lee's head after class!

CHAPTER 2.

An Awkward Position!

"TOM MEWWY——"

"Adsum!" said Tom, with a smile.

But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the ornament of the St. Jim's Fourth, did not smile.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was looking serious, in fact, worried.

Something, obviously, was disturbing the serene repose of the swell of St. Jim's.

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther had come out with the Shell after class. They stopped as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came up and addressed the captain of the Shell. They regarded him with smiling faces. Arthur Augustus looked troubled; and they were prepared to sympathise if the trouble was deep. Meanwhile, they smiled.

"The fact is, I am wathah wowwied," said D'Arcy.

"Bill from your tailor?" asked Lowther.

"Not at all, deah boy."

"Has Herries' bulldog worried your silk hat again?"

"No, it is not as bad as that," said Arthur Augustus, innocently. "But it is a feahful wowwy, all the same."

"Don't say you've lost your new necktie!" said Manners solemnly.

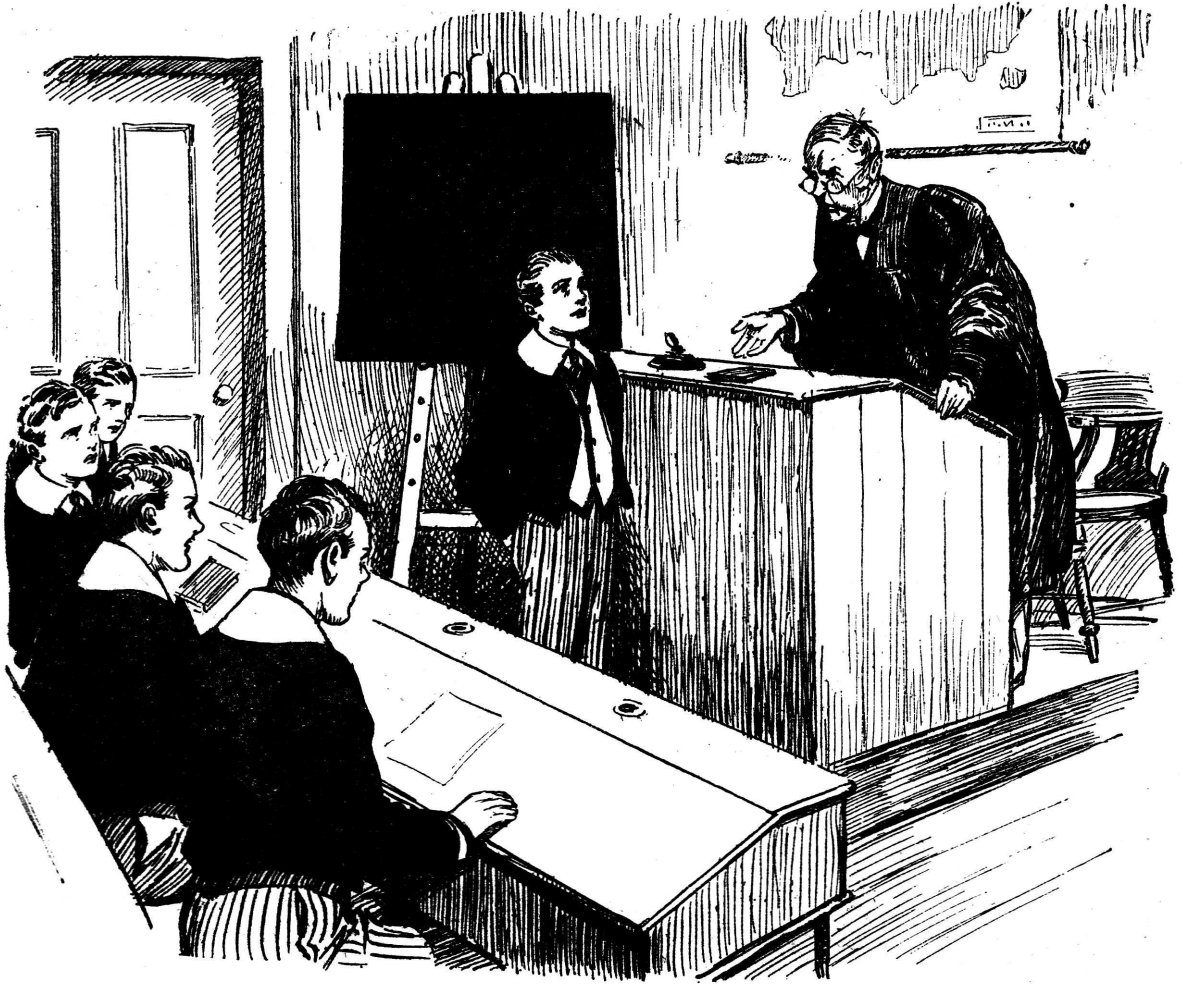
"Weally, Mannahs——"

"Well, give it a name, old bean!" said Tom Merry,

ANSWERS

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"You will kindly turn out your pockets, Cardew," said Mr. Lathom. "Very well, sir," sighed the dandy of the Fourth. Quite calmly, Cardew laid a handsome Russia-leather cigarette-case on the Form-master's desk. Mr. Lathom jumped. "Cardew!" he exclaimed, with rising indignation. "This case, and what it contains, will be confiscated. And you will bend over that chair!" (See Chapter 1.)

laughing. "You can look on us as three uncles ready with good advice and counsel."

Still Arthur Augustus did not smile. His worry was evidently real, though not so serious as the worrying of his silk hat by Herries' bulldog, Towser.

"Cousin Ethel is comin' on Wednesday aftahnoon!" said the swell of St. Jim's at last.

The Terrible Three stared.

"Cousin Ethel!" repeated Tom.

"Yaas."

"And is that the worry?"

"That's it, deah boy!"

"Well, you ass!" said Tom. "If you don't want to see Cousin Ethel, lots of fellows will take her off your hands."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Put me down for first place," said Monty Lowther.

"Me for second," said Manners.

"Me for third!" chuckled Tom. "And I dare say Figgins of the New House will be ready to oblige."

"Pway do not be fwivolous on a sewious subject, deah boys," urged Arthur Augustus. "Of course, I am always vewy glad to see Cousin Ethel, but it is a feahful awkward posish. She is comin' to see me, of course, as I am her cousin, and she will have tea in Study No. 6, and—"

"And you want us to come?" said Lowther. "Done!"

"Accepted with thanks," said Manners.

"Count on us, old chap," said Tom Merry.

"Kind of you to ask us," went on Monty Lowther. "Don't be bashful about it, old man. Of course, it's an honour, for a Fourth Form kid to have Shell fellows to tea. But bless you, we're not proud."

"Not at all," said Manners.

"Bai Jove! I weally wish you fellows would be sewious, you know. Of course, I shall be glad if you will come to

tea with Ethel in our studay. Blake and Hewwies and Dig will be glad, too. But—" Arthur Augustus shook his head. "She will ask me about Lee."

"Lee!" repeated the Shell fellows.

"Yaas, wathah! You wemembah, Tom Mewwy, that Cousin Ethel asked us to look aftah Lee at school, because his sister is a chum of hers, and Alice Lee was wathah wowwied about her bwothah heah."

"I remember," said Tom cheerily. "She asked you and Eiggins and me, and we all played up. But Lee has shown that he isn't the ass the fellows supposed, and that he can take care of himself."

"Yaas, but it's vewy awkward. You see, the fathead wants to get out of the school, and he has been twyin' to pwovoke the Head into sackin' him. Feelin' it my dutay to look aftah Lee, I butted in, you know, and saved him frowm gettin' the sack. I wewarded that as keepin' my pwomise to Ethel. Lee would have been sacked for stayin' away frowm school a whole night, as you know; and I discovahed at the last moment that he had been doin' air stunts, wescuin' an airman and savin' his life, and all that; and the Head let him off. And then the ungwateful boundah pitched into me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you know, there is nothin' to cackle at, in Lee's howwid ingwatitude. I still have a swellin' on my nose."

The Terrible Three chuckled.

Arthur Augustus' intervention on that celebrated occasion had indubitably saved Angelo from being expelled from St. Jim's.

But as Angelo had been planning to get expelled, in order to carry out his darling scheme of becoming an airman, much gratitude could not really have been expected from him.

Certainly he had not shown any; unless punching Arthur Augustus' aristocratic nose was a form of gratitude.

"Aftah that," said D'Arcy, with dignity, "I dwopped the fellow. I gefused to have anythin' more to do with him; and if he gets neah the sack again I shall not intahvene to save him."

"That's the way to bag his gratitude!" chuckled Monty Lowther. "You see, he wants to go—he wants to clear out of St. Jim's and start in his Cousin Peter's aerodrome as a giddy flying man. If you hadn't chipped in he would be gone now."

"Yaas; but it is a fwightful disgwace to be sacked fwom school, you know."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Lee doesn't seem to mind that, so long as he gets away," he remarked.

"He ought to mind, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "He ought to think of his people's feelin's, you know."

"He ought!" agreed Tom Merry.

"Well, I have chucked him up," said Arthur Augustus. "I have wefwained fwom givin' him a feahful thwashin', but I have wresolved to give him the go-by. I was goin' to w'rite to Cousin Ethel and explain, but it is wathah awkward, you know. And now she is comin' to the school, and if she asks me about Lee, I weally do not know what to say. Pwobably she will expect to see him in Studay No. 6, and I cannot ask him to tea, you know, as I am not speakin' to him. Indeed, I should not be surprised if he is sacked by Wednesday, fwom the way he is goin' on. He was wottin' in the Form-room to-day—twyin' to make Mr. Lathom think he was a smokin' boundah, you know; though, as it happened, Cardew bagged the lickin' instead of Lee. He weally does not seem to have much luck."

"What happened in the Form-room?" asked Tom.

Arthur Augustus related the incident of the cigarette, and the Terrible Three roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus grinned.

"Of course, it served Cardew wight," he said. "He had no bizney to have smokes about him. I heah that he is goin' to punch Lee. But, you see, that is Lee's game now—he is goin' to twy to get the sack for bad conduct, as there is no othah way. He seems to be absolutely pottay on his scheme of becomin' a flyin' man, and looks on the time he spends at St. Jim's as sheer waste. Check, you know. But the twouble is, what am I goin' to say to Cousin Ethel? It's vevy awkward, isn't it?"

Tom Merry looked thoughtful.

"The fact is, we took on rather a hefty job, when we undertook to look after Lee," he said. "Of course, Ethel never knew what it was like, or she wouldn't have asked us. She only knew that he was a fellow who didn't want to come to St. Jim's, and wanted to get away again, and was likely to land in trouble in consequence. I dare say she thinks he's settled down by this time, and it's all serene. We could have helped any other fellow to shake down. But to keep Lee from getting himself sacked when he's bent on it is rather too big an order."

"Yaas, wathah! And aftah he has punched my nose, of course, I cannot continue to look aftah him," said Arthur Augustus. "I considah that I am tweatin' him vevy genewously in wefwainin' fwom givin' him a feahful thwashin', you know. But aftah pwomisin' Ethel to look aftah him, it's fwightfully awkward to tell her that I have turned the fellow down, isn't it? It's a vevy awkward posish, you know."

"Awfully!" said Manners.

"There's only one thing to be done," said Lowther.

"What's that, deah boy?"

"You've turned Lee down?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, turn him up again."

"Eh?"

"Then it will be all right," said Monty.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Keep on butting in, and saving him from the sack, you know. If he punches your nose every time, you will have the most distinguished boko at St. Jim's, in the long run—"

"You uttah ass!" roared Arthur Augustus.

The Terrible Three chuckled.

"Pway be sewious, you fellows," said D'Arcy. "It weally is a vevy awkward posish, you know. Do you think it would do any good for me to talk to Lee, Tom Mewwy, and point out to him that it is his dutay to wespsect his pater's wishes, and to play up, you know, and give up his sillay ideahs? Perhaps if I put it to him vevy gleahly, he would wrealise that his pwesent line of conduct is wathah wotten. Aftah all, a little advice fwom a fellow of tact and judgment might be just what he wants."

"Good idea!" said Lowther. "Go and see him and put on your well-known bedside manners—"

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And even if it doesn't do him any good it will serve him right," added Lowther. "Talk to him like a Dutch uncle. If he survives—"

"Weally, you funnay idiot—" Arthur Augustus breathed hard. "Twy to be sewious on a sewious subject. It is quite poss, I think, that I might bwing Lee to a bettah fwame of mind. But a fwesh difficulty awises. How can I speak to him when I am not on speakin' terms with him?"

"That's a real poser," said Tom Merry gravely.

"You see, the posish bwistles with difficulties," said Arthur Augustus. "But as Cousin Ethel is comin' on Wednesday somethin' will have to be done. I think, upon the whole, I will twy the effect of pointin' out to him that he is actin' in a wotten way, and ought to be jolly well ashamed of himself, you know. Perhaps that will have some wesult."

The chums of the Shell grinned.

They did not anticipate that Gussy's eloquence would produce much effect upon Angelo Lee, whose determination to become a flying man made him deaf and blind to all other considerations.

If it had any result, that result was, in fact, only too likely to be another punch upon Gussy's aristocratic nose.

"I considah—" went on Arthur Augustus.

He was suddenly interrupted. Baggy Trimble shouted from the doorway of the House.

"Come on, you fellows—you're missing it."

"Weally, Twimble—"

"Missing what?" asked Tom.

"Cardew's on the war-path—scrappin' with Lee—"

"Bai Jove!"

"Come on," said Tom Merry, laughing. "This is the giddy sequel to Lee's dodge in the Form-room."

"I was makin' a wemark, Tom Mewwy—"

But the Terrible Three did not heed. Perhaps they considered that Gussy had already made enough remarks. At all events, they rushed away for the scene of the scrap, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, like the flower that is born to blush unseen, was left to waste his sweetness on the desert air.

CHAPTER 3.

Asking For It!

"THAT cad Lee—" "Oh, chuck it, Cardew!" said Levison of the Fourth.

"Yes, chuck it!" advised Sidney Clive. "Lee's a cheeky ass, but he never meant to land you with a licking, Cardew. It was really your own fault."

"Was it?" said Cardew unpleasantly.

"Yes, it was; if you hadn't had smokes about you it couldn't have happened," said Clive. "You were due for a licking, if Lathom had known. So chuck it up and let Lee alone!"

"Thanks for your advice," said Cardew, with a yawn. "It's quite good advice."

"Glad you can see that."

"But it's a weakness of mine never to take good advice," continued Cardew urbanely. "Much as I value your opinion, old bean, I can't consent to make an exception in your favour. Now, if you'll give me some bad advice, I'll undertake to act on it without even stoppin' to think."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"Can't help it, old bean, any more than you can help bein' a bore," said Cardew affably. "I had to bend over and take six, on account of that idiot Lee and his fat-headed stunts; and I promised myself the solace of punchin' his silly head, hard. I never break a promise. And, speakin' of angels, there he is."

"Look here, Cardew—"

Ralph Reckness Cardew did not heed his comrades. He hurried across to Angelo Lee, who was going towards the door on the quad. Levison and Clive, looking rather irritated, followed him. Cardew was not a fellow to bear grudges, as a rule; but so long as the effects of the "six" lasted, he was likely to feel a strong desire to punch Angelo Lee. And undoubtedly Mr. Lathom had laid on the cane hard, and the effect still lingered. So there was to be trouble.

"Stop a minute, Lee," said Cardew suavely.

Lee stopped and looked at him.

"You got me a lickin' this afternoon," said Cardew.

"Sorry."

"Very good; but unfortunately your sorrow does not take away the pain," explained Cardew.

Angelo grinned.

"Well, naturally, I couldn't guess that you had cigarettes in your pockets," he said. "Lathom wouldn't let me explain when I tried. I don't see that I was to blame."

"You don't?" queried Cardew.

"Well, no. I was laying in cigarettes for a stunt, as all

the fellows know; you must have had them for smoking, so, my opinion is that you deserved what you got."

"So kind of you to give me your opinion," smiled Cardew. "I dare say you're quite right. All the more reason why I should give you a lickin'—fellows irritate me when they're in the right. I can always sympathise with a man in the wrong—sort of fellow-feelin', you know. But a man in the right gets my goat. Where will you have it?"

"Cardew—" began Levison.

"Give us a rest, Ernest, old bean," said Cardew. "I'm goin' to thrash this cheeky outsider; I'm sure it will do him good. Will you step into the gym with me, Lee?"

"Thanks, no."

"Behind the chapel is a good place."

"No doubt; but I'm not going there."

"I hope I shall not have to conclude that you are a funk, my dear man," said Cardew gently.

"You can conclude what you like," said Lee coolly. "I don't care a rap for your opinion, one way or the other!"

Fellows were gathering round now, and many curious glances were cast at Lee.

Nobody supposed that the new junior was a funk; his exploit in handling an aeroplane, when the pilot had been disabled, was well known to all the school; indeed, it was the amazing courage and presence of mind displayed on that occasion that had saved Lee from the sack. Dr. Holmes had felt that he could not expel a St. Jim's fellow who had displayed a courage that brought credit upon his school. The schoolboy who had been able to handle a plane, and land after dark in a difficult place, was not a fellow to be considered a funk.

Yet obviously he did not intend to accept Cardew's invitation to adjourn to a secluded spot, where a licking could be given and taken without interference by masters or prefects.

"I mean business," said Cardew, with a gleam in his eyes. "You're not gettin' off, Lee, after landin' me with six."

Angelo smiled.

"You're challenging me, then?" he asked.

"Has that only just dawned on you?"

"As the challenged party, I have the choice of place, I think?"

"Certainly; I don't care where I lick you, so long as I do lick you!"

"Very well. Come on!"

Angelo turned, and walked towards the masters' corridor. Cardew stared after him.

"Hold on!" he said.

"Well?" Lee looked back.

"You don't want to scrap outside the doors of the masters' studies, I suppose?" said Cardew.

"Suppose again!" said Angelo cheerily. "That's exactly what I do want!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Cardew.

He felt that he was caught. A fight between two juniors outside the door of a master's study was an extremely serious affair. It might suit Lee, in his scheme of making his stay at St. Jim's impossible. Certainly, it did not suit Cardew.

"Look here, that's not good enough," said Cardew, after a pause.

Lee laughed.

"I hope I shall not have to conclude that you are a funk, my dear man!" he said, parodying Cardew's words.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Cardew set his lips.

"Lead on!" he said grimly. "I'll fight you outside the Head's study if you choose—or inside it!"

"Cardew—" urged Clive.

"Rats! Get on with it, Lee."

"Follow on!" said Angelo cheerfully; and he walked down Masters' Corridor, with Ralph Reckness Cardew at his heels.

Levison and Clive followed their chum, feeling extremely uneasy, and a score of fellows followed on. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther came up with a run, to join the crowd, and Blake and Herries and Digby arrived, and Wally of the Third; with Manners minor and Levison minor. Seldom or never had the sacred precincts of Masters' Corridor been invaded by such a mob of the Lower School.

Angelo stopped outside the door of Mr. Lathom's study. The master of the Fourth had retired to his study after class, as the new junior was aware.

Doubtless, he desired a little repose and quiet after his labours in the instruction of the Fourth Form. His desire was not likely to be gratified, in the circumstances.

Angelo faced the dandy of the Fourth, smiling. Cardew's face was hard and grim; but he did not think of backing out. He was landed in trouble, and he knew it; but he was going through with it.

"Ready?" asked Cardew, between his set teeth.

"Quite!"

"Go it, ye cripples!" said Blake of the Fourth. "Get in as much as you can before Lathom comes out and massacres you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quiet!" said Monty Lowther. "Lathom will come out before the circus begins, if he hears us."

"Go it, you chaps!"

Angelo stood with his back to Mr. Lathom's door, scarce a foot from the oak. It was obviously his intention to give the Form master no choice about hearing the disturbance. Cardew advanced upon him, his cuffs pushed back, his hands up. It was quite impossible that time should be allowed for a fight to a finish. Mr. Lathom was certain to emerge in a state of amazement and wrath. As Cardew was "for it," he wanted to give Lee as much as he could before they were interrupted.

In the midst of a breathless silence, Cardew attacked the new fellow, hard and fast.

Crash!

Lee went backwards under the attack, and came into violent collision with Mr. Lathom's door.

"That does it!" murmured Tom Merry, as there was a startled exclamation within the Form master's study.

Angelo came forward, without falling, however, and closed with the dandy of the Fourth.

"Break away!" exclaimed Herries.

But the two juniors did not break loose; they closed and struggled, and it was easy to see that Angelo was whirling Cardew intentionally towards the study door. It was easy to see, also, that he was the stronger of the two, and able to carry out his intention.

Crash!

This time the two juniors came together against the study door, and rolled on the floor close to it, still struggling.

And as they rolled and struggled on the floor, packets of cigarettes fairly rained from Lee's pockets. The flimsy cardboard packages broke and crumpled as the juniors rolled and trampled over them, and cigarettes were shed on all sides. The juniors gazed on, almost spellbound. They understood Angelo's little game now. That struggle outside the Form master's door was to force Mr. Lathom to come on the scene and discover him in possession of the forbidden smokes—revealed, as it were, by accident. That was why he was struggling with Cardew in Masters' Corridor, and that was why he was turning the fight into a wild-cat wrestle on the floor.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Here comes the beak!" said Digby.

Mr. Lathom's door opened.

The crowd of juniors backed away across the broad corridor; but at the feet of the astonished Form master Lee and Cardew struggled, in a sea of cigarettes, whole and broken.

"Bless my soul!" stuttered Mr. Lathom.

He blinked at the two juniors, and at the scores of cigarettes, in utter amazement. Another door opened farther along the corridor, and Mr. Selby, the master of the Third Form, looked out, with a sour face.

"What is this disturbance?" exclaimed Mr. Selby.

"Bless my soul! Cease this at once!" exclaimed Mr. Lathom.

Cardew and Lee separated, and rose to their feet, panting. Cardew was crimson with anger and exertion, and his elegant clothes were rumpled and dusty. Mr. Selby stepped out of his study.

"What is this crowd doing here?" he demanded. "Go away at once—disperse all of you! Mr. Lathom, I am astonished that boys of your Form should quarrel and fight in this corridor. I am astonished that you should allow it, sir!"

Mr. Lathom reddened with mortification.

"Really, Mr. Selby—"

"A disgraceful scene, sir!" exclaimed the master of the Third. "Disgraceful! Were these boys in my Form they would be dealt with, with the utmost severity!"

"They will be dealt with very severely, Mr. Selby!" answered the Fourth Form master tartly. "You may safely leave that to me."

"I trust so, sir!" snapped Mr. Selby. "I trust so, indeed!" And the master of the Third went back into his study, and closed the door with a bang.

"Lee! Cardew!" Mr. Lathom's voice trembled with anger. "You have dared to fight in Masters' Corridor—you have dared—"

"My fault, sir," said Angelo.

"And mine!" said Cardew disdainfully. Ralph Reckness Cardew was not the fellow to take a favour.

"You are equally to blame," said Mr. Lathom sternly, "so far as this disgraceful disturbance is concerned. With regard

to the cigarettes dropped by one of you, that is a still more serious matter, especially after what occurred in the Form room this afternoon. I shall deal first with you, Lee! Step into my study. You will wait, Cardew!"

"Very well, sir," said Cardew.

Lee followed the Form master into the study.

Mr. Lathom picked up a cane and pointed to a chair.

Angelo hesitated.

"You—you do not intend to report me to the Head, sir?"

"I do not, Lee. I intend to cane you severely."

"If you please, sir—"

"Bend over that chair at once, Lee! If you utter another word, I shall give you double the number of strokes." Angelo did not utter another word.

Undoubtedly he wanted to be reported to the Head as a shady and doubtful character. But he did not want twelve strokes with the cane instead of six. He did not want any, in fact.

But he had to take six.

The six were well laid on, and the strokes rang like pistol-shots, and the fellows outside looked at one another as they listened.

It was but seldom that Mr. Lathom inflicted severe punishment. But he was deeply angry now, and undoubtedly Mr. Selby's glib tongue had given a sharper edge to his temper. Lee was fairly wriggling when the last of the six had descended upon him.

"You may go!" snapped Mr. Lathom.

Angelo gasped for breath.

"But the cigarettes, sir?"

"That matter does not concern you, Lee. Go!"

"But, sir—"

"Go!" thundered Mr. Lathom, and he added to the effect of his command by laying the cane across Lee's shoulders.

Angelo went promptly enough then.

Mr. Lathom followed him into the corridor, and frowned at the juniors still lingering there.

"All of you go away at once!" he snapped. "Excepting Cardew! Cardew, you will follow me to your Housemaster's study. Your offence is so serious that I prefer Mr. Railton to deal with it."

Cardew raised his eyebrows.

"Really, sir—" he began.

"Your conduct, Cardew, is absolutely disgraceful!" said Mr. Lathom. "Only this afternoon I caned you for having cigarettes in your possession. Already you have obtained a fresh supply—a large supply—of these pernicious things, and you have scattered them at my very doorway in your struggling with Lee. I take this, Cardew, as a deliberate defiance of authority, and your Housemaster will deal with it!"

Cardew stood rooted to the floor.

"Great gad!" he gasped.

"Follow me!" thundered Mr. Lathom.

"But, sir—"

"Come!"

Mr. Lathom grasped the dandy of the Fourth by the shoulder, and marched him away to the Housemaster's study. Cardew shrugged his shoulders, and went without another word. Tom Merry & Co. stared after them blankly.

They understood Mr. Lathom's mistake.

After the incident in the Form-room Cardew and cigarettes were indissolubly connected in his mind. It did not even occur to him that the shower of cigarettes on the floor had been dropped there by Angelo. He took it for granted that they had been scattered by Cardew in the struggle, accidentally, of course. It was no wonder that he was deeply incensed. His face was grim and angry as he marched the dandy of the Fourth away, under the astonished eyes of the juniors.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "He thinks—"

"It's too rotten!" exclaimed Clive. "He thinks Cardew dropped all those filthy smokes there—"

"Ha, ha, ha! What was he to think?" chuckled Blake. "Cardew's a dog with a bad name now, you know."

"It's his own fault," grinned Julian.

"Anyhow, he can explain to Railton," said Manners.

Levison of the Fourth shook his head.

"He won't!" he said. "He won't say a word."

"Then he's for it!"

In spite of Mr. Lathom's order to disperse, the crowd of juniors followed on to Mr. Railton's study, intensely curious to know what would happen there. Angelo was gone; he had departed immediately after his licking. But all the other fellows gathered round Mr. Railton's door, and listened for the swish of the Housemaster's cane.

They soon heard it.

For a few moments they caught the sound of Mr. Lathom's excited voice, reporting the delinquencies—real and supposed—of the dandy of the Fourth. The swish of the cane followed.

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"Six!" said Baggy Trimble, when half a dozen strokes had been counted.

But the swishing went on.

"My hat! Railton is putting his beef into it!" murmured Blake.

Not a sound was heard from Cardew. Twelve strokes in all were counted by the listening juniors; but no sound came from the dandy of the Fourth. He was taking his medicine in grim silence.

The swishing ceased at last.

The study door opened, and Cardew came out. He walked steadily, but his face was white.

The juniors looked at him. Levison and Clive closed in on either side of their chum, took his arms, and walked him away. And then the crowd of juniors dispersed.

CHAPTER 4.

Gussy Butts In!

"BATES, deah boy, where is Lee?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came into Study No. 3 in the Fourth Form passage and asked that question.

Bates of the Fourth was there, but there was no sign of his study-mate.

Bates shook his head.

"Not knowing, can't say," he answered. "Getting over his licking somewhere, I suppose. He had six from Lathom, you know."

"Yaas, wathah! And Cardew had twelve, owin' to Mr. Lathom makin' another mistake," said Arthur Augustus. "It was weally wathah wuff on Cardew; but perhaps he deserves it for bein' a smoky ass. Lee would have got the dozen if Mr. Wailton had known that the cigarettes were his. I want to see Lee vevy particularly."

"More than I do," said Bates. "I'm fed up with him and the stuff he brings into the study. He wants the beaks to suspect him, and search the study, I believe. I know he's got a box of cigars locked up in his desk, all ready for them to find—he jolly well hasn't smoked any, I know that. And look at that paper he's left on the table to catch anybody's eye that comes in."

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus looked at the paper. It was a pink paper, and the title of it was "Sporting Tips." D'Arcy gazed at it. Such a paper, in the possession of any St. Jim's fellow, junior or senior, was a very serious matter indeed. It hinted at horse-racing, dealing with bookies, backing horses, gambling, and disreputable acquaintances outside the school. Certainly, Lee had been guilty of none of those things; he was a thoroughly clean and wholesome fellow. But that was the impression that the discovery of such a paper in his study would have given; and that, undoubtedly, was the impression that Angelo desired to give, in his peculiar campaign to earn the "sack" from the school.

Arthur Augustus frowned darkly.

Since the punching of his noble nose by the ungrateful Angelo the swell of St. Jim's had given up the idea of looking after Lee—though he felt that that was a difficult matter to explain to Cousin Ethel. But he had resolved upon a heart-to-heart talk with the wayward Angelo, hoping thus to bring him to realise the error of his ways. The sight of "Sporting Tips" made it clear that Angelo was in need of sage advice from a fellow of tact and judgment.

"The awful ass!" said Arthur Augustus. "Keepin' on like this, he will vevy likely get sacked frowm St. Jim's."

"That's what he wants," said Bates.

"Yaas; but he does not appear to realise the frightful disgwace he is incurwin'," said D'Arcy. "What will his patah think if he is kicked out of the school for bad conduct?"

"Lee doesn't seem to have considered that. I fancy his pater will give him a jolly good hiding if he goes home in disgrace," said Bates, with a grin. "I know I would if I were his pater."

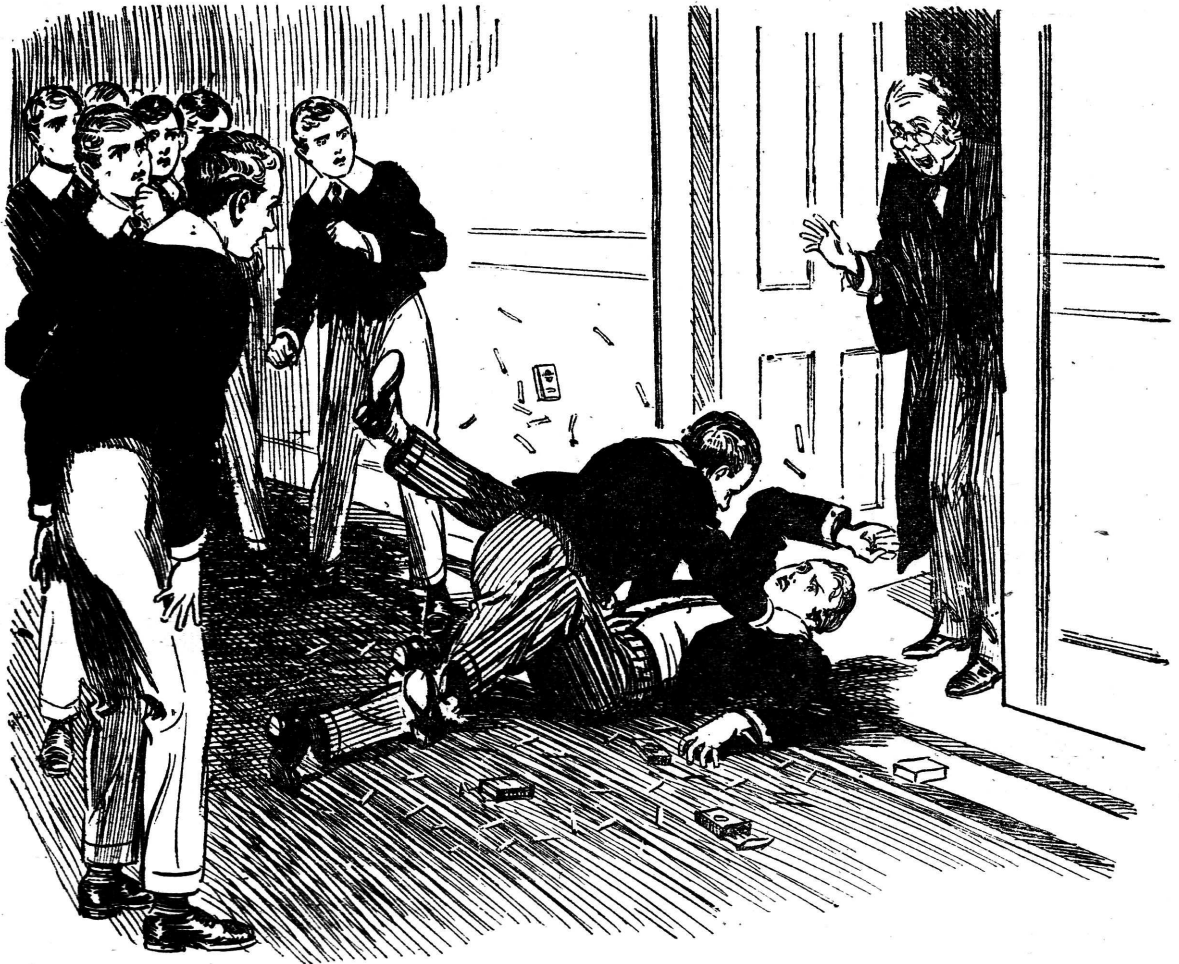
"Yaas; but that wouldn't wipe out the disgwace," said D'Arcy. "It is cleah that Lee does not realise what he is doin'."

"Lot he cares!" grunted Bates.

"Well, I think he would care if he realised that his conduct is vevy wotten," said D'Arcy. "He is quite a good chap, only he is pottay on takin' up flyin' stunts with his Cousin Petah. He thinks of that to the exclusion of evewythin' else, you see. I am goin' to speak to him vevy sewiously, and point out to him that it will not do. I will take away this papah."

"He tipped a man to bring it to him, on purpose to leave it around in the study," grinned Bates.

"I shall take care that it is not left around," said Arthur Augustus. "I twust I shall make him realise that he is goin' on in a vevy wotten way, and he will agree to burn this papah and dwop the whole thing."



Mr. Lathom's door suddenly opened, and the crowd of juniors backed away across the broad corridor. But at the feet of the astonished Form-master Lee and Cardew struggled, in a sea of cigarettes, whole and broken. "Bless my soul!" stuttered Mr. Lathom. He blinked at the two juniors, and at the scattered cigarettes, in utter amazement. (See Chapter 3.)

"Not likely!"
 "I shall twy, at least. You are suah you do not know where he is?"
 "Quite—and don't want to!" yawned Bates. Evidently Harold Bates, of the Fourth, was not deeply concerned about his study-mate.
 Arthur Augustus left the study, tucking "Sporting Tips" under his jacket. He did not want to be seen in possession of literature of that kind.
 "Have you seen Lee, Twimble?" he asked, as he came upon the fat junior on the stairs.
 Twimble grinned.
 "Yes—he's in the quad—wriggling like anything! I say, Lathom laid it on, didn't he? He, he, he!" Baggy chuckled. "I say, I've told him about Cardew getting double-six on account of his cigarettes. He, he, he! He says he will punch Cardew's head for keeping on butting in like this! He, he, he!"
 "Pway tell me where to find him, Twimble."
 "I saw him squirming under the elms near the tuckshop."
 "Thank you, Twimble."
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy walked out of the House and crossed the quadrangle. The dusk was closing on, and most fellows who were out of doors were making for the Houses. Some were coming away from Mrs. Taggles' little tuckshop with supplies for tea in the studies. Arthur Augustus, with the aid of his celebrated eyeglass, spotted Angelo Lee, leaning on a tree at a little distance from the school shop.
 Angelo gave him a far from welcoming look as he came up.
 Angelo was in an irritated frame of mind.
 His little scheme with the cigarettes had been tried twice on Mr. Lathom, and each time it had failed, the hapless Cardew coming in for the results. Instead of being reported to the Head as a secret smoker, with a search of his study

to follow for further evidence of misdeeds, Angelo had been caned for fighting in Masters' Corridor—merely that and nothing more. He was as far as ever from getting on with his scheme, and he was annoyed. He had no sympathy to waste on Cardew; he needed it all for himself. And he frowned at Arthur Augustus. But for the intervention of that well-meaning youth on an earlier occasion, he would have been gone from St. Jim's already. It really seemed to the junior who wanted to be sacked that the stars, in their courses, were fighting against the sack for him.
 Other fellows, like Racke of the Shell and Clampe of the New House, had been in danger of the sack, and strove their hardest to keep out of such peril. Angelo, who wanted it, couldn't get it, howsoever hard he tried. Really, it was annoying.
 "I've been lookin' for you, Lee!" said D'Arcy.
 "Don't!"
 "I am goin' to speak to you vewy seriously, Lee."
 "Chuck it!"
 "My opinion is, deah boy, that you do not wealise that you are actin' in a wotten, and indeed caddish and disgraceful mannah," went on the swell of St. Jim's cheerily.
 "That is what I am goin' to point out to you, Lee."
 Angelo's eyes gleamed.
 Whether he was quite satisfied with his peculiar scheme or not, certainly he did not regard it in the terms mentioned by Arthur Augustus. His opinion was very far from that.
 "You silly, cheeky ass!" he exclaimed.
 "Weally, Lee—"
 "Can't you mind your own business?" demanded Lee angrily. "Do you want me to punch your silly nose again?"
 Arthur Augustus breathed hard and deep.
 "It seems that you and Tom Merry and Figgins promised Ethel Cleveland to look after me here," growled Angelo.
 "I dare say Miss Cleveland meant well—my sister, at her school, seems to have asked her to speak to her friends here about me. I dare say it was kind of her—but I don't want

you butting in, and I tell you so plainly! I want you to shut up and chuck it, see? Is that plain enough English?"

"Yaas, wathah! But have you considahed—"

"Chuck it, I tell you!"

"Considah your fathah's feelin's—"

"I'm waiting for the pater to consider mine," growled Lee. "I'm going to be an airman, and he thinks it's dangerous. Poof! Of course it's dangerous—and what does that matter? I'm not going to be mollycoddled. My pater will have to swallow it when I'm turned out of here. Anyhow, it's no bizney of yours. Chuck it!"

"You are actin' vevy badly, Lee! I have found this wascally publication in your studay!" said Arthur Augustus, taking "Sporting Tips" out from under his jacket and holding it up to Lee's inspection.

Lee stared at it.

"You cheeky ass!" he exclaimed. "Can't you leave my property alone?"

"You have no wight to such pwopahty," said D'Arcy firmly. "I twust that you will burn this wascally wacin' papah, Lec."

"I shall do nothing of the kind, you dummy! Give it to me."

"I wefuse to give it to you, Lee. If you will not destwoy it I shall destwoy it personally."

"You want another punch on the nose?" said Lee. "I warn you that you'll get it if you keep on butting in. Go and eat coke!"

And Angelo tramped away under the trees, turning his back unceremoniously on the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus was left staring after him, holding the pink paper in his hand. His noble eye gleamed through his eyeglass. He had sought out Lee for a heart-to-heart talk with that erring youth, for his own good; but he was strongly tempted to change the programme, and give Angelo a terrific thrashing instead.

As he stood staring after Angelo's disappearing figure, a heavy hand dropped on his shoulder.

"You young rascal!" said the voice of Kildare of the Sixth.

D'Arcy spun round.

"Weally, Kildare—"

The captain of St. Jim's, coming away from the school shop, was passing quite close to Arthur Augustus, when he spotted the pink paper in his hand. He frowned at the swell of the Fourth grimly.

"What do you mean by it?" he demanded.

"Eh?"

Kildare had his official ashplant under his arm. He let it slip down into his hand.

"I'm sorry to see this, D'Arcy," he said. "Give me that paper at once."

Arthur Augustus handed the sporting paper over. Gussy's noble brain did not always work quickly; and he did not catch on, as yet, to the St. Jim's captain's natural misapprehension.

"I can't believe that you go in for this sort of thing, D'Arcy," said Kildare. "I've always thought you a decent enough kid."

"Gweat Scott!"

Arthur Augustus jumped almost clear of the ground.

He understood now.

"I suppose it is simply folly on your part," said Kildare. "But whatever may be your reason, you've got to learn that a St. Jim's fellow mustn't bring muck like this into the school. Bend over!"

"Weally, Kildare—" gasped D'Arcy.

"Bend over!" snapped Kildare.

"But I—I—pwotest! I—I—" stuttered Arthur Augustus incoherently.

"I'm going to give you two!" said Kildare. "If you keep me waiting another second I'll make it six. Bend over!"

"Oh cwumbs!"

The hapless Arthur Augustus bent over.

Whack! Whack!

"Ow! Oh deah! Wow!"

"Let that be a warning to you," said Kildare. And he tucked the ashplant under his arm again and walked away towards the House.

Arthur Augustus gazed after him with feelings too deep for words.

CHAPTER 5. The Limit!

"G IN!"

"Gin!"

"Impossible!"

"I saw it!" hooted Baggy Trimble.

It was the following day; and Baggy Trimble, who made it a point always to know the latest thing, was relating the

very last item of news to a crowd of incredulous juniors in the quad.

"Gammon!" said Figgins of the New House. "Lee's a silly ass, but he's not that sort. Chuck it, Trimble!"

"I saw it with my own eyes!" hooted Baggy.

"You couldn't have seen it with anybody else's!" remarked Kerr. "And I imagine that you didn't see it with your own. Can it!"

"Lee had the bottle under his jacket—"

"Rats!" said Blake.

"I saw it as he passed me in the Fourth Form passage—just a glimpse," said Baggy. "He whipped it out of sight fast enough; but I saw it. It was a bottle of gin."

"Bosh!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah! I am weally shocked at you, Twimble, makin' up whoppin' yarns like this!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy severely.

"I tell you—"

"Gammon!"

Baggy Trimble was crimson with wrath.

He had a startling item of news—an item with which, like the Fat Boy in Pickwick, he had expected to make the fellows' flesh creep. And instead of allowing their flesh to creep, the fellows only laughed and derided him. Not one fellow believed Baggy's statement.

Certainly the news, if true, was serious enough. But the plainest proof would have been required before anybody would have believed that a St. Jim's fellow had introduced intoxicating liquor into the school. Even a rank outsider like Racke of the Shell would never have dreamed of doing that. Baggy had expected to make the fellows jump with the news of that bottle of gin. Nobody jumped.

"I tell you it's true," asserted Baggy. "Lee had the bottle of gin under his jacket—"

"Rats!"

"Rubbish!"

"Chuck it!"

"He cut into his study with it," asserted Baggy, "and it's jolly well there still. I looked in after him and saw him locking it up in his desk."

"Pile it on!" said Blake.

Bates of the Fourth looked very thoughtful.

"I say, though, Lee has got a lot of muck in the study," he said. "I know he's got a box of cigars. Not to smoke, you know, but to make the Housemaster jump, if he can get Railton into searching his study somehow. I—I wonder if he's idiot enough to put in a bottle of booze, too. It would mean the sack, short and sharp, if it were found there."

"Bai Jove! That's so," said D'Arcy.

"Where would he get it?" said Tom Merry, shaking his head. "A St. Jim's kid can't walk into a wine and spirit merchant's and buy a bottle of gin. It's all gammon!"

"Here he is," said Figgins. "Let's ask him."

Angelo Lee came sauntering along towards the group, with his hands in his pockets.

Lee's face had a rather damaged look. The previous evening Cardew of the Fourth had called him to account, and there had been a scrap, and both the juniors bore signs of the trouble. Angelo was looking quite good-tempered and cheery, however, in spite of a swollen nose.

"Lee!" bawled Trimble. "I've told the fellows what you were taking into your study. Isn't it true?"

"That depends," said Lee. "If you've seen something that doesn't concern you, Trimble, you ought to hold your tongue about it!"

Tom Merry looked at the new junior.

"That's all rot!" he said. "If you've really got what Trimble says, you've got it for a fatheaded stunt, and you let Trimble see it on purpose, to get it talked of."

"Oh!" ejaculated Trimble.

"Bai Jove! That is vevy pwob," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Twimble can always be welied upon to tattle anythin' all ovah the school."

"Look here, you know—"

"Whatever your game is, Lee, you're a rotter if you've really brought a bottle of gin into the school," said George Figgins, with a scornful glance at the new junior.

"Dear me!" said Angelo.

"It's gammon!" said Monty Lowther.

"I tell you he's got it!" roared Baggy Trimble. "I tell you I saw him with a bottle of gin—"

"Shush!" exclaimed Blake. "There's Knox."

Baggy Trimble broke off suddenly. Knox of the Sixth was coming along the path, and the juniors wondered whether he had heard. Knox of the Sixth was a prefect, and he had already had trouble with Angelo. That Knox had heard Trimble's incautious words was soon clear. He came directly towards the group, a grim look on his face.

"What's that, Trimble?" he rapped out.

"Oh, n-nothing, Knox!" stammered Baggy.

"Were you speaking of Lee?"

"I—I—I—"

Knox turned to Angelo.

"Lee, is there any truth in what Trimble was saying?"

"There very seldom is," said Angelo calmly. "I haven't been long at St. Jim's, but I've been here long enough to notice that Trimble and truth are very distant acquaintances."

Some of the juniors grinned. Knox frowned.

"I don't want any cheek from you!" said Knox. "I know you're an insubordinate young rascal, and I shouldn't be surprised if there's something in this. Answer my question."

"I've nothing to say."

"Very well; I shall take you to the Housemaster," said the prefect. "Follow me."

"Pleased!" said Angelo.

He followed Knox into the School House.

"Bai Jove! There can't weally be anythin' in it, you fellows," said Arthur Augustus, with a deep breath. "Lee wouldn't be such an uttah blackguard, you know."

"Goodness knows what he might do," said Tom Merry. "If it wasn't true he could have denied it."

"Yaas, watah! But—"

"If he's got the muck in his study, it's only a stunt, of course. But Mr. Railton won't know that."

"I don't see how you know it, either," sneered Racke of the Shell. "If he's got it, he's got it to drink, of course."

"Wubbish, Wacke!"

"My opinion is that he's an absolute rotter!" said Racke. "That's wot, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "If he were an absolute wottah, he would have made friends with you."

"What?"

"Birds of a feathah flock togetah, you know," said Arthur Augustus innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors, greatly entertained by the expression on Aubrey Racke's face.

"But, as a mattah of fact, Lee has given you a wide berth, Wacke," said Arthur Augustus. "I know he has wufused to entah your studay at all. He will have nothin' to do with you, or Cwooke, or Clampe. So he cannot be an absolute wottah, as you suggest, Wacke."

"You cheeky idiot!" roared Racke.

"Weally, Wacke—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's follow on and see what happens," said Blake; and that suggestion was unanimously adopted. A crowd of fellows poured into the House, in time to see Mr. Railton emerge from his study, with Knox of the Sixth and Lee of the Fourth.

The Housemaster's face was very stern.

Evidently he had been greatly surprised and shocked by the extraordinary information the prefect had imparted.

There were black sheep at St. Jim's, as everywhere else; but this, if true, was the limit—it was absolutely unheard-of. Certainly, if Angelo had brought a bottle of intoxicating liquor into the House, and locked it in his desk, he was booked for the "long jump" without delay—his desire to leave St. Jim's was certain to be gratified on the spot.

Mr. Railton ascended the big staircase, followed by Knox and Angelo. This obviously meant that Lee's study was to be searched.

Tom Merry & Co. followed on to the Fourth Form passage, and gathered in a crowd outside Study No. 3.

Mr. Railton glanced round the room.

"Is that your desk, Lee?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is it locked?"

"I keep it locked, sir."

"Unlook it at once."

Angelo hesitated.

There was a breathless hush among the juniors. Mr. Railton's brow grew grimmer and sterner.

"You hear me, Lee?" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir. But—"

"You have not lost your key, I presume?"

"No, sir; but—"

"Then unlock the desk immediately!"

"I object to doing so, sir," said Angelo.

"You object to carrying out an order given you by your Housemaster?" exclaimed Mr. Railton in a terrifying voice.

"Yes, sir; I object and protest," said Lee.

"Upon my word!"

The juniors in the passage looked at one another. Angelo's objection could convey only one meaning to their minds—that he was guilty, and that he dreaded discovery.

Not that his objection was likely to count for anything against the authority of the Housemaster.

"Knox," said Mr. Railton, "kindly take the key from Lee, and open the desk."

"Certainly, sir," said Knox.

He grasped Angelo far from gently. Knox had not for-

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gotten how the new junior had punched him in his study. Angelo had received a prefect's beating for that exploit; but a dozen beatings would not have been enough, in the opinion of Knox of the Sixth.

With a rough hand, Knox went through Angelo's pockets, grinding his knuckles into the junior's neck, as he seemed disposed to resist.

A bunch of keys was soon produced.

"Is the key on that bunch, Lee?" snapped the Housemaster.

Angelo made no answer.

"Try the keys on the desk, Knox."

Knox released Angelo, and stepped towards the desk. With a sudden spring and a snatch, Angelo grabbed the bunch from him and threw it out of the study window.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus in the passage.

Mr. Railton seemed petrified, for a moment, by Angelo's action.

"Lee!" he gasped. "How—how dare you?"

"I object to my desk being searched," said Angelo.

"You young rascal!" exclaimed Knox.

"Knox, kindly obtain some implement, and force the desk open," said Mr. Railton.

There was a tool-chest, belonging to Bates, in the study. Knox opened it, and selected a chisel and a hammer. In a few minutes Angelo's desk was forced open.

Mr. Railton looked into it.

One glance was enough.

There, under his startled and horrified eyes, lay a bottle full of pale fluid labelled "Best Gin," and beside it lay a box of cigars.

CHAPTER 6.

Not According to Programme!

MR. RAILTON stared, and stared again, as if unable to believe his eyes.

Indeed, he scarcely could believe them.

Angelo's unwillingness to open the desk had disposed him to suspect the worst. Yet the discovery was simply staggering.

The Housemaster picked up the bottle with one hand, the cigar-box with the other. The bottle was three-parts full of liquid, and there were a dozen cigars in the box. All the fellows crowded outside the open doorway could see them.

Foolish and reckless fellows had sometimes been found with cigarettes in their possession. But cigars were quite unknown in St. Jim's studies. As for the gin bottle, the discovery of a Gorgon's head could scarcely have caused more horror and surprise.

Mr. Railton fixed his scornful eyes on Angelo.

"These—these articles belong to you, Lee?" he said.

"You've found them in my desk, sir," said Angelo with an air of sullenness.

"Do you admit that they belong to you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I can only conclude, Lee, that you are a boy of depraved character, and that Dr. Holmes was deceived when he allowed you to enter this school!" said Mr. Railton.

Angelo winced.

He wanted to leave St. Jim's, and he was prepared to incur disgrace to accomplish his object. But the scorn and contempt in the Housemaster's face cut him deeply.

The colour came into his cheeks, and he did not answer. He stood with his eyes on the floor.

"I shall take these—these articles to the headmaster, and you will follow me, Lee," said Mr. Railton. "I am very well aware that it is your desire to leave the school. I can assure you now that your desire will be gratified. A boy of your character cannot be allowed to remain here a single hour. I greatly fear that you may have exercised, already, a corrupting influence upon better boys."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Angelo.

"Bates! Step into the study, Bates."

Bates of the Fourth detached himself from the crowd in the passage, and entered Study No. 3. His manner was extremely uneasy. As Angelo's study-mate, there was a possibility of his being suspected of having shared in the new junior's rascality.

"Bates, do you know anything of this?" demanded the Housemaster.

"Not the—the booze, sir!" stammered Bates.

"The what?" ejaculated Mr. Railton.

"I—I mean the gin, sir!" stammered Bates. "I never knew about that till Trimble mentioned it, and then I didn't swallow it—I mean, I didn't believe it!"

"Am I to understand that you knew that Lee had cigars locked up in his desk?"

Bates wriggled uncomfortably.

"I—I couldn't help seeing him lock the box up there, sir, could I, as I was in the study?" he gasped.

"Your position was, I grant, a difficult one, as a school-boy's sense of honour would keep you from betraying this young scoundrel to those in authority," said the Housemaster. "But you should have spoken to your junior House captain, Merry of the Shell, on the subject. Now, however, that the discovery is made, you can speak freely to me. Has Lee ever attempted to induce you to join in his base proceedings?"

"Oh!" gasped Bates. "No, sir!"

"I am glad to hear that, at all events. You were aware that he was addicted to smoking cigars?"

"No, sir. He never smoked any, that I know of."

"Take care, Bates. He can scarcely have been addicted to these habits without your knowledge, as he shares your study."

Bates, in spite of his alarm and uneasiness, grinned faintly.

"Bates!" thundered Mr. Railton. "You are laughing, sir! Is this a laughing matter?"

"Oh, sir! No, sir!" spluttered Bates. "Not at all, sir! Oh dear!"

"What do you mean, then?"

"It was a dodge, sir," said Bates. "Lee never smoked cigars. I don't believe he could, without being sick, and I've never seen him sick. He had that box of cigars here to be found!"

"To be found?" repeated the Housemaster blankly.

"Yes, sir. He wanted his study to be searched, and the cigars found. All the fellows knew it was a dodge to get turned out of the school."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Railton.

A change came over the Housemaster's face. He gave Lee a very penetrating look, and Angelo kept his eyes on the floor.

"Merry!"

"Yes, sir," said Tom.

"As junior House captain, you should know something of this boy Lee. Are you aware that he was addicted to such habits as drinking and smoking?"

"Certainly not, sir!" said Tom. "I know he doesn't smoke, and I'm quite sure that he doesn't drink."

"You see what I have found in his desk, Merry?"

"It's a stunt, sir."

"What?"

"I mean a dodge—a trick, sir," said Tom. "It's jolly thick, I know, but it's only a trick to get sent away from the school, I'm sure of that. He's never tasted what is in that bottle."

Angelo looked up.

"That isn't true!" he said.

"What?" exclaimed the Housemaster. "Do you say,

Lee, that you have actually consumed part of the contents of this bottle? Do you confess it?"

"Lots of times, sir!" said Angelo. "I've drunk some every day since I've been at the school, and sometimes three or four times a day!"

Tom Merry stared at him.

"Well, that's news to me," he said, "and I don't believe it now!"

"It's true!" said Lee.

"Utah wot!" came Arthur Augustus' voice from the passage.

Mr. Railton looked at Tom Merry, and then looked very hard at Lee. His suspicions were deeply aroused now, but in a new direction. He removed the cork from the gin bottle, and sniffed at it. An aroma of gin hung round the bottle, but it was a very faint aroma. Mr. Railton tilted the bottle, and poured a little of the contents into the palm of his hand and tasted it. The juniors watched him breathlessly.

"Water!" said Mr. Railton very quietly.

There was a buzz.

Angelo's face was a study.

"Watah!" repeated Arthur Augustus. "Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that, you fellows!"

"Well, this takes the cake!" murmured Figgins. And there was a chuckle in the passage.

"Lee," said Mr. Railton in a deep voice, "you stated that you had drunk what this bottle contains, knowing it to be harmless water."

No reply.

"You intended me to believe, however, that it was an intoxicating liquor, and to report so to the headmaster."

Still no reply.

"Where did you obtain this bottle, Lee, which you have filled with water for a purpose of deception?"

Angelo gave a grunt.

"I sorted it out of a dustbin, sir," he answered. "I suppose I may as well own up now."

Mr. Railton set his lips. He had been tricked and deceived, and his ire was deep. At the same time he was greatly relieved to find that this remarkable affair was only a piece of trickery, and not a startling case of juvenile depravity.

"So the whole affair is a trick?" he said. "You bought these cigars and you placed them with this old gin-bottle in your desk, in order to deceive me and deceive your headmaster, Lee?"

"Not exactly that, sir," said Angelo. "I wanted to be sent away from St. Jim's, and I thought—"

"You were willing to incur indelible disgrace for that purpose?"

Angelo wriggled uncomfortably.

"For your own sake, and the sake of your people, Lee, I am glad that your impudent trickery has been revealed," said Mr. Railton. "You will not be judged guilty of depraved habits, Lee, and expelled. You will be punished with the utmost severity for attempting to deceive your Housemaster. I shall administer, sir, such a flogging as I hope will be a warning to you for the future to refrain from such trickery. Follow me to my study, Lee!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Angelo.

Mr. Railton left the study, and Angelo limped after him dispiritedly.

Once more he had failed.

This time he had been very close to success—indeed, had Mr. Railton been a little less keen-witted, Angelo could not have failed to be expelled from the school in utter ignominy. The ignominy he did not seem to mind, so long as he was expelled. But he had failed; and, instead of what he wanted, he was to receive what he most assuredly did not want—a flogging from his Housemaster.

In the lowest of spirits Angelo limped after the Housemaster, leaving the juniors grinning.

What followed was painful—for Angelo.

In the Housemaster's study he received a severe lecture upon his reckless and insubordinate conduct—which he could have borne with equanimity had it been all. But that was not all.

The flogging followed.

It was said of old that he who spares the rod spoils the child. Mr. Railton did not run the risk of spoiling Angelo.

By the time he was finished the junior who wanted to be sacked was feeling as if life was scarcely worth living.

He crawled away from Mr. Railton's study gasping.

And for hours afterwards, as Lee squirmed and wriggled in Study No. 3, fellows passing that study could hear his voice in a continuous series of such remarks as, "Ow! Wow! Wow! Yow!" And the fellows grinned as they heard him, and wondered what Angelo's next move would be—and whether, after this painful experience, there would be a "next."



Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was left holding the "Sporting Tips" in his hand. As he stood staring after Angelo's disappearing figure, a heavy hand dropped on his shoulder. "You young rascal!" said the voice of Kildare. The captain of the school, coming away from the school shop, had spotted the pink paper in D'Arcy's hand. He frowned at the swell of the Fourth grimly. "What do you mean by it?" he demanded. (See Chapter 4.)

CHAPTER 7. Bolted!

ON Wednesday afternoon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gave a final touch to his tie before the glass in Study No. 6—the final touch of many. Arthur Augustus was particular in these little matters, especially on such an occasion as the present. Cousin Ethel was coming down to the school that afternoon, and any day when Ethel came was a day worthy to be marked with a white stone, as it were. And Ethel Cleveland was to be met at the station by her Cousin Arthur and some of his friends—and Arthur Augustus had many friends, and, indeed, on such an occasion as this their name was legion. D'Arcy could have taken half the Lower School with him if he had liked, but doubtless Cousin Ethel would have been a little surprised to be greeted by such an army. But Blake was going, and Tom Merry and Figgins of the New House. And Arthur Augustus, who was always a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, was looking his very noblest now, though it was not yet time to start. He turned from the glass, satisfied that his tie was now at the pitch of perfection.

"Fifteen minutes!" said Blake, looking at his watch.

"Eh?"

"I've been timing you!" explained Blake. "It's taken you fifteen minutes to do that tie."

Herries and Digby chuckled.

"Wats!" said Arthur Augustus. "A fellow wants to look decently dressed, you know. You are wathah careless in such mattahs, Blake; and Hewwies is vewy careless, and Dig wathah a wuffian in mattahs of clobber. It is left to me to keep up the reputation of the studay. But I say, I have been thinkin' while I was tyin' that tie."

"Draw it mild!"

"Weally, Blake——" Arthur Augustus groped for his eyeglass and turned back to the mirror to stick it into his eye with the necessary exactitude. "That's all wight! About Lee——"

"Give Lee a rest!" suggested Blake.

"I was thinkin' of takin' him along," said Arthur Augustus. "It would be wathah a tweek for him, you know; and perhaps Cousin Ethel would like to see him, as she is so chummy with his sistah. Lee is not gated now, and he could come. Moreovah——"

"Good word!" agreed Blake.

"Moreovah," continued Arthur Augustus, "it will keep him out of mischief."

"I should think the floggin' he had yesterday would do that, for some time at least!" grinned Blake.

"I feah, Blake, that he has got ovah the floggin', and is already thinkin' out some new stunt for gettin' away from St. Jim's. Bates says he was sayin' somethin' about wunnin' away ffrom school."

"Silly ass!" commented Herries.

"Yaas, wathah! But as Ethel is comin' I would like to keep him out of twouble till aftah her visit. I shall explain to Ethel that it is weally impos to look aftah a pottay ass like Lee, and she will welease me ffrom my pwomise to do so. I think I will take him along."

"Rather a crowd, five fellows," said Blake.

"Well, Ethel said that possibly she might bwing a school fwied of hers with her if it could be awwanged," said D'Arcy. "If there are two gals, you know, that will be only two chaps each for them and one ovah——"

"Two and a half each, to be exact."
 "But if you weally think five too many, Blake, you can go down to the football pwactice instead, with Hewwies and Dig. I do not mind."
 "I do, fathead!"
 "Why can't you object to being one?" inquired Blake.
 "Why not have the name as well as the game?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Oh, wats!"

Arthur Augustus walked out of Study No. 6 and travelled along the passage to Study No. 3. He looked in and found Bates there.

"Lee gone out?" he asked.
 "Yes. I asked him to whack out these lines with me, and he said he had to catch a train," grunted Bates. "Like to lend me a hand, D'Arcy? I've got two hundred of the Eneid to do for Mr. Lathom."

"I should like to vewy much, Bates—"
 "Oh, good!"
 "It would be a weal pleasuah to help you out—"
 "Topping!"
 "Only I am afraid that I have no time—"
 "Eh?"

"So I am sowwy I shall not be able to help you with your lines, deah boy."

Bates glared.
 "Then take your face away, fathead!" he snapped.
 "Don't worry a fellow with a face like that when he's got lines!"

"Weally, Bates—"
 "Shut the door after you."

Arthur Augustus retired from Study No. 3, and closed the door after him. He went downstairs to inquire after Angelo.

Bates' statement that Lee had a train to catch rather startled him. Catching trains meant going out of school bounds, which could not be done without special permission. And it was fairly certain that Angelo had no leave to go out of bounds.

Some remarks of Angelo's, whether seriously meant or not, had led to a rumour in the Fourth that the new fellow was thinking of running away from school, as his next move in search of the "sack." It was almost the only method Angelo had hitherto left untried. Arthur Augustus, in rather a worried mood, wondered whether Angelo had taken advantage of the freedom of a half-holiday, to put that hare-brained scheme into practice.

He proceeded to inquire for Angelo, up and down and round about.

Tom Merry & Co. had seen nothing of him. Talbot of the Shell had seen him going down to the gates. Trimble had spotted him in the road, with a bag in his hand. The bag was significant. What did he want to take a bag with him for on a half-holiday?

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "It weally begins to look as if he has bolted! The uttah ass! On the vewy day when Ethel is comin'. Aftah to-day he could have gone as soon as he liked."

D'Arcy stood staring out of the school gates, with a cloud on his noble brow.

Angelo had tried his patience sorely; but he was mindful of his promise to Cousin Ethel to look after Lee. Certainly Ethel would release him from that promise at once when she learned what an exceedingly difficult task she had set her friends. But, until he was released from it, it weighed on Gussy's mind. More than once he had lost patience with his remarkable protege, and decided to turn him down, and every time he had relented. But now it looked as if Lee was beyond the reach of his kindly care.

A tap on his shoulder made him look round. Figgins of the Fourth, dressed in his best, was at his elbow, with his most agreeable smile on his rugged face. On the occasions when D'Arcy's Cousin Ethel was in the ofing, Figgy's manner to Gussy was so exceedingly agreeable that anyone might have supposed Arthur Augustus to be his nearest and dearest chum.

"Ready?" asked Figgins cheerily.
 "Too late, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, following his own train of thought, and forgetful for the moment of the great event of the afternoon.

George Figgins' face fell.
 "Too late!" he repeated.

"Yaas, watah!"
 "Mean to say we're too late for the train? You said it came in at half-past three!" exclaimed Figgins, in some excitement.

"Eh? What twain?"
 "Cousin Ethel's train, you ass!"
 "I was not thinkin' of Cousin Ethel's twain, Figgins."
 "Oh!" said Figgins, relieved. "We're not too late for that, then?"

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"Not that I am awah of, Figgins. I was speakin' of Lee."

"Oh, bother Lee!"
 "I twust you have not forgotten, Figgins, that you and Tom Mewwy and I pwomised Cousin Ethel to look aftah that silly owl!"

"Oh, no! I've done all I could, being in a different House," said Figgins. "But Ethel never know how the matter stood. Still, if there's anything I can do, I'm your man. Where is he?"

"I am afraid he has bolted."
 "Bolted!" yelled Figgins.
 "I feah so. Wun away fwom school, you know."
 "The silly chump!" said Figgins, with a whistle. "Still, if he's bolted, we can't catch him by putting salt on his tail, can we? What about starting for the station?"

"Weally, Figgins—"
 "We don't want to be late for Cousin Ethel's train, you know. By the way, didn't you mention that Ethel might be bringing a school-friend with her?"

"Yaas, it is possible."
 "A very nice girl, I dare say," said Figgins. "Bound to be rather nice if she's a friend of Ethel's—what? Most likely



CAMEOS OF

THE ST

THE study fire is blazing bright
 The guests are in their place
 And there are smiles of ke
 delight

Upon their cheery faces.
 Levison's sister is a guest,
 And Gussy's charming cousin;
 While Marie Rivers and the rest
 Make up a merry dozen!

The kettle's hissing on the hob,
 The sausages are simmering;
 To fry them well is Gussy's job,
 His eyes are gaily glimmering.
 Manners and Lowther rush around
 In quest of dainty crockery;
 The very smartest must be found,
 Or tea will be a mockery!

The tablecloth gleams snowy white,
 And on it you'll discover
 Dainties galore, to give delight
 To every keen tuck-lover.
 Dame Taggles has prepared a cake
 To meet the great occasion;
 And Fatty Wynn says, "I'll partake
 No need to try persuasion!"

a charming girl, D'Arcy. The sort of girl you would like to talk to."

"Quite poss, deah boy. But I do not quite see what you are dwivin' at," said Arthur Augustus.

"Well," said Figgins casually. "I mean, we'd all like to make a good impression on Ethel's friend, as she's a stranger to St. Jim's, you know. We'd like her to—see the school at its best. I—I was thinking that if you took her in hand it would give her a good impression of—of St. Jim's fellows generally. You see, you are our show-piece, if you don't mind my putting it like that. If she judges us all by you, she will get a topping impression of the school."

Arthur Augustus smiled.
 "It is vewy nice of you to say so, Figgy," he said.
 "Not at all, dear man—the frozen truth, you know," said Figgins. "You take Ethel's friend under your wing, you know—"

"Yaas, but I shall have Ethel to think of."
 "Well, I wouldn't mind looking after Ethel for you," said Figgins carelessly.

Arthur Augustus' smile faded away. He was not a sus-

picious youth, but Figgins' carelessness was a little too palpable. And Figgy was not a good hand as an artful deceiver; he blushed deeply under Gussy's accusing eye.

"Thank you vevy much, Figgins," said Arthur Augustus icily. "But I shall, of course, look aftah my cousin myself."

"Oh!" murmured Figgins, abashed.

"Here we are, Gustavus," said Tom Merry, coming down to the gates with Blake. "All ready—what?"

"Yaas, deah boy. I was thinkin' of takin' Lee, so that Ethel could see the chap, you know; but he has bolted—"

"Eh?"

"I feah that he has wun away fwom school."

"More power to his elbow," said Blake. "Let's get off!"

"It is wathah a sewious mattah, Blake, if that howlin' ass weally has wun away. It is weally too bad for the fwightful burblin' ass to do such a thing on the day Ethel is comin' heah!"

"Rotten," said Tom Merry. "But perhaps he hasn't. Still, if he has, he has, and there's an end. Let's get off!"

"We pwomised to look-after him, Tom Mewwy."

"That's all right. If he's bolted, he's gone to the station."

SCHOOL LIFE.

STUDY FEED.

Plump, sugary doughnuts, in a dish,
And tempting tartlets lure us;
There's everything that one could wish—
A feast for Epicurus!
That wise philosopher of old
Would surely be delighted
If he could see the manifold
Good things, and be invited!

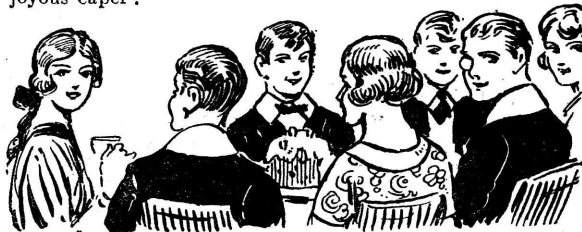
"Deah boys, the sausages are done!"
Arthur Augustus prattles;
And fast and furious grows the fun,
The crockery rocks and rattles!
And hand and foot the juniors wait
Upon their lady guests,
Replenishing each empty plate,
Obeying all behests!

What if the sausages are burnt
When served for our inspection?
What if Tom Merry's never learnt
Tea-making to perfection?
Who worries if the serviettes
Are made of impot paper?
At study feeds no fellow frets—
It is a joyous caper!



THIS WEEK:

THE CYCLE RUN!



Well, we're going to the station. Let's keep our eyes ahead of us, and then we shall be looking after Lee."

Arthur Augustus looked perplexed.

"I do not quite see, deah boy—"

"My dear chap, if we go in the same direction, looking in the direction he's taken, we shall be looking after him."

Figgins and Blake chuckled, and it dawned upon Gussy's powerful brain at last that this was a little joke.

"I do not mean lookin' aftah him in that sense, Tom Mewwy."

"Well I do! come on!"

"Well, I suppose we shall have to let him wip, as we can't be late for Ethel's twain!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Exactly. Get a move on."

And Arthur Augustus, though in a rather worried frame of mind, got a move on, and the four juniors walked down the lane to Rylcombe. Whether Angelo had, or had not, taken the final desperate step of running away from school, Tom Merry & Co. were too busy that afternoon to consider the matter. Angelo had to be given his head, as it were, and the juniors let him "rip."

CHAPTER 8.

An Unexpected Meeting!

"ALL clear at last!" murmured Angelo Lee, as he leaned back on the cushions in the railway-carriage.

His bag was on the opposite seat. The train pulled out of Rylcombe Junction, heading for Wayland Junction. From the window, Angelo glanced out, half-fearing, at the last moment, to catch sight of a master or prefect of St. Jim's.

But there was no one he knew on Rylcombe platform, and in a minute more the train was out of the station, and speeding away through the green countryside towards Wayland.

Angelo's heart was beating rather fast. Had his intention been suspected by the school authorities, he knew that he would have been stopped, and that there would have been trouble. And, in the way of canings and floggings, Angelo had had enough trouble already. He did not want any more of that kind.

Now he was clear of St. Jim's. Angelo had made up his mind. It seemed the only way left, and he had taken it. He was running away from school, and he did not intend ever to see St. Jim's again.

Beyond that his plans were vague.

He wanted to begin at Cousin Peter's aerodrome, but his cousin, of course, could not take him in without his father's consent. So there was no refuge with Peter Lee. As for going home, that simply meant being sent back to St. Jim's. So Angelo's plans were very vague; all that was decided was that he was leaving St. Jim's, and keeping away from the school. Such a step, he sagely considered, would make the Head tired of the trouble he was giving. Dr. Holmes would determine, at long last, to send him home; and if he was sent home, there was an end of his school-days at St. Jim's. And surely his father would realise then that the best thing to be done was to let him train as a flying man with his Cousin Peter!

Angelo hoped so; and he did not pause to reflect that this procedure was considerably lacking in respect to his father. He was an affectionate son, and in other matters never dreamed of setting up his own wishes against his father's; but in the matter of choosing his career, he seemed to consider that he had a right to decide for himself.

The train ran on, and Angelo smiled cheerily. St. Jim's lay farther and farther behind him; the Head, and the Housemaster, and his Form master, had disappeared, as it were, over the horizon.

Angelo was done with them; done with Latin verse and prose; done with classes; done with school. At least, he hoped so.

He was to catch the express at Wayland Junction; and once in the express he was safe from pursuit. He hardly troubled to think of what might lie beyond. All he thought of was of making the Head sufficiently "fed" with him to forbid his return to St. Jim's. After that desirable consummation of his schemes, all would be well.

The train clattered to a halt at Wayland.

Angelo picked up his bag, and stepped out of the carriage. There were a good many people on the platform, but no master of St. Jim's among them, no prefect of the Sixth Form. Angelo walked along, bag in hand, towards the bridge over the line.

On the other side, the express was due in a few minutes—the swift train that was to bear him far away, he hardly cared whither.

"Angelo!"

He started as his name was suddenly spoken.

"It's my brother!" the voice went on.

Angelo spun round.

Two girls had stopped, and were looking at him. One of them he did not know, though any other St. Jim's fellow could have told him that it was D'Arcy's Cousin Ethel.

But one he knew, and stared at in amazement. It was his sister Alice, Ethel Cleveland's chum at school.

"Alice!" stuttered Lee.

He stared blankly at the girls. He had not had the faintest idea of meeting his sister at Wayland, or anywhere else, that afternoon. What could possibly have brought her there was a mystery to him.

Alice Lee smiled at him sweetly, apparently not so surprised by the meeting as her brother was.

"It was very nice of you to come here to meet us, Angelo," she said. "Wasn't it, Ethel?"

"Very!" said Ethel, with a rather curious look at Lee.

It was her first meeting with her friend's brother, but she had heard a great deal about him from Alice.

"Oh!" stuttered Angelo.

(Continued on page 17.)

SIX DELICIOUS TUCK HAMPERS AWARDED TO READERS THIS WEEK!

Do you know a good story, chum? Of course you do! Would you like a ripping Tuck Hamper? What-ho! Then send your joke along, as these other chaps have done. All efforts should be addressed: Special "Tuck Hamper Competition" No. 5, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

A REAL ENTHUSIAST!

Little Tommy Tompkins was before the magistrate, charged with playing football in the street. "I must make an example of you, my lad," the J.P. said, and sentenced him to a fortnight in the second division, whilst the people in the court were aghast at the harsh sentence. "But, I say," said Tommy, not in the least dismayed, "can't you make it a month in the Southern League, sir?"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to J. Hanby, 22, Brown Street, Hyson Green, Nottingham.

STUNG!

Bill: "What is the difference between a bank and a beehive?" Joe (after thinking for awhile): "Give it up." Bill: "Well, a bank takes in notes while a piano lets out notes." Joe: "But what about the beehive?" Bill: "That's where you get stung!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to James Mack, Edgar Lee House, 14, Stonebridge Park, Willesden, N.W. 10.

Each Hamper contains:

An Iced Cake, Chocolates, Biscuits, Jam, Sardines, Honey, Sweets, Figs, Lemonade, Etc.

'ARD, AIN'T IT!

Two old ladies were gossiping in the market and eating apples at the same time. "Ain't it 'orrible to find a maggot in your apple?" said one. "Not 'arf so 'orrible as only 'arf a maggot!" said the other.—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to Frank Thomas Trodd, 187, Railton Road, Herne Hill, S.E. 24.

THAT CAUSED IT!

One day little Tommy's mother missed him for some time, and when he reappeared she asked: "Where have you been, my pet?" "Playing postman," replied the "Pet." "I took letters to all the houses in our road—real letters, too." "Where on earth did you get them?" questioned his mother, in amusement, which changed to horror when he answered: "They were those old ones in your wardrobe drawer tied up with blue ribbon!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to F. Gee, 39, Monson Road, Harlesden, N.W. 10.

Owing to the interest taken by readers all over the world in this Weekly Joke Competition a Delicious Tuck Hamper will be awarded for EVERY joke published on this page. Cut out the coupon below while you are of the mind to win one of these NOVEL PRIZES. Editor.



"RUNNING" THEIR BILL!

They were on their honeymoon and were climbing Ben Lomond. She stood above him, some thirty feet. "What do you see?" he asked. "Far, far below," she replied, "I see a long white streak stretching like a paper ribbon back almost to our hotel." "Ha!" he ejaculated. "I'll bet it's that confounded hotel bill overtaking us!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to D. Coombes, 2, Primrose Avenue, Poplar Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham.

A CERTAINTY!

"Here you are, ladies and gentlemen," said the tipster, "what did I give you yesterday? Didn't I tell you all that Bath was a wash-out. Broad Bean was not a runner, and Dusty Carpet would take a lot of beating? Now I have a special for to-day which I give you free. Be sure and back Loose Button; it's bound to come off!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to H. M. Morley, 6, Handley Street, Sleaford, Lincs.

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SO HE OUGHT!

An American visitor was discussing sporting matters with a Billingsgate porter. "Why, in my country," said the American, "we have some marvellous athletes. One Kentucky man ran thirty miles, and actually finished up by jumping a five-barred gate!" "Well," said the porter, "that's nothing to shout about. Look at the run he took!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to David Williams, 9, Manton Road, Kensington, Liverpool, E.

TUCK HAMPER COUPON.

THE GEM LIBRARY. No. 5.

No attempt will be considered unless accompanied by one of these Coupons.



THE SCHOOLBOY AIRMAN!

(Continued
from
page 15.)

"This is my friend, Ethel Cleveland," said Alice Lee. "She has a cousin at your school, named D'Arcy. Perhaps you know him?"

Angelo mechanically shook hands with Cousin Ethel.

He understood now, remembering that he had heard that D'Arcy's cousin was visiting St. Jim's that afternoon. He had not heard that she was bringing a friend with her, and certainly he had not expected to see his sister. The meeting was extremely unfortunate—from Angelo's point of view. Alice was taking it for granted that her brother had come to Wayland to meet them, and evidently did not think of parting company.

As Lee stood in doubt and dismay, he heard the roaring of the express coming into the station.

"I'm so glad you've met Angelo at last, Ethel," said Alice Lee brightly. "How did you know what time to meet us here, Angelo?"

"I—I—" stammered Lee.

"Probably my cousin told him," said Ethel. "But Arthur is meeting us at Rylcombe, the local station."

"You did not know I was coming with Ethel?" smiled Alice Lee.

"N-n-o!" stammered Angelo.

"It's a pleasant surprise for you, isn't it?"

"Oh! Yes!" gasped Angelo.

"Which is the platform for our train—the local to Rylcombe, you know?"

"I—I—"

The express was in the station. It stopped one minute at Wayland Junction. Angelo suppressed a groan.

Alice had slipped an arm through his, never doubting that it was her brother's intention to accompany the two girls to St. Jim's. To throw off her arm, rush away at top speed, and spring into the express, was Angelo's only means of escape. But he felt that he could not do it. Indeed, such an extraordinary proceeding could only have made the girls suppose that he had suddenly taken leave of his senses, and certainly would have alarmed them greatly.

The hapless Angelo felt that he was "for it," and submitted to his fate as cheerfully as he could. Once more he had failed when success was in sight.

"This—this way!" he stammered. "I—I'll take you to the local platform. Lots of time for the local train."

And Angelo walked between the two girls, looking as cheery as he could. Ethel glanced at his bag, no doubt wondering why a fellow who had come to meet people at the station brought a bag with him, evidently well-packed and rather heavy. Lee's expression puzzled her, too, and by the time they were seated together in the local train for Rylcombe, Ethel was wondering very much. Alice had taken it for granted, without thinking, that her brother was there to meet them; but Ethel considered it odd, at least, that Lee, who had not known that his sister would be there, should have come to the junction to meet a girl whom he did not even know by sight.

Ethel was thinking a good deal during the short run on the local line to Rylcombe.

Angelo's face was dismal as the train entered the station he had hoped never to see again.

There were four St. Jim's juniors on the platform; and while Arthur Augustus was glancing up and down the train with the aid of his eyeglass, George Figgins spotted Ethel's carriage at once, and raced across to it and pulled the door open.

"Bai Jove! Heah they are!" said Arthur Augustus. "And—Gweat Scott! Lee!"

"Lee!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Angelo gave them a grim look.

"Bai Jove! I'm glad to see you again, Lee!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Do you know, I weally feahed you had bolted!"

"So you haven't run away from school!" grinned Blake. Alice Lee looked round quickly.

"My brother—run away from school!" she exclaimed in amazement.

Ethel quite understood then.

"Bai Jove! Your bwothah?" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

Cousin Ethel hastily performed the introductions. The party walked down the platform, and Angelo lingered behind. Tom Merry dropped behind the others, and linked his arm in Lee's.

"Not this time!" he said.

"Look here—"

"Come on," said Tom. "You can't play the goat while your sister's here, Lee, even if you play it some other time. Chuck it, and come on!"

And Angelo, with feelings that were too deep for expression in words, chucked it and came on.

CHAPTER 9.

The Right Thing!

COUSIN ETHEL and Alice Lee were guests of honour in Study No. 6 at teatime.

That celebrated apartment was newly swept and garnished for the great occasion.

Herries and Dig and Manners and Lowther had made some preparations there, while the other fellows were gone to the station. Fatty Wynn and Kerr had lent a hand.

Study No. 6 looked really magnificent, with fresh flowers tastefully arranged in jam-jars, and a spotless tablecloth specially borrowed from the house-dame, and a handsome collection of crockery gathered from many studies.

It was quite a large tea-party in Study No. 6, which was filled to capacity, so to speak.

Blake & Co. were all there, and the Terrible Three, and Figgins & Co., as well as the two girls, and Angelo.

Angelo, doubtless, would have declined the honour willingly, with some idea in his head of still carrying out his scheme of evasion. But it really was impossible. His sister naturally expected him to be present; and two or three fellows were, as a matter of fact, keeping an eye on Lee, to see that he did not "play the goat."

So Angelo was a member of the numerous tea-party in Study No. 6, looking as cheerful as he could.

It was quite a merry tea-party.

Tom Merry & Co. liked Ethel's chum, and Alice Lee was evidently pleased by her brother's school and her brother's friends.

It was clear that Alice had no suspicion of her brother's peculiar proceedings since he had been at St. Jim's; though Tom Merry guessed that she had been rather anxious about him there, and was pleased and relieved to see him apparently getting on so well with so many agreeable friends in the school.

Probably it was her anxiety on his account that had brought Alice with Cousin Ethel to St. Jim's; but if she had been anxious, her anxiety was relieved now.

It had not even crossed her mind that Angelo's presence at Wayland that afternoon was due to an intention to run away from school, though Blake's words at the station had startled her. But Cousin Ethel had no doubt on the subject; and she was thinking a good deal over the matter during tea in Study No. 6.

After tea it was arranged that Lee's sister was to be taken round to see the sights of St. Jim's; and Cousin Ethel went with her, of course. Tom Merry walked on one side of Alice, Blake on the other, and Arthur Augustus took possession of his cousin Ethel—and, of course, Figgins walked on the other side of Ethel, heedless of an expressive glance from the swell of St. Jim's. Angelo came along, with his hands in his pockets, and a far from happy expression on his face. Ethel spoke to Arthur Augustus in a low voice.

"I want to speak to Alice's brother while I am here," she said.

"Bai Jove!"

"You remember the promise you made me, Arthur—"

"Yaas, wathah; and we have played up, deah gal," said Arthur Augustus. "But that chap Lee is weally a corkah, you know; and I want you to welease me ffrom that promise. It weally is impos to look atfah a fellow who is wresolved to get sacked ffrom the school."

"Is it as bad as that?"

"You see, he is keen on becomin' an airman, and he wants to go, and he doesn't care how he goes, so long as he does go," said Arthur Augustus. "It weally is a vewy remarkable posish, for a fellow to be huntin' for the sack ffrom school—but that is what it comes to."

"I did not understand quite how the matter stood when I asked my friends here to look after Alice's brother at his new school," said Ethel. "I knew that he was unwilling

to come to St. Jim's, and would be dissatisfied and discontented here, and thought that a little kind help would make things easier for him. But if it really is the case that he is trying to get himself turned out of the school—

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It's a fact," said Figgins. "He would have been sacked once for a cert if Cussy hadn't butted in."

"That was very kind of you, Arthur."

Arthur Augustus rubbed his nose reminiscently. There was still a slight swelling upon that aristocratic feature.

"Well, I meant to be kind to the sillay ass, and to keep my promise to you, Ethel," he said. "My weward was a punch on the nose—a vevy hard punch."

"Oh!"

"Of course, I wouldn't say a word for his sistah to heah," said Arthur Augustus. "But I had bettah be fwank with you, Ethel. The sillay owl has twied vevy possible twick to get bunked fwom the school; and soonah or latah he will bwing it off. The Head is bound to get fed with him in the long wun, you know. He's bagged more lickin's in a month than most fellows bag in a whole term. And he's still askin' for more."

Ethel's brow clouded a little.

"But he has not done anything wrong?" she asked.

"Oh, no; he seems quite a decent chap," said D'Arcy. "But he has twied to make himself out a bad chawactah, to get sacked. He doesn't seem to think about the disgwace."

"His people would think about it, I fancy," said Figgins. "But Lee's simply potty on getting away and starting as a flying man."

Ethel nodded.

"I understand. But it would be a great blow to Alice if her brother were expelled from the school—and to his father also. I should like to speak to him—perhaps it would do some good."

That was enough for D'Arcy and Figgins. Reluctantly but promptly they relinquished their places; and Angelo Lee found himself walking beside Cousin Ethel by the path under the old elms, with many envious-glances cast in his direction by other fellows.

Angelo grinned a little as he met Ethel's grave glance.

"I suppose I ought to thank you, Miss Cleveland," he said. "It seems that you asked your friends here to keep an eye on me at St. Jim's. They did it—there's no doubt about that."

"Your sister was uneasy about you," said Ethel. "It was for that reason I asked my friends to do what they could to help you to settle down."

"I know—and I'm really much obliged," said Angelo. "But I'd be still more obliged if you'd ask them to chuck it."

Ethel smiled.

"We haven't met before," she said. "But Alice is my great friend, as you know; and for that reason I am going to speak plainly to you. I am sure that when we met you at Wayland Junction this afternoon you were planning to run away from school."

"Don't tell Alice, for goodness' sake!"

"Of course not; she would worry," said Ethel. "But I must tell you that you are doing very wrong."

Angelo made a grimace.

"I'm in a rotten hole," he said. "I never wanted to come here—I want to start as a flying man with my Cousin Peter. He's keen to have me—we've often been up together. I can handle a plane, kid as I am. I've got a lot of wheezes for new gadgets in the air business, and I want to carry them out in Peter's aerodrome. But the pater thinks it's too risky a bizney, and he won't hear of it. But I can't waste my time here, you see. Sooner or later, the pater will have to let me go."

"But until then it is your duty to obey your father's wishes," said Ethel quietly.

Angelo made another grimace.

"I know that!" he said. "But—"

"There is no 'but,'" said Ethel. "When you know your duty you must do it. That is playing the game."

"Um!" said Angelo. "Of—of course, I'd rather not be bunked, if there was any other way of clearing. When I first came I played the fool—I made the school believe me a born idiot, and nearly got sent home for stupidity." He chuckled. "But that turned out a failure. Then I tried being a rebel—I punched a prefect and footballed a House-master. Still it wasn't the sack—only lickings. Then I worked up a stunt to get sacked as a bad character—and it nearly came off; but it failed again, and I bagged a terrific licking. So there was only one thing left—to bolt! And even that turned out a frost to-day!" said Angelo dismally.

"You will not try it again?"

Angelo was silent.

"If you are expelled from the school in disgwace—"

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"Oh, bother the disgrace, if I get away and begin again in Cousin Peter's aerodrome," said Angelo.

"But the disgrace will fall on others, as well as yourself," said Ethel. "Have you forgotten that?"

"Um!"

Angelo wriggled uncomfortably.

"It is perhaps not my business to speak to you like this," said Ethel, colouring a little. "But you have been thinking only of yourself, and forgetting others."

"Oh!" ejaculated Angelo.

He stared at Ethel.

"I say, that's pitching it rather strong, you know," he protested.

"Isn't it true?"

"Um!"

"I will say no more," said Ethel quietly, and she walked on quickly, and rejoined Arthur Augustus and Figgins, before Angelo could reply.

Angelo stood where he was, his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a frown on his brow, staring after her.

Undoubtedly, Ethel's words had given him food for thought.

He gave a sigh at last.

"It's the right thing," he murmured. "But—"

He tramped away under the elms, and the juniors did not see him again till the time came for Cousin Ethel and Alice Lee to start for the station.

Tom Merry & Co. walked down to Rylcombe with the girls, and with them went Angelo.

Before the train started he found an opportunity of speaking to Cousin Ethel.

There was a rueful grin on his face as he spoke.

"You gave it to me straight, didn't you?" he said.

Ethel nodded.

"I hope so," she assented.

"I've been thinking it over."

"Yes?"

"And I'm chucking it," said Angelo dismally. "I know it's the right thing to do, as you said, and I'm going to do it. Unless the pater changes his mind of his own accord, I'm sticking it out here."

"I'm glad," said Ethel simply.

And she gave Angelo a very kind smile when the train bore her away.

Tom Merry & Co. gathered round Angelo for the walk back to St. Jim's when the train was gone.

"No more bolting to-day," said Tom, with a laugh.

"Wathah not!"

Angelo grinned.

"That's all over," he said. "I've chucked it!"

"Good man!"

"Yaas, wathah! I am vevy glad, Lee, to see that you have weached a pwopah fwame of mind," said Arthur Augustus. "I twust you are feelin' bettah for makin' a good wewolution?"

"Um!" said Angelo.

The new junior at St. Jim's had made up his mind. But whether he felt better for it was another question.

CHAPTER 10.

At Last!

ANGELO did not look happy in the following days. He had made his resolution, and he kept to it, and there were no more "stunts" with a view to getting the "sack" from St. Jim's.

Possibly Angelo, in his more reflective moments, had never been quite satisfied with his peculiar plan of campaign, and certainly Cousin Ethel's quietly-spoken words had brought it home to him that it was not quite "playing the game."

So he made up his mind to play the game, and that meant obeying his father's wishes, and settling down at St. Jim's, and giving up his darling scheme of becoming a flying-man, an experimenter in improved aircraft, and an inventor of flying gadgets. It was a sacrifice that he had to make, and he made it; but he was not happy. He could only hope that in the more distant future he would be able to realise his ambition; in the meantime, the plain path of duty was marked out before him, and he resolved to follow it as patiently as he could.

But though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak.

Mr. Lathom had always found him a rather trying pupil in the Fourth Form-room, and all Angelo's good resolutions did not turn him into a model pupil, by any means.

A fellow whose thoughts constantly wandered to matters outside the school curriculum was not likely to please a Form-master, and often and often, in class, Angelo was discovered sketching air gadgets in his books or on his blotting-paper, oblivious of Mr. Lathom's valuable instructions on other subjects.



"Do you say, Lee, that you have actually consumed part of the contents of this bottle?" "Yes, sir!" Mr. Railton looked at Tom Merry and then at Lee. Then he removed the cork from the bottle, and sniffed at it. A faint aroma of gin hung round the bottle. Tilting the bottle, Mr. Railton poured a little of the contents into the palm of his hand, and tasted it. "Water!" he said very quietly. Lee's face was a study. (See Chapter 6.)

Many times the Form master's cane was brought into requisition, and continually Angelo had a stack of impots on hand, which accounted for a good many of his leisure hours.

Indeed, it was fairly certain that Mr. Lathom, at least, regretted that his remarkable pupil had not succeeded in his design of getting away from St. Jim's by hook or by crook.

It was a week after the visit of Cousin Ethel that Mr. Lathom called Angelo to his desk, just before dismissing the Fourth from morning classes.

"More trouble!" sighed Angelo, as he went.

Mr. Lathom blinked at him over his glasses.

"Lee, you will go to the Head's study when you leave the Form-room," he said.

"Oh!" said Angelo. "Why, sir?"

"No doubt you will learn when you see Dr. Holmes," answered the Fourth Form master dryly, and he dismissed the Form.

Angelo's face was grim as he went out with the Fourth. Arthur Augustus touched him sympathetically on the arm.

"Hard cheese, old chap," he said. "But weally, you know, you do wathah get Lathom's wag out in class."

Grunt from Angelo.

"Grin and bear it, old bean," said Figgins consolingly. "After all, you've got used to lickings by this time."

"I've a jolly good mind—" began Angelo, and paused. "Thinking of another bolt?" grinned Figgins. "Think again, old man."

"Yaas, wathah! Gwin and beah it," said Arthur Augustus encouragingly. "Aftah all, what is a lickin'?"

"I suppose it means a Head's licking," growled Angelo.

"Yaas." Lathom must have weported you, you know. Perhaps the Head won't lay it on vewy hard this time," suggested Arthur Augustus.

Angelo grunted, and walked out into the quadrangle by himself. Mr. Lathom had told him to proceed directly to the Head's study, but Angelo was in no hurry to obey. His face was dark.

He had given up his projects, he had done his best to settle down as a St Jim's fellow, and now he was booked for a Head's licking, all the same. He might as well have remained the most troublesome fellow in the House, so far as that went, and he was strongly tempted to throw aside all his good resolutions, and make a bolt for it while there was yet time. The temptation was strong, and almost unconsciously Angelo found himself walking to the slanting oak by the school wall, the spot where it was easy to escape from the precincts of St. Jim's undiscovered.

"Hallo, what's this game?"

It was Tom Merry's voice.

Tom and Manners and Lowther, taking a trot round the quad after class, came on Angelo standing by the shadow of the wall.

He started a little as he looked at them.

"Had it bad?" asked Tom.

"Eh?"

"Six from the Head?" inquired Manners.

"Eh? No!"

"We heard from D'Arcy that you'd been sent to the Head immediately after class," said Tom. "Wasn't it a licking? Gussy seemed to think so."

"I haven't been in to the Head yet," grunted Angelo.

Tom Merry looked serious.

"Lee, old bean, you can't keep the Head waiting," he said.

"Rot!"

"It only makes it worse, in the long run," remarked

Monty Lowther. "The beak will lay it on harder if you keep him waiting. A Head's licking is like wine, you know—it improves with keeping!"

Angelo grinned faintly.
"Come on," said Tom; "we'll walk with you as far as the House."

Angelo did not stir.

"I understand," said Tom. "You're thinking of bolting after all, Lee—that's why you're here. Is that it?"

"I'm fed-up!" grunted Angelo. "I made up my mind to stick it out—and what's the result? A Head's licking!"

"And what about your good resolutions?" asked the captain of the Shell, with a smile.

"I tell you I'm fed-up!"

"Oh, stick it out!" said Tom Merry encouragingly.

"Come on, old chap, and don't play the goat!" Angelo moved a step nearer to the slanting oak.

"You fellows can cut!" he said curtly. "I'm going!"

"To the Head?"

"No!"

Angelo laid his grasp on the trunk.

Tom Merry exchanged a glance with his comrades, and the Terrible Three laid their grasp on Angelo.

"This way!" said Tom cheerily.

"Let go!" roared Angelo. "You cheeky dummies——"

"Dear man, I'm your junior House captain, you know," said Tom. "I'm bound to see that you don't play the giddy ox to that extent!"

"Let go!"

"March!" said Tom Merry.

Angelo struggled, and almost broke away from the Shell fellows. But they collared him forcibly, and walked him away towards the House. The chance of evasion was gone; and Angelo hardly knew whether he was sorry for it or not. Tom Merry & Co. walked him into the House and along Head's Corridor to the door of Dr. Holmes' study.

"Here you are, old bean!" said Tom. "It's best to take it smiling—take my word for it."

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Angelo.

Tom Merry knocked at the door.

"Come in!" came the deep voice of the Head.

Tom opened the door.

Angelo hesitated on the threshold; but a push from Monty Lowther sent him into the study. Tom Merry drew the door shut after he was inside.

Angelo staggered into the Head's study, and straightened up as he found himself under Dr. Holmes' severe eye.

"I asked Mr. Lathom to send you to me after classes, Lee!" said the Head, fixing his eyes on Angelo.

"Yes, sir!" mumbled Angelo. "I——"

"You are late."

"I——"

"Very well; let it pass," said the Head. "In the circumstances, I shall excuse you."

Angelo blinked at him. He had not the faintest idea of what the "circumstances" were.

"As you will be leaving the school to-day, it does not matter," said the Head.

Angelo gave a jump.

"Leaving?" he ejaculated.

"Precisely."

"Oh!" gasped Angelo.

The Head peered at him over his glasses.

"Is not that your desire, Lee?" he asked.

"Oh! Yes! But——" stammered Angelo.

"But what?"

"But what have I done, sir?" asked Angelo, rather hotly. "My people will want to know why I am expelled from St. Jim's——"

"You appear to be under a misapprehension, Lee," said the Head kindly. "You are not expelled."

"Oh!" gasped Angelo again.

"I have received a communication from your father, Lee," said Dr. Holmes. "It appears that after consultation with your cousin, Captain Peter Lee, he has decided to accede to your wishes and allow you to leave the school and train as a flying man under Captain Lee's care."

"Oh!" stuttered Angelo.

His eyes danced.

This was why he had been sent to the Head! It was not a Head's licking after all! Not that a licking would have mattered much to Angelo at that joyous moment. This was what the Head had to say to him—and which he would never have heard had he carried out his scheme of bolting over the school wall! He owed much to the intervention of Tom Merry & Co.

The Head smiled.

"I may say that I fully approve of your father's decision," he said. "I have, indeed, written to him pointing out your aptitude for the profession you desire to follow. My letter may have helped him in reaching this decision. Your gallant conduct in saving Captain Lee on the occasion of his aeroplane accident has doubtless helped. At all events, your father has now decided to allow you to leave St. Jim's, and it is arranged for your cousin to call for you to-day——"

"Hurrah!" ejaculated Angelo.

Then he crimsoned.

"I—I beg your pardon, sir! But——"

"I wish you every success in your new career, Lee," said the Head kindly. "You may go now, my boy."

Angelo left the Head's study as if he were walking on air.

At the corner of the corridor he came on Tom Merry & Co., who were waiting for him there.

The Terrible Three stared at him. Few fellows left the Head's study, after a special interview with the headmaster, looking so merry and bright. Obviously, it had not been a licking!

"Hallo! Not licked?" asked Manners.

Angelo chuckled.

"Not quite! Hurrah!"

"What's happened?" asked Tom.

"The very best," grinned Angelo. "Thanks, you fellows, for yanking me back when I was going to bolt! It would have spoiled everything! I'm jolly glad I stuck it out now!"

"But what——"

"I'm going!" chortled Angelo. "The pater's come round at last, and Cousin Peter is calling for me to-day. I'm going to be a giddy airman—and everything in the garden is lovely! I'm jolly glad I wasn't sacked after all—jolly glad! But I'm glad I'm going—though, of course, I shall be sorry to lose sight of you chaps! You've been awfully decent to me here. But isn't it ripping?"

And Angelo juzzed away down the passage in the highest of spirits, leaving Tom Merry & Co. smiling.

"Lee, deah boy——" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy met the joyful youth at the door of the School House. "You are lookin' vewy mewwy and bwight! Wasn't it a lickin' aftah all?"

"Dear man!" said Angelo; and, greatly to Arthur Augustus' surprise, he grabbed the swell of St. Jim's and waltzed him round in sheer exuberance of spirits.

"Bai Jove! Leggo! Oh cwumbs!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Gweat Scott! Have you gone pottay, Lee? You are wumplin' my collah! You are wuffin' my jacket! You uttah ass—— Yawooooogh!"

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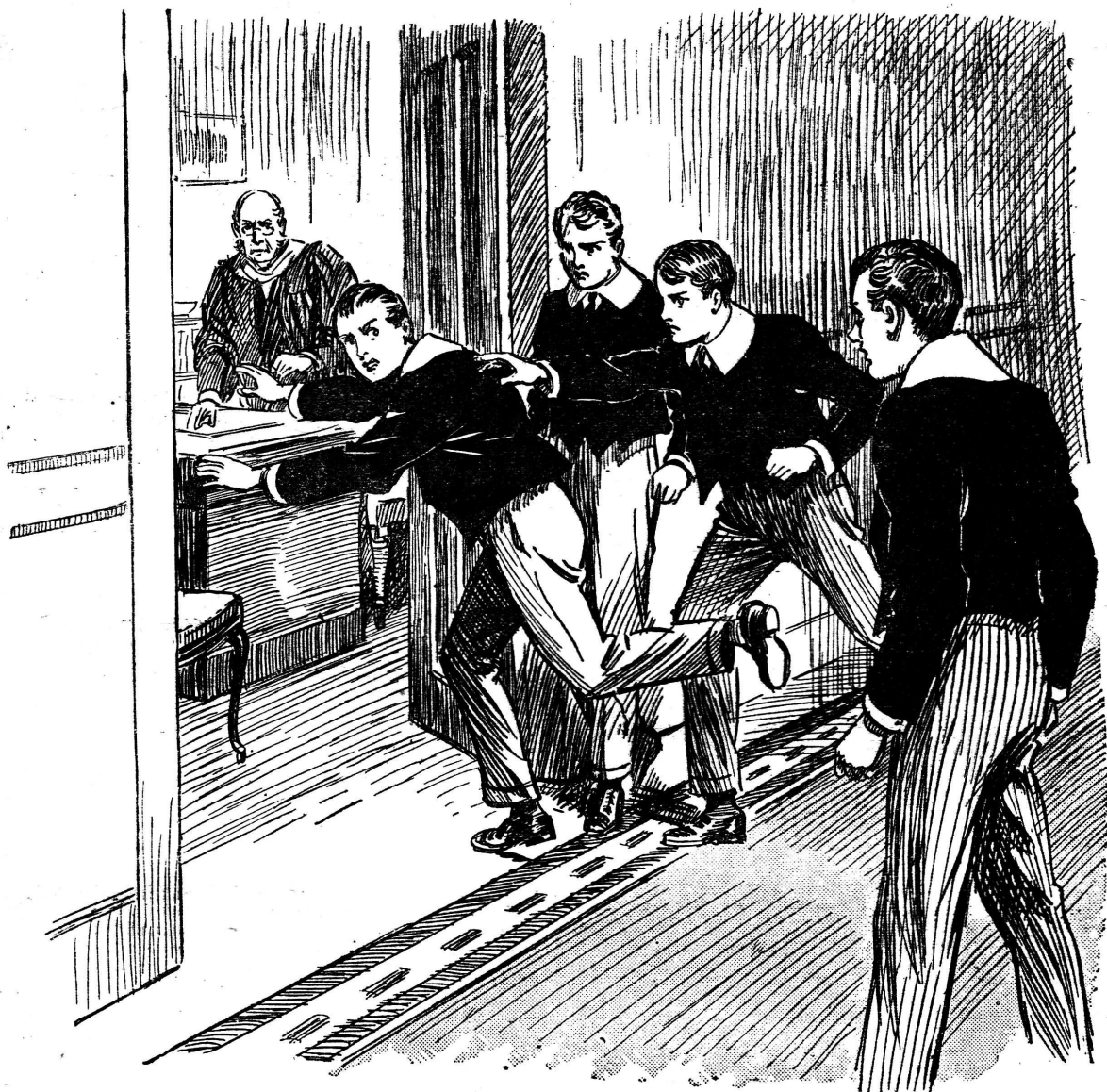
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In the strong grip of his school fellows, Angelo Lee was marched along the Head's corridor to the door of Dr. Holmes' study. Tom Merry knocked at the door, and the Head's deep voice bade him enter. Angelo hesitated on the threshold, but a push from Monty Lowther sent him into the study. (See Chapter 10.)

Crash!

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lee, as he and his partner collided with Mr. Lathom in the hall.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Lathom.

"Sowwy, sir!" stammered Arthur Augustus.

"Oh, awfully sorry, sir!" gasped Angelo. "You—you see, sir, I—I was celebrating, sir, as I'm leaving St. Jim's to-day—"

"Oh, I cannot say I am sorry you are leaving!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "If that is the case, I will excuse you, but kindly celebrate your departure a little less obstreperously, Lee."

Angelo walked out into the quad with a bright face. At long last he had his heart's desire—his darling ambition was to be realised. And he was more than glad, now, that he had determined to play the game, and "stick it out." All his amazing schemes for getting turned out of the school had failed, and now that he had abandoned them his desire was granted. It really was the reward of virtue.

Tom Merry & Co. were rather keen to see Cousin Peter when he arrived to take Angelo away. But they little guessed what the manner of his arrival would be. Even when, later in the afternoon, an aeroplane was seen flying over the school, they did not think of Cousin Peter. But

Angelo, standing in the quad and staring upward, gave a shout.

"Peter!"

"Bai Jove! Where's Petah?" asked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, looking round.

"He's come!"

"Blessed if I can see him!" said Tom Merry.

Angelo grinned.

"There he is!"

"Where?" demanded half a dozen fellows.

Angelo pointed upwards.

"I know his giddy machine," he said. "That's Cousin Peter."

"Bai Jove!"

A crowd gathered to stare at the circling aeroplane. It circled over the school buildings, with a myriad eyes upon it. There was a shout as it settled down on the football ground, and a rush towards the machine.

Cousin Peter stepped out, with a grin on his bronzed face.

"Peter!" yelled Angelo.

"Oh, here you are, young 'un!" said the flying man. "Ready?"

"You bet!"



**WHIZ!
BANG!
CRASH!**

Verrey lights blazed across the darkened sky, bombs fell to right and left of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He raced on for his life. . . What's Gussy doing amongst exploding bombs and Verrey lights? Read the grand extra-long yarn of St. Jim's in next Wednesday's

"GEM"

entitled:

**"THE
CHAMPION
OF ST. JIM'S."**

You'll enjoy every word of it, chums!

"Hop in!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "This is the very first time a St. Jim's man has left the school by aeroplane, you know. That boundah Lee is keepin' up his weputation for stunts to the vevy finish."

Angelo shook hands all round with his friends, and stepped aboard. Tom Merry & Co. stood in a group to watch the ascent of the plane, and waved their caps to Angelo as the machine rose.

But the last had not yet been seen of Angelo Lee—not by any means. As the plane climbed higher the watching juniors below saw Angelo stand upright in the small cockpit and lean over the space that divided him from his cousin Peter.

"The ass!" breathed Tom Merry. "He'll fall out if he's not jolly careful!"

"Bet you he doesn't," grinned Monty Lowther. "Remember his name is Angelo—he's got wings, you know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Angelo was in little danger of falling out; he had even looped the loop standing up on more than one occasion. He tapped his Cousin Peter on the shoulder.

"Give them a few stunts!" he roared, making his voice carry above the rush of the wind.

Cousin Peter smiled.

"Leave it to me!" he yelled.

The juniors were conscious that words were being exchanged between the "birdmen," as Monty Lowther called them, but they, of course, knew not the nature of them.

Suddenly the nose of the plane swooped down, and the familiar hum of the engine ceased.

The watchers below held their breath.

"What's happened?" said Tom Merry, in alarm.

"It's out of control!" gasped Manners. "Look!"

There was no need for the injunction. All St. Jim's were gazing skywards. The plane was rushing earthwards in a dizzy, terrifying spiral nose-dive.

"I've got it!" exclaimed Blake suddenly. "The young ass is stunting!"

A sigh of relief went up.

Angelo was stunting.

Down and down spun the plane, to all intents and purposes out of control, and the juniors below gazed at its

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passage through space in awe and silent admiration. Then, just as it seemed that another thirty seconds would see the plane crash headlong, there came the hum of the engine as it burst into motion. Up rose the nose of the plane, and away it circled, scarcely a couple of hundred feet above the heads of the St. Jim's juniors.

"Bravo!"

It was a regular chorus in appreciation of that thrilling stunt. Angelo leaned over the edge of the cockpit and waved his handkerchief cheerily at his old schoolfellows.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Tom Merry suddenly. "Here's stunt number two!"

The plane had climbed to a thousand feet. Then the nose of the machine was pointed towards the crowd of St. Jim's juniors on terra firma. This time it was a thrilling dive with the engine racing.

For a moment it seemed that the plane would land in their midst, but at the critical moment, with the wheels of the undercarriage barely a couple of yards above their heads, the plane was righted. Then away it soared again into the heavens, climbing all the time.

"Phew!" whistled Tom Merry. "That was a thriller, you chaps!"

"Yaas, wathah!" beamed Arthur Augustus. "I weally thought he would hit us."

"Hallo, he's at it again!"

Stunt number three was a perfect loop, and Tom Merry and Co. held their breath as they realised what would happen to Angelo in the back seat were the loop executed badly. But there was no danger. The plane came out of the loop in a swooping volplane, and again Lee waved his handkerchief and grinned. Thereafter, every known stunt to aviation was performed by Cousin Peter, and on each occasion when the plane righted Angelo was to be seen waving his handkerchief. But everything comes to an end some time, and it was half an hour later that Angelo Lee indicated that this time he really was going. A roar of cheering went up as he leaned over the side of the cockpit and "shook hands with himself," indicative of his leave-taking.

The plane began to climb.

Higher and higher it rose, till it was a mere spot in the clouds, and then it vanished from sight.

Angelo of the Fourth was gone.

THE END.

REDSKIN CUNNING! With young Tom Holt as his friend and ambassador, Black Hawk hopes to use him in his scheme to wipe out the White Settlements. But Tom isn't so green as he looks!



WHITE EAGLE!

A Grand Story of a young Britisher's Adventures with a Tribe of Apache Indians in New Mexico.

Told By

ARTHUR PATTERSON

Black Hawk's Plot!

"**H**E is dead." Tom spoke in a whisper. White Cat said nothing. He had followed his friend, after making sure that the puma was really dead; and now, throwing himself on the ground, he turned the dog over and thrust his hand under the left foreleg against the pup's side.

"Not dead. Only his head silly. Not dead at all."

Tom could have hugged the boy. He knew nothing of wounds, and felt as helpless as a baby. But White Cat was in his element. He had an inquisitive nature, sensitive fingers, and a quick, retentive memory. One of his greatest interests since childhood had been to see and to help the medicine-men at work with sick or wounded warriors.

We look upon medicine-men as mere quacks. Some were, but many had much knowledge of plants and long experience of the simpler forms of surgical operations. White Cat now examined Hunks thoroughly. The pup had a gaping wound in the hind leg, and another gash on the right shoulder. This one was serious, as it was bleeding badly.

White Cat tackled it first, contriving a bandage with a portion of his own shirt, ruthlessly torn in half for the purpose. In this he twisted a stick, drew it tight round Hunks' chest, and stopped the flow of blood. Then he made a rough cradle for the hind leg, and bound that. Lastly, he set the forepaw and bound it to a splint. Before he had finished Hunks had come to, and it was strange to see him staring hard at White Cat as though he could not understand what the Indian was bothering about.

He tried at first to get at his master; but at a word, and with Tom's hand on his head, he lay perfectly still, only giving a moan now and then when the young surgeon's handling was exceptionally severe.

All was done at last. But how were they to get the little chap back to camp? Though the moon was bright enough, it would not penetrate into the deep canyons they must pass through, and the way was very rough.

But they were relieved from the solution of this problem. A long whistle sounded from above, to which White Cat

replied; and in a few minutes the whole party had reached the spot, Black Hawk leading.

The absence of the two boys was noticed as soon as the storm ended. Black Hawk had sent men at once to find their trail, and the sound of the rifle-shots had done the rest.

The excitement of the Apaches over the tale which White Cat told them—Tom being far too much concerned with Hunks to say anything—was tremendous. The body of the lion had been discovered before the recital began, and dragged out of the bushes, and the marks of the pup's teeth were found on its back.

What exactly White Cat said Tom could never find out. He suspected that the whole affair was grossly exaggerated, because of the intense reverence which the warriors showed thereafter to Hunks; but White Cat could not be drawn.

"They not think Hunks 'devil any more!'" he grinned. "He save me and you. Any man who try hunt him—woof!" He made a diabolical face and pretended to scalp himself. "They call him god-pup now."

Hunks had reason to be grateful to White Cat for what he did say. Never in the history of Indian tribes was a dog so treated. He was given the best bed, the best meat, attention that never ceased day or night, and every luxury an animal could desire.

At first the pup got bored by so much kindness, but as he grew better he liked it. The effect of it all, and the change of relationship which took place, is difficult to describe. It was certain that long before Hunks was able to walk he had ceased to be a devil to anybody. But it was more than that. White Cat persisted in saying that they worshipped him as "god-pup," and perhaps, from an Indian's point of view, that was as good a way of expressing it as any other.

The climax was reached when, one day, after a ride on Malinka, Tom returned to camp, to find it empty, except for one Indian and Hunks. The dog was standing up. It was his latest accomplishment, and he was very proud of it. His big tail was waving gently to and fro. The Apache, extremely lightly clothed, was leaning back along the grass, looking up at Hunks and stroking him.

Tom saw Hunks drop his head and begin to smell the man's body. Suddenly he stooped and touched it with his nose. The Indian rose, with an exclamation, at which Hunks, stepping stiffly nearer, licked his face. The Apache gave a soft cry and put his arm round the pup's neck; then, seeing Tom, he leaped to his feet and went away. It was

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE!

TOM HOLT, a sturdy young Britisher of seventeen, lands in New Mexico—at the invitation of some friends of his father's—to start business on the Doggett Ranch.

He finds the place in a deserted and dilapidated condition, and from a letter, left by a former employee, learns that his two friends have died. Tom's in a quandary, for he knows nothing about ranching, but he buckles to and makes the ranch-house ship-shape. In the course of this general clean-up he comes across a dog, with whom he makes friends instantly. Hunks, as he names the dog, proves a real pal.

Shortly after his meeting with Hunks, Tom runs across a wandering tribe of Apache Indians. Their chief is Black Hawk. Unknown to Tom, the chief cherishes the hope of wiping out the "whites" in the country, and to help him to collect the necessary knowledge before a successful raid can be made on the white

settlements, he offers to take Tom on the trail and show him how to become a successful rancher.

Unconscious of the motive underlying the offer Tom accepts. Later, the young Britisher distinguishes himself by "sticking in the saddle" of an untamed mare called Malinka. This so pleases the chief that he makes a present of the mare to his paleface friend. It is intended that the tribe should hit the trail to hunt bear and mountain lion. Equipped accordingly, Tom acquits himself well by killing a father Bruin. The dead bear's partner, however, enraged at her loss, trails the unsuspecting Tom. The young Britisher is soon in difficulties, and the bear is about to account for him when the faithful Hunks comes to the rescue.

Encouraged by his success, Hunks some time later attacks a puma. The odds are too great, however, and Tom, realising his faithful companion's fate, aims at the puma, hoping against hope that his shot will be in time to save Hunks. The puma drops dead, leaving Hunks, his eyes closed, limp and still at his master's feet.

(Now read on.)

the Apache who had pushed Hunks into Malinka's stall, and whom White Cat had burnt at the stake. The pup had licked that scar.

Hunks was a month getting back the use of his limbs, and it was nearly two before he was entirely himself again; but, thanks to White Cat's skill, the good nursing, and, last and not least, a constitution of whipcord and wire, he completely recovered.

His coat was never the same again. He had a great bare triangular place on his shoulder for the rest of his life, and a line of brown hair along the flank where skin and flesh had been laid bare by the puma's claws; but these blemishes were marks of honour.

Apart from this, the rest, good food, and comfort which the animal enjoyed made a vast difference in his size and general appearance. He was as large now as a bull-mastiff. His chest was immensely broad, his limbs like a small lion's. Beauty he did not possess. The teeth of his lower jaw, which had grown with the rest of him, were so big now that at the slightest provocation they protruded beyond his lips and gave him an expression of ferocity entirely foreign to his character.

He stood a little lower in front than behind, which, while it in no way impeded his activity—for all his limbs were long and very wiry—gave him a very bulldoggy appearance. But, on the other hand, his hair was silky and long, a very fine collie black and tan. His curly tail was thick as a brush, and, in spite of his broad chest, he ran as a wolf runs, with the long, loping step which never seems to tire.

While Hunks convalesced Tom worked hard. At first he did not go far from camp, as the pup was feverishly restless in his absence. But he employed many useful hours in learning to lasso and ride, and in teaching himself to shoot. His accuracy with a revolver became a byword. He could bring down a bird on the wing, kill a hare running, and shoot a prairie-dog through the eye at thirty yards; rabbits he picked off at any distance up to a hundred yards. His rifle shooting was only moderate, but he was quick in the handling of weapons. And White Cat, after a mock fight, declared he would never try to kill him with a knife again. This joke was greatly enjoyed by the party—a fact significant of Tom's position among the Apaches.

He was a good rider now, though, from an Indian's point of view, he would never be first-rate. Apache babies ride before they walk—which Tom privately thought accounted for the shape of their legs; and, though the boy could sit Malinka at any time and under all circumstances without a saddle, and could shoot accurately over her back, flying at full speed with one foot in the stirrup and the whole of his body crouched behind hers, that perfect ease and grace and horse-possession which are a part of the riding Indian's make-up, were not for him and never would be.

In the important art of roping he became perfectly proficient. Moreover, he learnt to rope Indian ponies—which is as different from roping cattle as a hurdle-race to a gallop in the park. A cow or steer blunders on in a straight line, and only turns aside when it hears the whistle of the lariat about its ears; a pony twists and wheels and ducks, like a light-weight boxer in the ring. Tom could not, of course, acquire the experience of heeling over the animal when caught, because the wildest of the ponies stood like a lamb when it felt the loose pull upon neck and limb; but, as Black Hawk said, any cowpuncher would teach him that trick in an afternoon.

All this time—four months—the Indians had gone about their lawful business, hunting; and, the season being good and the men picked for the job, they had done well. Pack-ponies were weighed down with well-cured skins of bear and puma, fox and skunk, antelopes and wild-cat. They were not in such condition as would have satisfied the Hudson Bay Company; but they would sell quite well, and Black Hawk saw promise of a good store of dollars when they reached the settlements.

The mind of the chief, however, was now full of a much deeper purpose. Unknown to Tom, messengers had been coming and going all these past months between the camp and the governing council of the Apache nation far away south. Black Hawk's plan to use Tom as a tool to win the confidence of white settlers while Apache spies prowled and took notes for a mass attack next summer had been made known to, and approved by, the council, which was composed of the leading chiefs of the tribe. It heard of the progress of Tom's education and his growing popularity with the party; and it was due to a hint from the chiefs that Black Hawk, during the last weeks of the hunting season, offered to teach Tom the Apache language. When Tom agreed with enthusiasm Black Hawk went further. He told the boy that he had gained the affection of all the party, and especially of himself and White Cat, to such a degree that a request was going to be submitted to the council to confer upon him the honorary title of a chief in the tribe.

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"It has been done only once in the history of our nation," Black Hawk said. "That was when my father lived, fifty years ago. It is a gift we make to a friend we most trust."

Tom was overcome.

"But I have done nothing to deserve it!" he exclaimed.

"Huh!" grunted Black Hawk. "You like, then, to be chief?"

The boy's face was sufficient answer.

"I could never have a greater honour."

Black Hawk assented with his hardest and most immovable expression.

"But, Tom," he said, after a pause, "no man, white or red, can be chief in our nation until he has done service. You see?"

Tom saw, and, all unconscious of the thoughts behind those inscrutable eyes, exclaimed:

"I should refuse the honour on any other terms. What can I do?"

"Time come when you shall know, but not yet. We hunt one moon more. Then you go to the place of white men. Will you be ready to do what I may ask?"

Tom smiled as their eyes met.

"I would do anything in my power for your sake alone. You have been my friend."

The chief's face grew cold.

"It is well. The day before we leave mountains I tell you something."

Tom went to work to learn Apache with a will, and, having already picked up many phrases of ordinary conversation, and become thoroughly used to Indian mannerisms, he was an apt pupil.

He never forgot those last weeks on the trail. Everyone was in good humour, and the report having got about that Tom was to be put forward for election as a chief, all the Indians became his closest friends. As for White Cat, his delight at the prospect knew no bounds. Black Hawk had said nothing more to his son of the scheme for using Tom. The affection which had grown up between the lads made it unsafe; though, to do Black Hawk justice, he had no intention of harming Tom personally, if it could be helped.

He had even a vague idea at the back of his head for getting Tom out of the country before war began next year. So everything went smoothly as the party made their way back to the country near Servita. They halted the evening of the last day twenty miles to the north of the town, the opposite side to the Doggett Ranch.

This evening, as on the first day of all, the chief, with White Cat and Tom, sat apart from the rest at a camp-fire of their own.

"My son," Black Hawk began, "to-morrow, as the sun rises, you will leave us. With the clothes you have brought in your sacks on your back and your legs, you ride upon your new saddle to Servita. Make yourself known to that bank where all your dollars lie. That first, white men only think much of people who have dollars. But tell not one man how great a store you have, or they steal from you every cent."

Tom laughed.

"Come, chief, I am not a fool. Even you do not know what I possess."

Black Hawk waved a careless hand, though a look came into his slanting eyes which belied his words.

"Huh! Dollars are nothing to me. Here are my words."

He paused and cleared his throat in a way which made Tom listen attentively.

"The Apache nation wish to live at peace with white men. It is the wish of the council of the nation that our young brother, when white men know that he has dollars, and love him, shall tell them that all Apaches are their friends. Will he do this? I want his word now."

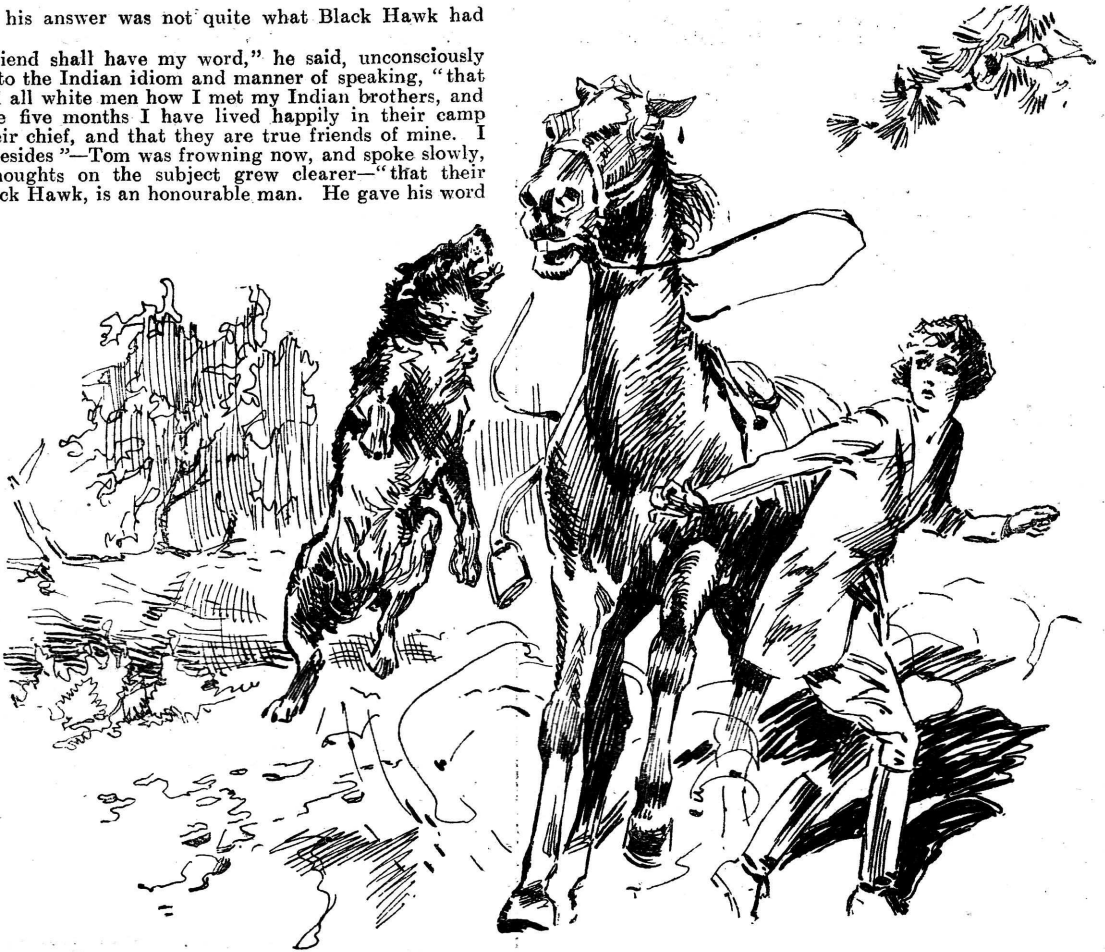
He paused, looked hard at Tom, and resumed the pipe he was smoking, and which he had waved in the air to emphasise his words.

Tom straightened up. He was still a boy in mind, though, physically, after all his exercise and hard work, stronger than many full-grown men. But he had a quick brain. The service he was to do the Indians would be no easy task. He was to be, in a sense, a sort of ambassador from the chiefs to the white settlers living on the borders of the great Indian Reservations—the land allocated to them by the United States Government. Now, Tom was the descendant of an old Lancashire family, and North-countrymen have shrewdness in their bones. It struck him at once that there was something singular in this proceeding.

He knew nothing of the present relations of Indians and whites; but he had never heard a good word spoken of Apache Indians, and many bad ones. Black Hawk's own remark about the white men's worship of dollars showed what he thought of them. Assuredly, then, the mission of a friend to both parties was going to be a tough proposition. He did not shrink from it, but it was some time before he spoke,

and then his answer was not quite what Black Hawk had expected.

"My friend shall have my word," he said, unconsciously falling into the Indian idiom and manner of speaking, "that I will tell all white men how I met my Indian brothers, and that these five months I have lived happily in their camp under their chief, and that they are true friends of mine. I will say besides"—Tom was frowning now, and spoke slowly, as his thoughts on the subject grew clearer—"that their chief, Black Hawk, is an honourable man. He gave his word



Hunks advanced quietly and braced himself for a leap, and when the cruel teeth of the runaway would have caught the girl's flesh, what they encountered was Hunks' lower jaw. (See page 27.)

to me, and he has kept it. His son, White Cat, is my comrade and my dear friend. The warriors in this party have become my comrades, too. I trust them because I know them. Is that what you wish that I should say?"

It was not exactly. Black Hawk was far too shrewd himself not to see the limitation implied in Tom's guarantee. He meant that he would speak for the Apaches whom he knew, not for the nation.

Not a sign of the chief's thoughts, however, appeared on his face. He merely smoked in silence.

"Good talking," he said at last. "Say that all the men of our nation are the same as those you have known. Tell white men that the council of the nation—which is me"—he placed his finger on his own breast—"are to be trusted, even as you trust White Cat, your dear friend. Have I your word?"

He rose as he spoke, and did what he had never yet done—stretched out both hands to Tom. Then he repeated his question.

"Have I your word?"

Tom took the red hands and gripped them fast, and Black Hawk was struck by the increased strength of his fingers since he had touched them last.

"Yes," Tom answered. "I will carry any promise made by you. You have my word, Black Hawk."

"It is good!" Black Hawk said gravely.

But Tom noticed at the time, and was to remember afterwards, that Black Hawk's fingers were very cold, though it was a warm night.

Then a very curious thing happened. The sun had only just set, and it was still light. A shrieking of birds overhead, and from the top of a tall pine-tree above the camp flew a turkey-bustard, a very rare sight, for these birds are nearly extinct. Chasing the bustard was an eagle, the great white eagle of the Rockies. It pounced on its prey in mid-air, gripped it in its talons, and began to soar slowly away over the canon. But two shots rang out, and both birds fell. Tom had pulled his revolver and killed them both.

The Indians crowded round. It was very good shooting, and a murmur of praise was heard on all sides.

A thought struck Black Hawk, and, with an exclamation which commanded attention from all, he laid a hand on Tom's shoulder, and pointed at the dead birds.

"Apaches," he said, speaking in their own tongue, "this is a sign. The council of your nation had received from me and my son a petition that our brother Tom shall be a chief in the tribe. He will tell to all white men his love for us, and make them trust you, and welcome you into their ranches. I would send a message to our council. Is it your will, when this service has been done, and he becomes blood-brother to us all, that he take the name of the king of birds which he has killed to-night, and thereafter be known as White Eagle, of our nation? Give me your hearts."

He turned and raised his right hand. There was a dead silence. Then, White Cat leading, there came, sharp, clear-cut, and hard, the Apache war-cry, and from every man the words in chorus:

"It is our will!"

Hunks Takes a Licking!

IT was the last day of August when Tom, having bade farewell to Black Hawk's party, and shaken hands twenty separate times, paced away on Malinka towards Servita, Hunks galloping gaily at his side.

What was in Tom's mind as the mountain-side faded out of sight, and he approached the homes of white men once more, was the talk with Black Hawk the night before, and the undertaking he had given to the chief.

It was just like Tom, this. Most fellows would not have troubled about the matter until they were brought face to face with it. It was not going to be a very pleasant job. Then why think about it beforehand? Servita would probably be quite a decent-sized town by this time. There

ought to be fun going for a chap who had seven thousand dollars in the bank. Tom was not eighteen yet, and in perfect health. He ought to have thought about pleasure and his own business, and not worried over Apache Indians.

But a person is as he is made, and here was Tom, not so long ago a careless sailor-boy who did not know the difference between a prairie-dog and a coyote, now pondering deeply over what he could do to solve one of the toughest problems in the history of man—the reconciliation of two great races, white and red, which have no common ideals and no common sympathies, and which, in the nature of things—because both want to live in a country where there is only room for one—must stand in bitter opposition to each other, the weakest going to the wall.

What would have happened to Tom if he had reached Servita in this state of mind, with only one idea in his head, to justify, and at once, for that was his way, the coming honour of chieftainship, and the title of White Eagle in the Apache Nation, we really do not know. Something pretty violent, probably, for Servita men were a hard and bitter crowd, and had a short way with cranks. In plain language, he would have made a fool of himself. But he was saved from this fate; and the person who saved him was Hunks. The pup deserved no thanks for this, and got none. It all happened, indeed, through a burst of mischief which nearly ended in tragedy.

It was noon. The three comrades, though in hardest condition, were very hot and thirsty, for they had been on the trail five hours. Malinka's head drooped; Tom's mouth was dry and his lips were sticky; Hunks' tongue lolled out about a yard.

On the left had appeared a bunch of willow-trees, which always mean water; and Tom noticed from the slope of the ground about him, and the rougher texture of the grass, that he was reaching river country. He decided now to turn off the trail and strike for those willows, and make a halt. He had passed two houses some little distance away, and the trail was widening. He could not be very far off Servita now.

Tom went slowly, paying no attention to anything, so hard was he thinking about his problem. Hunks, on the contrary, paid attention to everything, and being impatient to get to the water, trotted ahead.

Suddenly he stopped. Something was moving in the grass. Its back was towards him, and it was going very slowly the same way. Hunks stared petrified. The thing was a dog. Now it had to be remembered that, since he could walk, probably, Hunks had never seen another dog. He had a faint remembrance of his mother, because, just before he was weaned, she had punished him rather severely for pinning her by the ear. But the beast he saw now was not in the least like his mother. It was a soft-looking thing, round and fat, with a long, white-and-brown coat, big lolly ears, and a very curious tail.

It was the tail that did it. But for this, Hunks would have claimed acquaintance in the usual way, and there would have been no trouble. Perhaps he was jealous, because it was quite a different kind of tail from his own—short, perky, upstanding, and tufty. This dog, to be precise, was a Clumber spaniel, with a pedigree as long as your arm. Be Hunks' reasons what it may, no sooner had he cast eyes upon this dog than, with the cunning of half a dozen foxes, and the swift ferocity of a pack of wolves, he stalked it, darted upon it, placed a heavy paw upon its neck, and grabbed that tail.

Really, Hunks had excellent intentions. A little pinch, a gentle shake, could do no dog harm. He would make

friends afterwards. At least, that was what was in his mind. But he had not counted on the feelings of the other dog. It was a proud beast, and inclined to be irascible in temper. The most indulged of pets, and jealously guarded from all harm, it had never experienced the slightest inconvenience, in mind or body, since its importation as a small puppy from a famous English kennel several years ago. It was also, as dogs are liable to become when brought up in cotton-wool, an arrant coward.

In consequence, when Hunks' paw descended, and his teeth closed upon the tail, and the dog was suspended suddenly in air and shaken, that spaniel nearly had an apoplectic fit. It choked for an instant in palsied fright; then, struggling free—quite easily, for Hunks was holding it as a mother bear would mouth a cub—it tucked its tail between its legs, and scurried away for protection with the speed of a mad jack-rabbit, and squealed like fifty pigs.

Hunks had never heard such a sound or conceived a sight so dreadful. Too late, he wished he had let the thing alone. He stood appalled, quite still, with one paw raised. He was ashamed of himself. But the harm was done. Close by, but hidden from Hunks by a steep river-bank, was the spaniel's owner, a girl, mounted, watering her horse. The beast was a thoroughbred, with nerves which frayed at a touch.

The yell of the dog made him shy violently, and when the spaniel shot over the edge of the bank, and, losing its balance, rolled helplessly down upon him, howling louder than ever, the nerves of the horse gave way. He plunged, reared, lashed out savagely with his heels, caught the bit between his teeth, and bolted.

How the rider kept her seat was a mystery, but riding with or without a saddle had been second nature to her since childhood. Somehow she held on, clinging to the saddle with all her strength, and, with one despairing cry, resigned herself to her fate.

Tom had not witnessed the incident that led to all this: Hunks was too far ahead. But he heard that cry, saw the horse cross the river, very shallow in summer, in three bounds, spring up the other side, and gallop away, clearly beyond all control.

The danger of the ride was clear to him. The country was broken. The soil, though soft in some places, was very rough and stony in others, and honeycombed everywhere with prairie-dog holes. Only the sure-footed Indian ponies could gallop safely over such ground, and Tom perceived at a glance that this beast was not Western bred. He did not hesitate a moment, therefore. A word to Malinka, a touch of the spur, and he was on a runaway's trail, the mare galloping at the top of her speed.

It was a grim chase, and at first seemed a hopeless one. Malinka was fast, and Tom, by reason of only two meals a day and much exercise, was light enough; but the girl's horse was a far better beast, and its rider a featherweight.

Presently, however, Tom noticed that the direction the horse was taking led up a long hill towards the foot of a mountain. It would have to turn right or left when it reached that place, and there was a short cross-cut to the right. If the runaway kept its feet and went that way he could overtake it. But how to make sure that it turned to the right?

It was a mere toss-up, and to the left the mountain-side was far away. In that direction the horse could go on for ever.

Malinka's head twitched slightly, and Tom discovered that, running ahead of them, was Hunks. He seemed to know that they were after that horse, and Tom could see that he was racing along, and gaining slightly on the mare. An idea came to him, though it was an absurdly desperate one. Hunks had learned to bring the ponies into camp. If he could only be made to understand an order now he might do signal service.

Tom called him, and Hunks raised his head. Tom indicated the horse, pointed to the left, and then moved his hand slowly to the right. He did it three times, the third time swinging Malinka well to the right, with a shout of: "Go, lad!"

Hunks understood and went. He was very unhappy. No heroic desire filled his heart, as it should have done, to rescue a beautiful damsel like a dog of romance. He thought the whole affair utterly absurd. She was a stranger, and of no interest to him; her horse a stupid, hysterical lunatic. And it was so hot! But his master wanted it done, and, therefore, it must be done at any cost.

With one sharp yap of intelligence, the dog turned to the left, and broke into a speed he had not attempted yet.

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He was all sheepdog now, and he went at the pace of a collie after the straying flock. He carried too much weight in that chest of his, but he had a mighty pair of bellows and immense power in his limbs. He could never manage to turn as swiftly as a collie turns, but he could beat any dog but a greyhound running in a straight line.

Hunks soon reached the top of the hill. On the other side was a slight decline, then the foot of the mountain—just here a wall of rock.

Hunks redoubled his efforts, for he saw the horse begin to swerve to the left. His master had disappeared, but he knew he was somewhere to the right, where the wall of rock swerved round. He knew that the horse must be made to go that way, and that now everything depended upon himself. So, turning a little more to the left, Hunks set his bulldog jaw, and, striking a bee-line for the foot of the mountain, at a place where he calculated he could cut across the runaway's path, he threw every ounce of energy and strength that was left in him into the race.

It was a near thing. The horse was a very powerful beast and extremely fresh. Its rider had stolen him out of her father's stables, after having been strictly forbidden to mount it under any circumstances whatever. It had a mouth of iron, and the temper of Beelzebub, and that temper the yowling spaniel and the horrid thud of its fat body against his feet had thoroughly aroused. He did not feel the girl on his back. The prominent teeth in his Roman nose were set as hard as the dog's, and he was in a mood to run all day. He had been imported from the Old Country for a fabulous sum. His sire was a famous racehorse, and his dam a hunter in the Shires. Hunks had his work cut out.

The dog scored first point by reaching the mountain before the horse, and seeing it come charging towards him. This gave him a moment to breathe and to think. He needed it. The ground here was an expanse of coarse grass, dotted with larch saplings, which, behind where Hunks now stood, increased in number until they became an almost impassable grove of young trees. It was plain enough that if the runaway plunged into that grove his rider would be swept off in a twinkling.

The dog knew this, or perhaps we should say felt it by instinct. He saw the girl tugging desperately at her reins; the horse gave an ugly toss of his obstinate head and came on straight for those trees, like a stone from a catapult. Hunks now began to bark. It was no ordinary bark, but the roar of the bulldog at bay, with all the additional volume of sound of a sheep-dog's bay when he calls on the flock to turn. The horse had never heard anything like it before, and he was filled with loathing and dread. He had always hated this country. He knew perfectly well that the ground was treacherous and that he might fall and break his leg at any moment; but, being out of temper, he did not care. Now, somehow, with that menacing yell in his ears, he began to care. Half-consciously he slackened pace. Then, catching sight of Hunks right in his path—a Hunks with teeth bared, ruff out, big head in air, swart and gigantic, he pulled in abruptly and made a sharp turn to the left.

That was what the dog wanted. He would head the horse round this way and get him going straight for the master. But Hunks had not counted on those trees being in the way, nor had the horse. At the place where he made his turn two saplings were growing close together side by side. The beast had not seen them, and he crashed into one, and then ricocheted into the other, caught his forefoot in a root, pivoted half round, and fell on his head. His rider was thrown some distance, and if there had been another tree in the way she must have been killed. But there was a clear, open space of soft bunch grass, and being so light she came down almost without shock, full length on her back.

The child, she was hardly more, recovered immediately and sprang to her feet; the horse also. The trees were green wood; his head had slid sideways along soft ground. He was not hurt at all. But he was now in a dangerous temper, and when he sprang to his feet he snorted savagely, and was ready to strike with teeth and heels anything that came near him.

The girl, however, did not know this. Seeing that the beast was loose, she ran to him to pick up the trailing rein. At this the animal's ears flattened against his head, he showed the whites of his eyes, and as his rider stooped he charged her.

But something came straight for him. Hunks had been watching matters closely. His first instinct had been to go to the girl when she fell; then seeing her rise without hurt, he turned his attention to the horse, and what he saw made every hair bristle on his back. He advanced silently, braced himself for a leap, and when the cruel teeth of the runaway would have caught the girl's flesh, what they encountered was Hunks' lower jaw. This contact was painful for the horse, but much more so was the grip Hunks now got upon the steel bit, for which he had aimed, and on which he now threw the whole of his weight.

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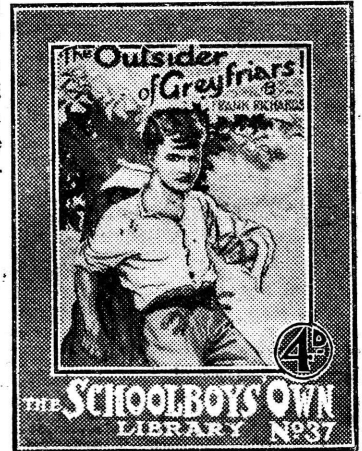
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That horse had a nerve-shattering experience. Hunks weighed a hundred pounds. Every ounce of this fell dead upon the runaway's neck. He could not bite; he could not kick. He could hardly move. It was as much as he could possibly do to keep his feet at all. Cold and desperate fright seized him. He thought no more of demolishing his rider or anybody else. He only wanted to get free. He staggered back, shook his head furiously, and shuddered through all his being as growl followed growl from the throat of the black beast which held him, and those gleaming fangs, hooked closely upon the bit, bruised his lips and seemed every instant about to transfer their hold to his mouth.

But Hunks had no thought of letting go. He was as cool as the horse was nervous. His growls were for effect, and all his energy was directed to keeping the animal's head to the ground, to prevent those powerful forefeet splitting his own skull. It was his intention to hold on, and keep the horse still, until his master came. But this did not happen for several minutes, and in the meantime Hunks found that this horse was not his only enemy.

The pup, we know, was clumsy, and it so happened that he collided with his rider with no little force, and the impact of his body threw her down. She had been unconscious of the danger. She did not know Hunks, and in her ignorance of the situation she imagined he was some wild, half-mad dog which had wantonly attacked her horse. Being a fearless person and loving horses, she proceeded to punish this interfering beast with all her strength, and Hunks, to his infinite astonishment, found himself being soundly thrashed with a riding whip, and heard a shrill voice ordering him to let go.

The pup paid no attention whatever to the command. He knew exactly what he was about, and it was the first principle of his life never to obey anyone but his master. As for the thrashing, it was a very trivial affair to Hunks, who had a thick coat and was as hard as a nail. But the matter was the reverse of trivial to Tom when he arrived on the scene. He divined at once why Hunks had seized the animal, and only the immediate need of securing it kept him from expressing his feelings to its rider in no measured terms.

But he had to finish his job first; and Hunks was told to let go. He did so with great relief, thankful to resign all responsibility into his master's hands. The horse thereupon reared, plunged back, and fondly imagined that he was free to resume his pranks. But Tom's hand shot forward with a rope; Malinka drove her forefeet into the earth, like knives, and the astonished runaway felt a horrid hairy substance settle about his neck, and when he threw his strength against it lost his breath, his heels flew from under him, and he fell, a prisoner at last, choking to the ground.

The appearance of a man and the roping of her horse thoroughly astonished the lady with the whip. She saw now

(Continued overleaf.)

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WHITE EAGLE!

(Continued from
previous page.)

that this dog had been acting under orders, and when the horseman, after slackening the noose round his captive's neck, rubbing it gently to restore circulation, and then bringing it to its feet, caressed the cur and called it by endearing names, she became not a little embarrassed.

But Miss Sadie Chapin, formally, to introduce her, was a young person whose will had been law to every member of the other sex with whom she had been acquainted from babyhood. The only child of a rich man, who doted upon her,

she was accustomed to find that people not only did her will, but ran to do it; and she ruled her father's ranch, his servants, and himself with complete and unquestioned authority.

"Oh! Is that your dog?" she said, "I thought he was a stray attacking my horse. I hope I haven't hurt him very much."

Tom stared at her for a while without speaking. He had been furiously angry, and while attending to the horse, was nursing his wrath, determined to drive in some home-truths which would not easily be forgotten.

"But when he saw the person he had to deal with, he couldn't do it."

She was such a slip of a thing, not more than fifteen, if that, with fair curly locks very much dishevelled at the moment, great blue eyes, and an impudent mouth. She was straight as a dart, but slender as a lily, and looked as if a breath would blow her away; yet, after coming through great danger, and being heavily thrown, the first thing she had done was to whack old Hunks!

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