

MANY SPLENDID COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES INSIDE!

The Penny **1½**
Popular

Week Ending
April 17th, 1920.

No. 65.
New Series.

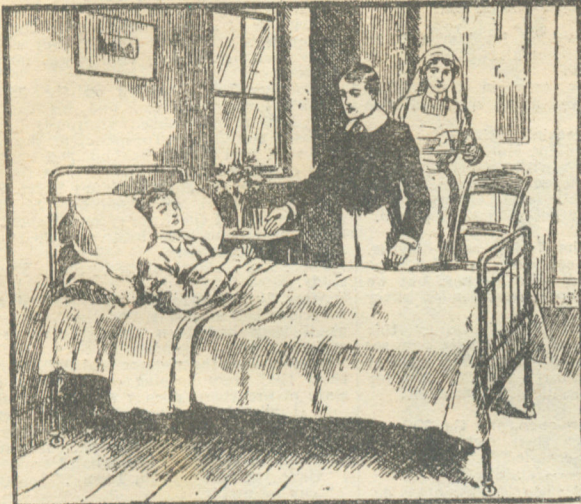
20 PAGES.

GRAND CINEMA SERIAL AND COMPLETE SCHOOL STORIES.



BOB CHERRY GIVES THE NEW CAPTAIN A ROUGH TIME!

(An Exciting Scene in the Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Grevfriars.)



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Fourth Form Mean Business.

"B LESS my soul!" said Mr. Bootles, in astonishment.

The master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood had called out "Come in!" in response to a respectful tap at his study door.

The door had opened, disclosing to Mr. Bootles' astonished eyes about half the Fourth Form crammed in the passage.

The Fistical Four of the Fourth—Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome—were in the lead. After them came Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern side. Then there were Oswald and Flynn and Rawson, and Van Ryn and Towle and Tubby Muffin, and a dozen more fellows, Classicals and Moderns.

And they were all looking excited. They marched into Mr. Bootles' study—eight or nine of them, the rest crowding the doorway and the passage outside.

"Bless my soul!" he repeated. The Form-master's study had never held so many of his Form before at once. It was a regular invasion.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Bootles, still blinking. "What do all you juniors want here?"

"If you please, sir, we're a deputation," said Jimmy Silver, speaking up as captain of the Fourth.

"Representing both sides of Rookwood, sir—Modern and Classical," said Tommy Dodd.

"Classical and Modern, you mean," remarked Lovell.

"I mean a Modern and Classical!" said Tommy Dodd warmly.

"Look here, Tommy Dodd—"

"Look here, Lovell—"

"Ahem!" said Mr. Bootles.

Tommy Dodd and Lovell, with a mutual glare, ceased to debate the question of precedence. Mr. Bootles' study, they realised, was not the right place for such a debate, important as the question was.

"Shut up, you two!" said Raby. "Mr. Bootles is waiting."

"Really—"

"The fact is, sir," said Lovell, "we're a deputation, representing all Rookwood."

"Hear, hear!" said the deputation with one voice.

"We want to speak to you, sir—"

"About Mornington, sir—"

"That rotten cad, sir—"

"He hasn't gone—"

"We want him to go—"

"He's got to go—"

The deputation were all speaking at once, and excitement was growing. Jimmy Silver waved his hand for silence.

"Order! Let Lovell speak!" Lovell's spokesman!

"If you have anything to say, I will listen to you," said Mr. Bootles. "But pray be brief."

"Go it, Lovell!"

"It's about Mornington of our Form, sir," said Arthur Edward Lovell. "You know what's happened, sir. Mornington of the

Fourth and Beaumont of the Sixth planted a banknote on Jimmy Silver, and got him accused of stealing it. If old Rawson hadn't got at the truth, Jimmy would have been sacked from Rookwood. He was sacked, in fact, but he wouldn't go—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, we hear that Beaumont and Mornington have been expelled for their dirty trick," went on Lovell.

Mr. Bootles nodded.

"Both have been expelled from Rookwood," he said. "Beaumont has already left the school. Mornington will follow."

"That's the point, sir," said Lovell. "We saw Beaumont go—and a good riddance to him! But Mornington hasn't gone."

"And we want to see the last of him!" said Rawson.

"Hear, hear!"

"They were sacked yesterday for their dirty trick," resumed Lovell. "Beaumont left yesterday afternoon. Mornington didn't. Well, we expected to find that he had gone this morning. But this morning he hadn't gone. His box is still in the dormitory, and his things are still in his study. We haven't seen him about, but we know he's still in the school."

"Shame!" came a howl from the passage.

"Under the circumstances, sir, we've come to you as a deputation," said Lovell. "We want Mornington to go. The Fourth Form of Rookwood, sir, can't stand him."

"Never!"

"We don't think it's possible that the Head would think of allowing him to stay after what he's done. But he hasn't gone, and it's twenty-four hours since he was found out. Why hasn't he gone, sir?"

"That's the question, sir," said Tommy Dodd. "The Fourth Form feel that they have a right to know, sir."

"Sure, if he stays here, we'll slaughter him intairolly," said Flynn.

"We'll scalp him!" roared the deputation from the passage.

Mr. Bootles waved his hand.

"Silence, please!"

"Shut up!" said Jimmy Silver. "Silence for Mr. Bootles!"

The Fourth Form-master coughed.

"My boys, I am not surprised that you are indignant and disgusted at Mornington's heinous conduct. He attempted to fasten a false charge upon Silver; he had been compelled to confess his guilt. Silver stands before you cleared of any suspicion, without a stain on his name—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo, Jimmy!"

"Mornington is under sentence of expulsion. His accomplice left Rookwood yesterday, never to return. Mornington has not yet gone, but he will be removed from the school as soon as possible."

"Why not at once, sir?" asked Lovell.

"Because he is ill."

"Wha-a-at?"

"The wretched boy appears to have suffered severely from the shock of the discovery and the punishment that followed," said Mr.

Bootles. "He fell in a faint in the Head's study, and was removed to the sanatorium. The school doctor is now in attendance upon him. Mornington appears to be suffering from a nervous breakdown. In such a state he cannot leave the school."

"Oh!"

"As soon as he is sufficiently recovered for removal, he will be taken away from Rookwood," said Mr. Bootles. "You may rest assured of that. Such an unmitigated young rascal could never be allowed to remain here."

The juniors looked at one another.

They knew Mornington—they knew the cunning, unscrupulous, and audacious nature of the cad of the Fourth.

There was only one thought in the minds of Jimmy Silver & Co. The dandy of the Fourth, in spite of the discovery of his rascality, in spite of the sentence of expulsion, hoped yet to escape the degradation of being kicked out of Rookwood. His illness was one more of his many tricks.

There was a murmur from the deputation—a murmur of disgust and indignation.

"You may go!" added Mr. Bootles.

But the deputation did not go.

"Excuse me, sir," said Lovell, "we don't believe a word of Mornington's yarn about being ill—do we, you chaps?"

"Not a word," said Jimmy Silver.

"Not a giddy syllable," said Tommy Dodd emphatically.

"It's only some more of his lies, sir," said Rawson.

"It's a trick to stay at Rookwood," said Oswald. "Morny thinks it will blow over in time, and his nobby relations will get round the Head."

Mr. Bootles frowned.

"The matter is not for you to decide," he said. "It is in Dr. Chisholm's hands. Now, please leave my study."

Mr. Bootles waved his hand to the door. The deputation, with grim looks, filed out of the room at last.

But outside in the passage there was a roar of angry voices. Mornington's latest trick roused deep anger in every breast.

"Rookwood won't stand it!" exclaimed Lovell furiously. "I know the game, just as if the cad had told me. He's going to put on illness for a week or two, while his titled connections have time to talk the Head over. He thinks he's going to stay when it's blown over."

Jimmy Silver set his lips.

Jimmy had had a narrow escape from expulsion and disgrace, owing to the machinations of his old enemy. He did not mean to run any more risks of that sort.

"He's got to go!" he said. "Gentlemen of the Fourth, if the Head lets this matter slide I vote that we take it into our own hands."

"Hear, hear!"

"So long as Mornington is in the sanatorium we can't touch him; there's a bare possibility that he's really ill, and we can't handle a chap who may be seedy. But the

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"You were always jolly deep, Morny," said Townsend admiringly. "Will your guardian back you up, then?"

"I think he will. He don't want the disgrace of havin' his nephew expelled from school. It will make him awfully wild. Besides, he don't want me at home," grinned Mornington. "I'm a bit of a handful at home. As for sendin' me to another school, what decent school could I get into after bein' expelled from Rookwood? It means no end of trouble for old Staepole, and he's sure to do his level best to smooth the matter over and keep me here."

"But the Head?"

"That's a difficulty. The Head's frightfully ratty about it," said Mornington. "But he will calm down. I dare say he'll take old Staepole's view that I was simply a tool in Beaumont's hands. And Beaumont's sacked! So there's one victim to satisfy justice, you know. He's gone, hasn't he?"

"He went yesterday," said Townsend. "He looked a miserable bounder when he went. Poor beast!"

"He owed me a good many quids, and I shall never see them again!" growled Mornington. "Hang Beaumont! After all, with one party sacked, a foggin' ought to meet the case for the other. Don't you think so?"

Mornington eyed Townsend anxiously. He spoke in a confident manner, but it was easy to see that his confidence was assumed.

"Well, I don't!" said Townsend frankly. "I'm afraid the game's up, Morny! The Head simply can't let you stay. He can't! And—and I don't see how your guardian could have the cheek to ask him. He would refuse, anyway!"

"Well, you're a pretty Job's comforter!" snarled Mornington.

"And there's the fellows!" said Townsend. "It will blow over. Everythin' blows over in time!"

"I'm afraid this won't! The Fourth have got up a deputation to Bootles about it already."

"Hang them!"

"And—and they mean business."

"I suppose my friends are stickin' to me?" growled Mornington.

Townsend hesitated.

"You see, it's jolly difficult!" he said. "We'd have stuck to you, though what you did was awfully thick, you must own that! But—but Jimmy Silver & Co. won't have it. The rotters came and ragged us in our study. Wrecked the dashed place! They won't even let a chap visit you here. They'll be lookin' for me when I go back, I believe."

"Oh, by gad!"

"They're talkin' about tarrin' and featherin' you as soon as you come out of sunny. The game's up, old chap! Even if the Head could be talked over, all Rookwood would cut up so rusty you'd have to go. And the Head couldn't be talked over, either. You think your dashed money can buy everythin'; but it can't!"

Mornington's face looked scowlingly from the pillow. He realised the truth of his friend's words. His conduct had been too black, and there was no pardon for it. Yet he clung to a straw of hope.

"Well, I'm not goin' to give in!" he said at last. "I'm not goin' to be kicked out an' disgraced for life if I can help it. I shall play the game out to the finish!"

"I wish you luck!"

"But you won't help me!" sneered Mornington. "You mean that, even if the Head lets me stay, I should have all the school against me, includin' my old pals?"

Townsend was silent; but his answer could be read in his face. The kind of fellows who would stick to Mornington after his treachery were not the kind of fellows to face a storm for him. If he returned to his place in the school, he had no friends to reckon on. At the best, he would be sent to Coventry, and his old pals would pass him by lest worse should befall them. It was not a happy prospect. But Mornington's face hardened indomitably. By sheer determination he would make his way, if only he were given a chance.

The nurse came in, and Townsend rose from the bedside.

"Well, good-bye, old chap! Best of luck!" said Townsend half-heartedly.

Mornington did not answer, and he did not glance at Townsend as he went. The boulder of Rookwood was still determined. He meant to fight it out to the very last; but deep down in his heart he knew that it was all in vain, and that his career at Rookwood School was closing in disgrace—for ever!



There was a gasp of relief from the boys gathered below as Mornington was seen again. He was on the sill, clinging blindly, his clothes charred and singed by the flames. But Bulkeley was rushing to his aid. The Rookwood captain's strong grasp closed upon him, even as his hold was relaxing. (See page 17.)

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Nice for Towny!

"WAITING for you, dear boy!"

Rawson slipped off the gate as Townsend came across the Head's garden. Townsend paused and bit his lip in anger.

"What do you want?" he growled.

"You!" said Rawson cheerfully.

"Look here—"

"You've been to see Mornington," said Rawson coolly. "You know Mornington's barred. Come on."

The sight of Tom Rawson sitting on the gate had drawn other fellows to the spot. Quite a little army of the Fourth were waiting for Townsend.

The Nut of the Fourth looked alarmed. He remained where he was.

"Look here, I've only been to have a word with Morny!" he argued.

"One word too many!" remarked Lovell.

"I've simply been tellin' him that I can't come to see him again," said Townsend.

"You should have left him to guess it intoirly," said Patrick O'Donovan Flynn.

"Come on and be ragged, darling!"

"I'm not comin' out, then!"

"Don't make us come into the Head's garden to mop you up!" said Raby. "You're going to be mopped up in any case."

"Better get it over," suggested Tommy Dodd.

Townsend breathed hard. The gate was lined with Fourth-Formers—Modern and Classical—waiting for him. And certainly he couldn't remain a fixture in the Head's garden.

Already Towny was repenting that he had paid that last visit to the "spoofer" in the sanatorium. Certainly he was not likely to pay another. But the Fourth were in grim earnest. Mornington could remain at the school so long as he succeeded in spoofing the Head and the school doctor. But while he was there he was to understand that he was an outcast, avoided as a thing unclean. Townsend had failed to "toc the line" with the rest of the Lower School, and he could not say that he had not received a warning.

"Are you coming?" demanded Newcome impatiently.

"No; I'm not!" growled Townsend. "I'm stayin' here, hang you!"

"Then we'll come for you!"

"Mushn't have a row in the Head's garden," said Higgs.

"Oh, rats! We'll chance that!"

Newcome vaulted over the gate, and half a dozen juniors followed him without hesitation.

Townsend took to his heels, desperately racing up the path among the shrubberies.

"After him!" shouted Tommy Dodd.

"After the spalpeen!" yelled Flynn.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp!

The shouting crowd of juniors rushed after Townsend. He dodged round the greenhouse, and dodged again, and uttered a yell of terror as he was run down, and three or four pairs of hands closed on him.

"Got 'im!"

"Bump him!"

"Hurrah!"

Bump, bump!

"Yaroooh!"

perate hands, as if to make a larger passage. Then he disappeared for a moment from view.

The hearts below hardly beat. There was a buzz, deepening to a roar, as Mornington reappeared at the window. He had something in his arms—a bundle rolled in a blanket. He pushed it through the window, and held it while the ladder was planted below. From the rolled blanket a tress of golden hair escaped. Then they knew!

"Miss Dolly!" Jimmy Silver breathed the words. Dr. Chisholm gazed at the blackened face of the expelled junior, and at the bundle he held by main strength on the sill out of the rolling smoke and licking flame.

"My daughter!" The ladder crashed on the wall. Bulkeley rushed up it, his feet seeming scarcely to touch the rungs.

Mornington grinned down at him through the smoke. In that fearful moment he was the same Mornington as of old—cool, mocking, reckless.

"Take her, Bulkeley! She's not hurt—only faint!"

Bulkeley, without a word, took the insensible girl in his strong arms. He descended the ladder with her carefully.

Miss Dolly was passed into her father's arms, and his tears fell upon the calm, unconscious face, smoke-grimed, but unhurt—not a hair of her head had been harmed. And it was Mornington, the cad of Rookwood, the blackguard, the expelled rascal, who had saved her!

Could he save himself? As Bulkeley ascended the ladder again, there came a gust of smoke and flame from the window where Mornington stood, and for an instant he was hidden from sight.

A groan went up. All Mornington's faults, all his rascality, all his treachery, were forgotten then. At that hour he was the hero who had saved a child from a fearful death in the fiery flames, and risked his own life in doing it!

There was a gasp of relief as he was seen again. He was on the sill, clinging blindly; his clothes charred and singed by the flames; blind with pain, with smoke—at the end of his strength.

But Bulkeley was rushing to his aid. The Rookwood captain's strong grasp closed upon him, even as his hold was relaxing. In Bulkeley's strong arms he was brought down the ladder. And as Bulkeley landed on firm earth there was a shout of warning:

"Stand clear!" The crowd surged back. The wall was falling inwards—the ladder with it. The escape had been terribly narrow.

Bulkeley laid the junior on the ground. His eyes had closed, but they opened again, and Mornington looked round him wildly. His face was burned; his hands burnt; his hair was almost gone, his eyelashes were gone. He was hurt—terribly hurt—and he knew it!

"Morny!" panted Jimmy Silver, with tears in his eyes. Jimmy had more than forgiven his old enemy now.

Mornington grinned—a twisted, blackened grin.

"Hallo! You knew I was spoofin' in the sanatorium. I sha'n't be spoofin' this time, by gad—what! I wonder if this is the last lap? Well, I shall be game to the finish, you can bet on that! Is she safe?"

"My dear, dear lad!" The Head bent over the blackened dandy of the Fourth—not

much of a dandy now. "My brave, noble lad! She is safe, and you have saved her from a fearful death! Heaven bless you, Mornington!"

"All serene, sir!" said Mornington coolly. And then Mornington, hard as he was, fainted.

Rookwood was in a buzz of excitement the next day.

The Head's house was a blackened ruin. But few heeded that. No lives had been lost. The grim tragedy that might have cast its gloom over the school had been averted.

And Mornington? Miss Dolly had been saved. She was not hurt, apart from the shock.

Mornington had found her overcome by smoke, and, with strange coolness in the hour of fearful peril, he had wrapped her carefully in blankets before he moved her, and then he had fought his way through flame and smoke to the window.

He had entered the burning house even before the Head had emerged from it. No one had noticed him then.

Perhaps some thought had been in his mind of rendering prompt assistance, and thus improving his chances of eluding the sentence of expulsion. He had found her and saved her, but the flames he had so carefully protected her from had taken their vengeance upon him. Mornington of the Fourth lay in the sanatorium, a "spoofer" no longer, but terribly ill, torn with pain, and enduring his pain with grim, cool stoicism.

There was no mention of expulsion for Mornington.

Jimmy Silver, whom he had so cruelly wronged, was the first to ask the Head if Mornington might be allowed to remain. And the Head's answer that Mornington was pardoned, more than pardoned, gave satisfaction to all the school.

When Mornington recovered he was to take his old place in the Fourth Form at Rookwood, and the Fourth were content to know it.

It was long before the dandy of the Fourth was destined to rise from the bed of illness. But as soon as he was able to see visitors, the Fourth-Formers were eager to pay him visits, and Jimmy Silver was the first.

A scarred face grinned at Jimmy from the white bed.

"Don't I look a picture?" said Mornington. "But the doctor says it will go in time. By gad, I shouldn't like to keep a chivvy like this! And I'm not going to be sacked!"

"And I'm jolly glad of it!" said Jimmy.

"I'm going to be a thorn in your side still!" chuckled Mornington. "When I'm back in the Form I'm goin' to give you a tussle, Jimmy Silver. I'm goin' to be captain of the Fourth yet!"

"More power to your elbow!" said Jimmy.

"But there's only one thing I'll say," said Mornington, after a pause. "I've been doin' a lot of thinkin' while I've been lyin' here. I'm sorry I played that dirty trick on you—real sorry, and there's my fist on it, if you like to take it!"

And Jimmy Silver took it, with all his heart.

THE END.

(Another splendid long complete story of Rookwood School will appear in next Friday's PENNY POPULAR, entitled: "Morny's Minor." Order your copy at once.)

GOOD STORIES!

SELF-DEFENCE.

Mamma: "Good gracious, Tommy, what have you been doing?"
Tommy (showing signs of a recent conflict): "Keeping a boy from getting whacked, ma."
Mamma: "What boy?"
Tommy: "Me, ma!"

A NATURAL ANXIETY.

Teacher: "Why were you not in school yesterday?"
Sammy: "Please, miss, there was a burglary in the West End, and mother sent me round to see if father was the one that was caught."

ONE FOR THE LITTLE 'UN.

The Little 'Un: "I would have you know, sir, I've been well brought up!"
The Big 'Un: "Perhaps so; but you weren't brought up far enough, you see!"

"What did you think of that cigar I gave you? It was an Admiral, you know."
"Well, well, how appropriate! There's something about that cigar that's suggestive of an admiral."
"What's that?"
"It's rank!"

Magistrate: "How came it that you dared to break into this gentleman's house in the dead of night?"

Prisoner: "Why, your worship, the other time you reproached me for stealing in broad daylight. Ain't I to be allowed to work at all?"

Willie: "Say, sis, is a dog a quadruped?"
Sister: "Yes, Willie. An animal with four legs is a quadruped."

Willie: "Well, Rover's got one of his legs cut off. What's he now?"

"Who signed Magna Charta?" asked a school-inspector. There was no answer.

"Who signed the Magna Charta?" tumbled the inspector, walking up and down the floor. A very small, delicate boy raised his hand timidly.

"Please, sir, I didn't!"

Young Mother: "Now, Harold, whom do you love most—papa or me?"

Little Harold: "Papa."

Young Mother: "But yesterday you said you loved me most."

Little Harold: "Yes; but I've thought it over since, and decided that we men must stick together!"

"Now, gentlemen," spoke the auctioneer, as he leant over the rail of his perch, "what can I say for this beautiful old master—a genuine Raphael? Somebody give me a start."

"Five bob!" came from a voice in the crowd.

"What?" yelled the indignant wielder of the hammer.

"Ah," spoke the voice again, "I thought that would give you a start!"

Miss Priscilla Form Master!



A Tale of TOM MERRY & CO. At St. Jim's

The GEM

Our Grand Companion Paper.