

SPLENDID, LONG,  
COMPLETE STORY OF

"STRINGER & CO.!"—INSIDE

# The BOYS' 2<sup>d</sup> HERALD

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ON SALE EVERY TUESDAY.

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**A LANCASHIRE LAD IN LONDON.**

Jim Leader, the hero of our remarkable story, "DON'T GO TO LONDON, LAD!"—Inside.

## Another Splendid Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars School!



# Jack Drake, Detective.

Another of these Splendid  
Stories Here Next Week.  
By Owen Conquest.

### Bunter's Old Pal!

"FERRERS LOCKE!"  
"Yes."

"The giddy detective?" asked Jack Drake.

"The celebrated detective," said Billy Bunter reprovingly. "I know him jolly well, you know. In fact, he's coming down to Greyfriars to-day chiefly to see me."

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and Drake of the Remove had just come out of the schoolhouse to go down to the gates when Billy Bunter buttonholed him. Bunter was hanging about the steps, apparently on the look-out for the expected distinguished visitor.

"You've never seen him, of course?" said Bunter, patronisingly.

"Never," agreed Drake.

"I suppose you've heard of him?" said Bunter, with a touch of scorn.

"I suppose everybody's heard of him, more or less," said Drake. "Isn't he a relation of Dr. Locke, our headmaster?"

"Of course he is—he's coming to see the Head to-day. I—I mean, he's really coming to see me, but he will call on the Head as well. Last time he was here we were quite pally," said Bunter. "Wharton knows him, but not so well as I do. I'll tell you what, Drake, I'll introduce you if you like."

The Owl of the Remove eyed Drake anxiously through his big spectacles. Drake was glancing past him, towards a gentleman who had entered at the school gates, and was coming towards the house. He was a rather tall and slim young man, with a calm, clear-cut face and very penetrating eyes. There was enough resemblance between his features, and those of Dr. Locke, for Drake to guess the young man's identity. Billy Bunter, whose back was towards the newcomer, rattled on unconsciously.

Drake chuckled.

Ferrers Locke was only a dozen paces from Bunter's fat back, and he heard every word uttered by the fat junior as he came on. Quite a peculiar expression came over his face.

"The last time he was here," continued Bunter, "we were not end pals. I helped him in a rather difficult case, in fact. When he went away he said, 'Billy'—he calls me Billy, you know—he said, 'Billy, don't forget me next time you run up to town, and bring any friend you like with you.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Drake.

"I always call him Ferrers—we're so pally," said Bunter. "Now, be a decent chap, Drake, and squeeze out that ten bob, so that I can stand Ferrers a decent tea in the study—he expects it of me—"

"Does he?" said a quiet voice over Bunter's shoulder.

"Oh, crumbs!"

Billy Bunter spun round.

His spectacles almost fell off his fat little nose at the sight of Ferrers Locke—whom he knew well enough by sight, though not quite so intimately as he would have conveyed to Drake.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Drake, greatly tickled.

"You—you beast! You saw him coming, and never told me!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, Mr. Locke—how—how—how do you do?"

"So you always call me Ferrers, do you?" asked Mr. Locke, fixing his eyes on the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"Nunno!" gasped Bunter.

"And I always call you Billy?"

"I—I—I—," stammered Bunter. "Nunno! I—I—I really meant to say that—that—that you don't always call me Billy, sir."

"I think I should call you an untruthful young rascal, if I called you anything," remarked Mr. Locke.

And he passed into the house, leaving Billy Bunter gasping, and Drake chuckling.

Jack Drake laughed and sauntered away towards the gates. His chum, Dick Rodney, had gone down to Friar-dale, and Drake was to meet him there and walk back to the school with him.

### An Interpreter Wanted!

"STOP, please!"

Jack Drake stopped.

He was half-way to the village, at the point where the lane dipped and ran between high banks overshadowed by trees. Close up against the steep, grassy bank on one side, a motor-car was halted, and Drake glanced at it carelessly as he came along. The car was closed, even the windows being shut, though the afternoon was sunny and pleasant. Two men stood by the car, one evidently the chauffeur; the other, a slim, pale, sandy-complexioned man dressed in grey tweeds. It was the latter who turned quickly, as Drake came along, and called to him.

The Greyfriars junior stopped, supposing that the car was in trouble, and that assistance was wanted. The man in grey came quickly towards him.

"Excuse me," he said, very civilly, "I judge by your dress that you belong to the big school yonder."

He jerked a thumb towards the distant tower that stood over the trees in the direction of Greyfriars.

"Yes," answered Drake, surprised at the question. "I belong to Greyfriars."

"What Form are you in?"

"The Lower Fourth," said Drake, still more surprised, and beginning to feel inclined to resent the stranger's curiosity. "Anything more you'd like to ask?" he added, with a touch of sarcasm.

"Please excuse me—I have a reason for asking," said the man in grey, still very civilly. "I suppose you study French in your Form at Greyfriars?"

"French!" ejaculated Drake.

"Yes."

"Of course," said Drake. "But I'm blessed if I can see what it matters to a complete stranger."

"You can speak French?"

"Yes, more or less," said Drake. "Is that all?" He made a movement to pass on, really wondering whether the man in grey was quite right in his mind. He had never been so astonished in his life.

"Stop a minute, please. If you can speak French, you can be of assistance to a man who has been hurt in an accident," explained the man in grey. "He can speak no English, and we cannot understand what he wants to tell us."

"Oh!" ejaculated Drake.

"Will you come and see him?" asked the man in grey. "It will only take a few minutes in the car."

Drake paused.

He was quite willing to oblige; indeed, he would have been eager to render any assistance to a hapless foreigner who had met with an accident in a country where he could not make himself understood.

But there was something so odd about the whole matter that the junior hesitated. The man in grey was watching him with shifty, restless eyes, and the chauffeur had drawn nearer to Drake, and had a look as if he was prepared for a spring. It flashed into Drake's mind that if he refused the two men intended to use force; and if they wanted an interpreter, why had they not driven on to the school instead of waiting in the lane in this surreptitious way to waylay a schoolboy?

"Will you step into the car?" asked the man in grey, edging nearer to Drake as he spoke.

Drake backed a pace.

"I think not," he answered. "If the matter's as you say, I'm willing to help you, but—"

"There is no time to waste. Please step into the car."

"I won't!" said Drake, coolly. "My hat! Hands off, you rotter!"

He put up his hands as the man in grey leaped at him. Drake was a "good man with his hands." He drove his fist at the sandy face, and the man in grey reeled back. But at the same moment, the chauffeur sprang on the junior from behind, and grasped his collar and dragged him over.

"Quick!" he panted.

Drake struggled furiously. He was utterly in the dark as to what the two rascals wanted, or intended; but he resisted with all his strength. But the chauffeur was a powerful man, and Drake was almost helpless in the grasp of the ruffian.

The man in grey was on his feet again in a twinkling, and he threw open the door of the car.

Drake, resisting fiercely, was thrust into the car, and the man in grey followed him in. The chauffeur flung the junior sprawling on the floor, and closed the door when his confederate was inside. A moment or two more, and the engine was throbbing.

Drake scrambled furiously to his feet.

"You scoundrel!" he panted. "I—"

"Quiet!"

The muzzle of a revolver was thrust fairly into Drake's face as he was about to clutch at the door to open it. Over the weapon, the shifty eyes of the man in grey glittered.

"Quiet, you young fool!"

Drake started back.

"Sit down!"

The junior dropped into the seat. He stared blankly at the revolver, and the glittering eyes behind it.

"No harm is intended you," said the man in grey, more quietly. "The matter is just as I said—you are wanted to speak to the Frenchman, who cannot speak English, and who has been hurt. You will not be harmed, and you will be paid for your services, if you like. But you must come with me, and if you give any trouble—" He made a motion with the revolver.

The car was moving now.

Drake sat silent.

He could see that the man was desperate and determined, and though he was not conscious of any feeling of fear, he realised that resistance was out of the question. Even if the rascal had not ventured to pull the trigger he could have stunned the junior with one blow of the heavy metal butt. And Drake was somewhat reassured, too. It seemed unlikely enough that these two men, complete strangers to him, could mean him any harm. That they needed a French interpreter was pretty clear, though Drake was sure that the matter was not precisely as the sandy man stated.

He sat quietly as the car rolled on.

The windows were closed, and the blinds were down; and it was very hot and stuffy inside the car. But as Drake made a movement to the window the man in grey snapped out again.

"Sit still!"

Drake shrugged his shoulders.

"Why shouldn't I see where we're going?" he asked.

"Silence!"

"Where is the Frenchman you spoke of?"

"You will know soon enough. Silence!"

The car was putting on speed now, and dust rose round it in a cloud. There was a jingling of bicycle bells on the road, and a voice that Drake knew well, shouted:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Do you want all the road with that blessed car?"

It was the voice of Bob Cherry, of the Remove.

Drake could not see him, or his companions, but that shout was enough. He knew that the car had passed Harry Wharton and Co. on the road; and he was aware that the Famous Five had ridden over to Highcliffe that afternoon. So the car was passing by way of Highcliffe! He knew the direction he was taking now.

But for that clue, he would have had no idea of his direction—for the car had made many rapid turns, which Drake guessed were intended to baffle him if he was trying to guess the route.

The car rushed on, and the cyclists were left far behind. little dreaming that their schoolfellow was a prisoner in the automobile.

Drake sat quiet, not allowing his face to give any indication of the fact that he knew now exactly where he was.

But all his senses were on the alert.

Who the two rascals were, and what their object was, he could not even guess, but their actions were proof enough that there was foul play of some kind in progress. And Drake was determined that he would know where the car was heading for, carefully as the man in grey was keeping the secret. The blinds were too closely drawn for him to

see anything outside as the car rushed on. But if he could see nothing he could hear. There was a breeze blowing from the sea, and at first it had been behind the car, but after a time Drake noted that the car was driving against the wind.

Unless the wind had suddenly changed, the car was now heading back in the direction whence it had come.

The chauffeur was making a round of the country, in order to deceive the junior; his real destination was somewhere near the spot where he had been picked up.

The car slowed down at last. The engine was silent; and Drake heard the chauffeur descend from his seat. Then the man in grey broke his silence.

"You must be blindfolded now," he said. "Do not be afraid. No harm is meant, as I said before. But you are not to know where you are taken, for certain reasons. If you resist I shall stun you with the butt of this revolver. If you are sensible, you have nothing to fear."

"Oh, go ahead!" said Drake carelessly. "I don't mind, so long as I'm back in time for locking-up at Greyfriars."

The man looked at him keenly.

"You are a good distance from your school now," he said. "But you shall be taken back in good time, and then I would advise you to say nothing about what has happened; or evil may result to you. At what time is—what did you call it?—looking up, at your school?"

"Seven, to-day."

"You shall be home by seven. Now—"

The man in grey drew a muffler over Drake's head, and tied it behind, covering his face down to the mouth.

"Help him out, Jim." The man in grey was speaking. "It's all right."

A strong hand grasped Drake's arm, and he was lifted from the car. He could see nothing; but his ears were intently on the alert. He heard the sough of the wind in branches about him, and he felt grass under his feet. He was led on, and brambles brushed his clothes. Then a door opened, and closed again behind him; the muffler was drawn from his face, and a sudden glare of light dazzled him.

#### Drake's Device!

**J**ACK DRAKE blinked in the light, and stared about him. Round him were earthen walls, shored up with wooden beams. Overhead was a rough plank roofing. The floor under him was of earth. That he was underground he did not need telling, yet he had not descended. He knew that. He had walked down a slight slope, and that was all. There had been no steps.

He knew instinctively in what kind of place it was. It was a dug-out—an excavation in a hillside, used as a shelter during the air-raids in the war. There were plenty of such places up and down the country, deserted and falling into ruin since the war. It was a sort of tunnel excavated in the side of a hill, and ending in a large chamber shored up with timber. That old dug-out, deserted, and probably forgotten in the neighbourhood, had been chosen as a refuge by the man in grey and his confederate. For what?

The chauffeur had lighted a motor-lamp, which cast a brilliant light through the old dug-out. The rays fell upon a man seated on a stool, to which he was bound with strong, knotted ropes.

The man was dark in complexion, with a pointed, black beard, and curling moustache. Drake could see that he was a Frenchman, at a glance. This was the man, then, for whom he was to act as an interpreter. If Drake had believed the story of the man in grey before, he would have known now that it was false. The Frenchman was evidently a prisoner, bound so securely that he could not move neither hand nor foot. And a black bruise on the hapless man's forehead showed that he had been subjected to violence.

The man's black eyes twinkled in the light, as he turned them from one to another of his captors, and then, in astonishment, upon the schoolboy.

"Is this the chap—" began Drake.

"That is the man." The man in grey suit spoke quietly. "Listen to me. You are to ask him certain questions, which I shall dictate to you, and give me the answers in English. You understand? Either he cannot or will not speak English. So we need an interpreter. You will ask him the questions exactly as I dictate them to you—neither more nor less. You understand?"

"Yes," said Drake.

"Very good. If you attempt any trickery, you will not leave this place alive."

The two rascals drew aside, and conferred together in low tones. It was evident that they were not wholly satisfied in their minds, and that they were loth to trust Drake to interpret. But they had no choice about the matter, for it was equally evident that they could not speak the language of their prisoner.

Drake had a glimmering of how the matter stood.

The Frenchman had fallen into the hands of the two scoundrels—how, the bruised on the forehead showed. They wanted information from him, and the bar of a strange language was between them and their prisoner. It had been essential to obtain an interpreter.

To hire an interpreter in the ordinary way was evidently out of the question, and probably the man in grey and his accomplice had puzzled over the problem for some time before coming to a decision.

And they had decided that the safest means was to kidnap a schoolboy who could speak French, and force him to act as interpreter.

It was a cunning scheme, and the safest, probably, that the rascals could have hit upon.

Drake had been taken on a run of twenty miles in the car, and undoubtedly the man in grey supposed that the junior was under the impression that he was a great distance from Greyfriars.

If he told his story at the school afterwards it was probable that such an extraordinary tale would not be believed; but in any case a search, if it took place, would take place a distance from the spot where the Frenchman was held a prisoner. That Drake had divined that he had been brought back to a spot near where he had started from, the rascals could not guess.

That knowledge Drake kept to himself.

The muttering voices went on for several minutes, and at last the man in grey came towards the junior again. The chauffeur stood by, with his revolver in his hand now.

"You will now question him," said the man in grey. "You will repeat the questions exactly as I ask them."

"I understand."

"Ask him where the stones are."

"He says never," answered Drake.

"Yes. Ask no questions, you young fool, but do exactly as I tell you, or it will be the worse for you."

Drake turned to the Frenchman. The man's black eyes were fixed anxiously upon him.

He could see that Drake was not a member of the gang that had kidnapped him, and doubtless the sight of a schoolboy in Etons appraised him of how the matter stood.

"Ou sont les pierres?" asked Drake, repeating the sandy man's question in French.

The Frenchman shook his head.

"Answer!" hissed the man in grey. "Tell him to answer, boy."

"Repondez, si'l vous plait," said Drake, summoning up all his knowledge of French; and wishing, at that moment, that he had paid a rather more strict attention to the instructions of Monsieur Charpentier at Greyfriars.

"Jamais."

"What does he say?"

"He says never," answered Drake.

The man in grey clicked his teeth venomously.

"Tell him that if he does not answer he will be killed."

The stones to which the man in grey referred were evidently precious stones, and it was equally evidently a robbery in which the Greyfriars junior was called upon to assist.

Drake's eyes glittered at the thought.

He had not the remotest intention of assisting the thieves in their rascality; but he realised that he had to be very wary. His only thought was to assist the unfortunate man, and his brain worked rapidly. His only chance lay in the two rascals' ignorance of the language he was speaking.

"Il faut parler, on l'on vous teura," said Drake, in his best Fourth Form French. "Mais je suis prisonnier comme vous, et je suis votre ami."

He spoke quite calmly and unconcerned, as if his whole speech was in obedience to the orders of the man in grey. But his heart throbbed. If the rascal suspected that he had said more than he was ordered to say—

But there was no suspicion in the face of the man in grey. His mind was a blank in the French language. Drake had said: "I am a prisoner like you, and your friend."

For a moment Drake's heart had beaten almost to suffocation as he took the chance. But he had succeeded; and he knew now that he could say what he like in French, without the rascals being any the wiser, so long as his face did not betray him.

The Frenchman's eyes glimmered for a second.

He answered in French:

"Help me, if you can, my friend. My name is Legrand, and these scoundrels have kidnapped me to rob me."

"What does he say?" asked the man in grey impatiently.

"Give a chap a chance," said Drake coolly. "I haven't been trained as an interpreter. I must ask him to speak more slowly."

"Go on, then."

Drake proceeded, in French:

"They shall not rob you if I can help it. How did you come here?"

"I was knocked down last night in the street, and taken away in a car."

"What is he saying?" asked the man in grey.

"You have no right to keep him here," said Drake, on the spur of the moment.

"Tell him his life hangs by a thread," he said.

"Tell me where you were taken prisoner," said Drake, in French. "Put the name of the place in French, or they will catch it."

"Je comprends La cour de terre."

Drake almost smiled at that rendering of "Courtfield," the town near Greyfriars. But he understood.

"What is his answer?"

"You will not dare to kill him," said Drake.

"He shall see," said the man in grey.

"Yes." Drake hurried on in French. "As soon as I get away from here I'll get help for you somehow. Try to gain time with these villains until I can help you."

"What does he say?"

"He says he understands."

"But the stones—where are the stones?"

"I'll ask him again."

Drake repeated the question in French, and hurried on in the same language:

"Tell him anything to keep him quiet till to-morrow. By that time I'll have you out of this."

"Brave garçon!"

"Anything that will satisfy him for the present—"

"What are you saying now?" muttered the man in grey.

"I'm telling him to answer."

"Tell him his life shall pay for it if he does not speak at once."

"What shall I tell him, to satisfy him?" asked Drake in French.

"Tell him I placed the diamonds in the strong room at my hotel, and they will be given up to nobody but me personally."

Drake translated.

"Good!" said the man in grey.

He drew aside, and consulted with his confederate in low tones. Drake stood silent, waiting.

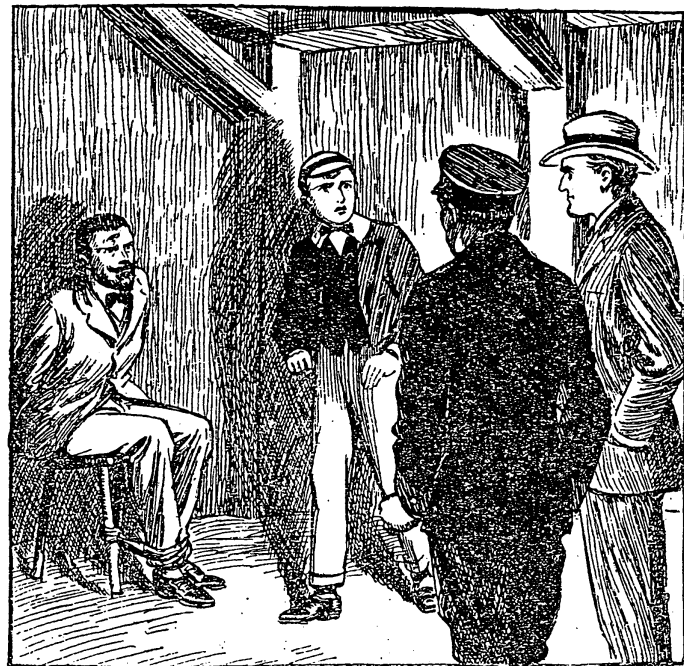
He could not venture to speak again without command. So far, he had avoided arousing suspicion that he was going beyond his instructions.

The man in grey turned back at last. Without speaking, he threw the muffler over Drake's head again, and the junior was led out of the dug-out.

The muffler was drawn from his head, and he found himself sitting beside the man in grey, and the car was rattling away through ruddy lanes at a great speed.

#### Ferrers Locke Takes a Hand!

**D**RAKE sat silent as the car ran on. The blinds were as carefully closed as before, and he could see nothing; but he knew that the wind was behind him. His face gave no sign of his thoughts. Once more the car was making a long round, to give him



The man's black eyes twinkled in the light, as he turned them from one to another of his captors, and then, in astonishment, upon the schoolboy. "Is this the chap—" began Drake. "That is the man!"

the impression that he had been taken a great distance from his school.

Mile after mile ran under the whirling wheels. The car turned and turned again, right and left, left and right, in a way that would have baffled Ferrers Locke himself to tell the direction it was taking. But after a time, Drake was aware that the keen wind was blowing directly against the car, and he knew that the chauffeur, after covering a great distance, had turned back. On and on ran the car.

No word was spoken by the man in grey during the long drive.

But the expression on his face indicated that he was satisfied with the result of the strange interview in the dug-out.

So far as Drake could see, the result had been anything but satisfactory; the rascals were no nearer to the precious stones of which they sought to rob their prisoner. They knew where the stones were—or thought they knew—and that was all.

The car stopped at last.

"You are free now," said the man in grey, breaking the silence. "You will be back at your school in good time, my boy, and I recommend you to say nothing of what has happened."

"I'm afraid the fellows would only think I was spinning a yarn if I did," answered Drake.

"Very likely. But in any case, say nothing. You have not been harmed, but if you chatter too much, harm may come to you," said the man in grey, menacingly. "Can you guess where you have been?"

"I know we've covered at least forty or fifty miles altogether," answered Drake. "Can't be much less than that."

"Nearer sixty," said the man in grey. "You've had a ride for nothing. Now all you've got to do is to forget what has happened. You step out here."

He opened the door of the car, and Drake stepped out. A moment more, and the door was slammed, and the car shot away at breakneck speed. If Drake had any thought of following it, the rascals were too quick for him. The car rounded a bend and vanished almost in a twinkling.

He was in Friardale Lane, not a dozen yards from the spot where he had been picked up by the kidnapers.

He stood reflecting for some moments. He had not the slightest intention of obeying the man in grey, and keeping the matter a secret. His only thought was to save the hapless Frenchman from the rascals' clutches. He thought of the police-station—and debated in his mind whether he should proceed there, or inform the Head first of what had taken place. And then he remembered that the Head's relative, Ferrers Locke, the famous detective, was at Greyfriars. That recollection decided him at once. He hurried on towards the school.

"Hallo, there you are!" Dick Rodney greeted him at the

gates. "You didn't come down to the village, you duffer I waited for you."

"Awfully sorry, old chap; I couldn't help it. I'll explain afterwards. Do you know whether Ferrers Locke is still here?"

"I believe he's dining with the Head this evening," said Rodney. "Bunter said so, and he generally knows things."

Drake hurried on into the schoolhouse. He tapped at the door of the Head's study.

"Come in!" came Dr. Locke's deep voice.

Drake entered. The Head was seated at the table, and Ferrers Locke's slim form stood by the window. Both of them looked at the junior as he came in.

"I am engaged now, Drake!" said the Head with some severity.

"I must speak to Mr. Locke, sir," said Drake. "It's important. I was going to the police, when I remembered that he was here—"

Ferrers Locke looked curiously at the junior.

"You have something to tell me, my boy?"

"Yes, sir; it's a case of kidnaping—and threatened murder," said Drake breathlessly. "A man's life is at stake, and—"

"Drake!" exclaimed the Head.

"It's true, sir," said Drake, desperately. "If you'll listen—"

"Let the boy tell his story, sir," said Ferrers Locke, his glance dwelling very curiously on Drake's face.

"You may proceed," said the Head.

And Drake plunged breathlessly into his story.

Saved by a Schoolboy.

FERRERS LOCKE listened quietly, his eyes still on the junior's flushed face. Dr. Locke sat mute with astonishment and a trace of incredulity in his look. It did not take the junior long to explain, and when he had finished the Head ejaculated:

"Bless my soul! Really, this most extraordinary story—"


Ferrers Locke crossed to the telephone and rang up the police-station at Courtfield. The Head, still amazed, drummed lightly on his desk with agitated fingers, while the detective was speaking over the wires. Drake waited in silence.

Ferrers Locke put up the receiver at last, and looked round.

"I have spoken to Inspector Grimes," he said. "A Frenchman named Legrand, staying at the Hotel Royal in Courtfield, has certainly disappeared. He did not return after going out for a walk in the town yesterday evening and nothing has been heard of him. His hat was found this morning, dented and stained with blood, and foul play is suspected."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Continued on next page.



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**JACK DRAKE, DETECTIVE—Continued from previous page.**

"Mr. Grimes tells me that Legrand represented a Paris dealer in precious stones," continued Ferrers Locke. "He was in Courtfield on business, and had with him several cases of jewels, which, however, he had lodged at the bank for safety. The rascals evidently kidnapped him in the hope of obtaining the diamonds, and were disappointed not to find any plunder upon his person. Probably he speaks a little English, at least; but adopted the plan of affecting not to understand, in order to gain time hoping to escape. That is why the rascals were driven to obtain an interpreter."

"You will take the matter in hand?" asked the Head.

"Certainly, in an unofficial way," answered the detective, with a smile. "I have told Mr. Grimes so, and he welcomes my aid. But it is to this boy, I think, that Mr. Legrand will owe his rescue, if we save him. From what you have told me, Drake, you appear to have some of the gifts of a born detective."

Drake smiled.

"Now answer me carefully," said Ferrers Locke. "You were driven in the car at least forty miles in all, out and back?"

"Quite that."

"Yet you think you were taken to a spot near Greyfriars?"

"By noting how the wind was blowing," said Drake. "Going it was behind us first, and then against us. Coming back, it was just the same. So I figured it out that we really made four journeys—ten miles or so past Highcliffe and back, and then again ten miles past Highcliffe and back. I know they think I believe that I was taken twenty miles from Greyfriars. I let them think I believed it, too."

"Which was very wise of you," said Ferrers Locke. "But did you allow for a possible change in the wind?"

"It was blowing from the sea when we started," said Drake. "It was still blowing from the sea when they landed me in Friardale Lane, a quarter of an hour ago."

"Very good." The detective mused for a few moments. "We may take it as certain that the Frenchman is being kept a prisoner within a very short radius of Courtfield, especially as the thieves would not wish to go too far from the place where they know the diamonds must be. No doubt there are plenty of disused dug-outs in this district, Dr. Locke?"

"A large number," said the Head. "This district suffered very severely in the air-raids in the war. There are at least a dozen old dug-outs still remaining in the hillsides, within a mile of the school. Some of them have fallen in, but some, I think, are intact."

"Most of the dug-outs have steps at the entrance," said Ferrers Locke. "The one in question, according to Drake, is simply tunnelled into the hill. That should be a clue. You saw nothing, of course, my boy, as you were blindfolded."

"I know there were trees. I heard the wind in the branches, and some brambles caught my sleeves," said Drake.

"Good. A hillside, with trees and brambles, in which a dug-out is tunnelled," said Ferrers Locke, "and within a short radius of Courtfield! That should not be difficult to find. Inspector Grimes probably knows every one of them."

"You are sure, Drake, that the rascal did not know that you were putting questions to the Frenchman, others than those dictated to you?"

"Quite sure, Mr. Locke."

"It was a clever device," said the detective approvingly. "You have a cool head and a quick wit, Master Drake. If your way in life were not otherwise marked out, I should be glad to secure your services myself; you would be very

useful to me. Good—very good! I think we shall lay these rascals by the heels very simply," said Ferrers Locke. "They broke off the interpreting as soon as the Frenchman told them the diamonds were in the strong-room at the hotel. Did they seem satisfied?"

"I thought so," said Drake. "I don't quite see why, because Legrand said the diamonds would only be handed over to him personally."

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"No doubt they have their own methods of penetrating an hotel strong-room," he said, "once they know the plunder is there. But as the diamonds are in reality lodged in the bank, they would meet with a disappointment, and then Heaven knows what might happen to their unhappy victim. I think you will be instrumental in saving a man's life, my boy. May I ask you to say nothing about your adventure to anyone till to-morrow?" said Ferrers Locke.

"Certainly, sir."

"A still tongue shows a wise head," said Mr. Locke, with a nod. "I shall see you again before I leave in the morning, Drake."

There was rather startling news at Greyfriars the following day. Billy Bunter was the first to spread the story of the arrest of two cracksmen in Courtfield. Bunter was always the first with news. It came out that the police, suspecting a burglary, had kept watch on the Hotel Royal, and that the two cracksmen had been caught in the very act of breaking into the strong-room.

There was one junior in the Remove who knew very well who those two cracksmen were—one the sandy man in grey, the other his confederate the chauffeur. There was no news as yet of the Frenchman; but Drake knew that the search for the dug-out had been going on. It was just before morning lessons that Ferrers Locke came up to Drake.

"He's found, sir?" asked Drake eagerly.

The detective nodded.

"Yes, my boy; every dug-out in the district was searched, till he was found and rescued. He had been kept a prisoner less than a mile from Courtfield. I dare say you have heard that the kidnapers are now under lock and key. Mr. Legrand is suffering a good deal from his unpleasant experience, but he will soon be on the mend, and he is very anxious to see you and thank you for what you have done."

"I'm jolly glad!" said Drake.

The detective paused a moment, and then went on.

"You have interested me very much, Drake. But for your sagacity in outwitting the rascals while in their hands it is pretty certain that the Frenchman would never have been seen alive again, whether the rascals had succeeded in robbing him or not. You have the gifts that would make a good detective, Drake." Ferrers Locke paused a moment, and added quietly. "We can never tell what the future holds for us. It is not likely, but it is possible, that some day you may need to turn your gifts to account, that circumstances may make you desire to follow a profession for which you are certainly well fitted. If that should ever happen, Drake, remember that I shall be glad to see you, and come to me any time in Baker Street."

And Ferrers Locke shook hands with the Greyfriars junior, and left him. Jack Drake went thoughtfully into the Form-room with the Remove crowd.

For none could tell what might lie behind the veil of the future; and he wondered whether the day would ever come when he would remind Ferrers Locke of his promise. If he could only have known it, that day was very near!

THE END.

**There will be another grand, long story of Drake in next week's issue of the "Boys' Herald."**

**THE LAD FROM THE LOWER DECK—Cont. from page 11.**

"Thank goodness for that!" murmured Frank fervently beneath his breath. Aloud he said: "Thanks very much, old top. Nothing would suit me better."

Reggie departed, conscious of having nobly performed his duty to the guest he considered his pater had so unwisely invited. As for Frank, he felt considerably more at ease now he knew he would not have to make conversation to some modern flapper.

A few minutes later the dinner-gong sounded, and Lord Deerhurst led the way into the spacious old oak dining-room with his niece, the Honourable Myrtle Meadows.

There was one long table and two or three smaller ones in the room, and so interested was Frank at the display of fine linen, silver and cut-glass arrayed thereon, that he failed to notice for some minutes that he was ensconced near the end of the long table next to his sworn foe, Guy Murdock.

After the usual Naval grace had been said, the orchestra struck up a dreamy waltz air and the waiters busied themselves serving.

"Thick or clear, sir?"

The voice of a waiter in his ear brought Frank up with a start. He glanced uncomprehendingly at a menu set out in French, and murmured "Clear" in a thick voice.

He felt horribly awkward, and he thought that Murdock, who was sitting on his right, seemed rather ill at ease also. Certainly the senior snotty was fidgeting about a good deal. His fingers drummed on the edge of the table-cloth and toyed with the cutlery, with the result that he clumsily knocked a fork to the floor.

With a sheepish expression on his heavy face Murdock stooped to retrieve it. A moment later Frank felt a violent prod in his ankle. With a sharp intake of breath he drew himself up quickly, with the most disastrous result. A waiter was in the act of passing a plate of tomato purée close to his left shoulder, and, as Frank jerked up suddenly, he joggled the man's arm. Immediately, half the soup splashed out of the plate and descended on Frank's waistcoat and immaculate white shirt-front.

**Get next week's "BOYS' HERALD" for the continuation of this splendid story.**