

The Fourth Form at GRIMSLADE!



YOU WANT THE BEST SCHOOL STORY OF THE WEEK. HERE IT IS, SHOWING FRANK RICHARDS AT THE TOP OF HIS FORM.

JIM DAINTY, THE REBEL OF GRIMSLADE, IS BEING GRADUALLY TAMED. HE EVEN PROMISES HIS HEADMASTER THAT HE WILL NOT FIGHT FOR A WHOLE TERM! THAT PROMISE TRIES JIM DAINTY AS HE'S NEVER BEEN TRIED BEFORE. GRIMSLADE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, DUBS HIM A MISERABLE FUNK. BUT—!

Butting In!

HOLD on, you duffer!" exclaimed Jim Dainty.

It was after prep at Grimslade School. Jim had come into his study, No. 10 in White's House, and was about to turn on the light, when he stopped and stared in amazement at the study window.

That window was open, and a shadowy figure, in the dark, was climbing out. Had Jim pressed the switch the window would have been lighted up, and the junior who was breaking House bounds would have shown up against the light. Jim stopped in time, ran across the study, and caught Dick Dawson by the arm. Dawson gave a startled gasp.

"Let go, you ass!"

"Rot!" said Dainty tersely. "You're not breaking bounds at this time of night, Dawson. It's only an hour to dorm."

Dawson jerked at his arm.

"Leave go, I tell you! I've got to cut down to Middlemoor. Fenwick of the Fifth's asked me to take a note for him. I've got it here. Don't make a row, you fathead!"

Jim Dainty compressed his grasp on his study-mate's arm. Dainty had not been long at Grimslade, and he did not know all the fellows in his House; but he had heard a good deal about Fenwick of the Fifth, who was not a credit to his House or the school.

"You're not going, Dawson," he said quietly. "Fenwick can take his own rotten notes to his bookie pals. You're risking a flogging!"

"I'm going!"

"You're not!"

Dawson wrenched angrily at his arm. Jim Dainty grasped him with both hands, pulled him back from the window, and landed him on the floor with a bump. Then he slammed down the sash and fastened it. Dick Dawson scrambled to his feet, his face red with anger.

He made a rush to the window. Dainty grasped him again, and they struggled. There was a crash as they went down together on the study floor.

"Mein gootness! Vat vas all tat?" exclaimed the fat voice of Fritz Splitz.

The German junior came into the study, switched on the light, and stared at the two struggling figures on the floor with startled saucer-eyes.

"Shut up, Fritz!" snapped Dainty.

"Dawson, give me that note."

"You cheeky rotter!" panted Dawson.

"Fritz, lend me a hand! Drag him off!"

Fritz Splitz came to the rescue. The next moment he wished that he hadn't. Dainty released one hand and gave the fat German a jab, which landed where Fritz had packed away his supper. There was a gasping howl from Friedrich von Splitz, and he staggered back and sat down with a bump that shook Study No. 10.

"Ach! Mein gootness! Oooogh!"

"Help me, you fat fool!" panted Dawson, struggling.

"Ach! Tat I cannot do!" wailed Fritz.

"I have had a pang in mein pread-pasket! I have no more te breff! Ach!"

Dawson struggled fiercely, but Jim Dainty pinned him down.

"Dick, old chap," he breathed, "you can't get mixed up in that kind of thing. Give me that note to take back to Fenwick."

"I won't! I'll smash you!" gasped Dawson.

From his pocket, as he struggled, an envelope slipped out. Jim caught it up.

"Give it to me!" panted Dawson.

"That's Fenwick's note, you rotter! Give it to me!"

"I'll give it to Fenwick."

Jim Dainty leaped to his feet and ran to the door. Before Dawson could scramble up he changed the key to the outside of the lock, left the study, slammed the door after him, and locked it.

The next moment Dawson was hammering furiously on the inside of the door. Unheeding the clamour from Study No. 10, Jim Dainty walked away to the Fifth Form studies.

He did not trouble to knock at the door of Fenwick's study. He jammed his boot against it, and the door spun open with a crash.

A senior who was sorting something out of the table drawer in the study jumped and swung round, and two or three cigarettes scattered from his hand over the carpet. He picked them up hastily, threw them into the drawer, and glared angrily at the junior.

"You cheeky little tick! What the thump do you mean by barging into a man's study?" he roared.

"I've brought you that, Fenwick!" snapped Dainty; and he threw the sealed envelope on the table.

Fenwick of the Fifth stared at him, stared at the note, and then caught it up in his hand. He seemed amazed.

"Hasn't Dawson—?" he began.

"No; and he isn't going to," said Jim, with a curl of the lip. "I've made friends with Dawson. About the only friend I've made here. Now I've rowed with him to get that note away and bring it back here."

"You took this away from Dawson?" gasped the Fifth-Former.

"Exactly! I expect he will scrap with me over it. I don't care for that. He's a good kid, and you're not using him to take messages to pubs and bookies. If Sammy Sparshott nailed him with that note on him, a lot you'd stand by the kid! Sammy would take the skin off your back if he knew your games. He's not going to take the skin off Dawson's!"

"You meddling little scoundrel!" roared Fenwick, crimson with rage.

"What are you buttin' in for?"

"I've got pally with Dawson. He's rather an ass—too easy-going. I'll bet he never wanted to take that note. Well, I've stopped him. There it is! Like me to take it to Billy White?" sneered Dainty.

Fenwick tossed the letter into the study fire. The mere mention of his Housemaster made him anxious to put it out of existence as quickly as possible. Then he came round the table towards Jim, a deadly gleam in his narrow slits of eyes.

"You young hound! You can't sneak to Billy White now!"

"I'm no sneak, you cur!" answered Dainty. "But you're leaving Dick Dawson alone, and I'll make you."

Fenwick said no more, but he reached at the junior and grasped him. Dainty returned grasp for grasp.

"I'll thrash you till you can't crawl!" hissed Fenwick.

Jim laughed savagely.

"Get on with it! I believe I can handle you. I'm going to try, anyhow!" he snapped. "I hated handling Dawson, but I'll be jolly glad to handle you!"

The next moment they were fighting.

Jim Dainty had been in more scraps since coming to Grimsdale than any other three fellows in the school. His passionate temper had been to blame for some of them, as he was beginning to realise. But this time he knew that right and justice were on his side. And, Lower boy as he was, Jim was so tough, so determined, and so hard a hitter that he had a good chance in a scrap with a senior.

Most Grimsdaders were fighting-men; but Jim Dainty was rather out of the common in that line, even at Grimsdale. There was a Yorkshire grimness in him like that of the Yorkshire "tyke" who would bite, alive or dead. Fenwick was a foot taller, but he was not hard as nails, like Dainty. To his surprise he received a terrific jolt under the jaw as he closed with the junior that lifted him from his feet and sent him crashing on his back.

He lay sprawling for a few seconds, Jim panting and glaring down at him. He scrambled up and fairly hurled himself on the junior.

Dainty's hands were up like lightning. Foot to foot, eye to eye, they fought, Dainty heedless of fierce blows that rained on him, and giving back all the time as good as he received. He did not care two straws if he was licked, so long as he damaged his enemy. And Fenwick was the first to slacken. He backed, and Dainty followed him up, hitting hard.

The study door was flung open.

"Stop that at once!"

Mr. White stared into the study, frowning angrily. Jim Dainty dropped his hands. Fenwick staggered, and leaned on the table, panting.

The Housemaster eyed the two grimly. For a long moment there was silence. Then Mr. White stepped to the table, took pen and ink, and wrote a note, folded it, and handed it to Jim.

"Take that to Dr. Sparshott!" he said curtly. "At once—just as you are!"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Jim.

He left the study. With a winking eye, a nose streaming red, ruffled hair, and torn collar, Dainty left his House, stared at by a crowd of fellows as he crossed the dusky quad to Big School. Desperately he tried to tidy himself up, and then tapped at the door of the headmaster's study there.

Sammy's Way!

"SAMMY" SPARSHOTT, headmaster of Grimsdale School, was occupied when Jim Dainty entered his study. Three juniors of Redmayes House were there—Ginger Rawlinson, and his chums Bacon and Bean. Sammy gave the new arrival a nod, and waxed him aside.

Apparently Ginger & Co. were up for judgment, for they stood in a meek row before the Head, trying to look as if butter would not melt in their mouths. That was a rather difficult feat for the three most unruly young rascals in Redmayes House.

"House rivalry," said Sammy severely, "is a good thing, a healthy thing. But it must not be carried too far. Pouring treacle on the head of a White's junior is the limit. Besides, it is a waste of treacle. Waste not, want not! Understand?"

"Yes, sir!" said the three meekly.

"Treacle is an article of diet. Treacle should either be eaten or left alone! I am going to help you remember this. Byles!"

Byles, the Head's servant, entered the study. To the surprise of the Redmayes trio, and of Jim Dainty, he carried a tray on which stood three dishes of thick treacle, with spoons sticking up in them.

"You may sit down, boys," said Sammy genially, "and eat the treacle! Finish it! Fail to do so, and you will get six—hard! Go it!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Ginger.

The three grinned as they sat down to the treacle. It was good treacle, and they liked it. But after a dozen large spoonfuls, it palled on them. After a dozen more, they were tired of treacle. But there was still plenty left. Progress was slow now. Ginger & Co. looked at one another dismally. Sammy made an impatient gesture—and they got on with it. By that time the Redmayes trio realised that Sammy was making the punishment fit the crime, which was one of the ways Sammy Sparshott had.

"Ooogh!" murmured Streaky Bacon.

He paused.

"You are wasting my time," said the Head, swishing the cane which he held behind his back.

That was enough! Ginger & Co. piled desperately into the treacle. There seemed no end to it. They wished they had never mopped treacle over the head of Tommy Tucker of White's House. They wished they had never heard of treacle. They wished that treacle had never been invented.

They ate and ate and ate, and wondered with horror whether they would ever get to the end. Their faces were sickly. Jim Dainty grinned as he watched them. Sammy Sparshott smiled genially.

"Oh dear!" gasped Sandy Bean.

"Grooogh!"

The horrid treacle was finished at last.

The three juniors rose, sticky and sickly. Dr. Sparshott made a gesture of dismissal, and they almost limped from the study, Byles following with the tray and the empty dishes. A minute later a yell floated in at the window. Bacon and Bean were kicking Ginger in the quad. It had been Ginger's bright idea to mop treacle over Tommy Tucker. His chums were letting him know what they thought of his bright ideas!

Dr. Sparshott turned to Dainty and took the Housemaster's note from him. He knitted his brows as he read it, and fixed his keen, penetrating gray eyes on the new boy at Grimsdale.

"Dainty," he barked, "I have a high opinion of you, and I've told you so. You are a reckless, unthinking, wilful young rascal; but you have good qualities, and Grimsdale is going to bring them out. It seems that you are always fighting. Within limits, I do not disapprove of a healthy scrap. But there must be a limit. Stop it!"

Dainty did not answer. Somehow, he had come to have a great respect for Sammy, and he wanted to please him, and earn his good opinion. He stood silent and respectful.

"Fighting in the Fifth—what?" barked Sammy. "Against all rules—not at all the thing. I ought to flog you. I'm not going to flog you. You're going to give me your word to keep out of scrapping for the rest of the term. You've had more than enough for one term already! I'm not going to get any more reports like this! Give me your word."

"Oh!" gasped Jim.

"I'm waiting!" snapped Sammy.

"But, sir—" stammered Dainty.

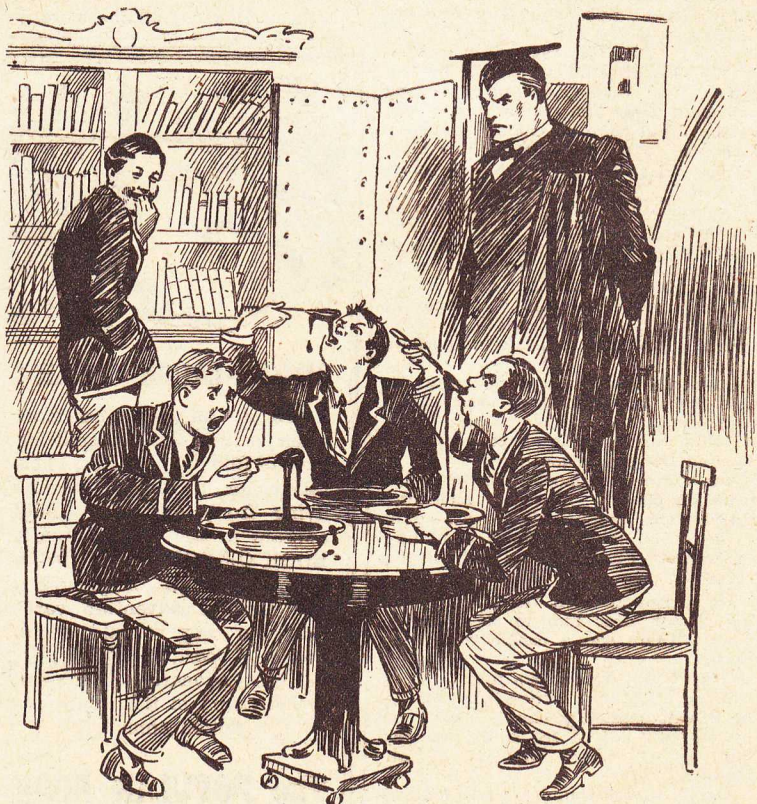
Sammy glared at him.

"Did you come to Grimsdale to argue with your headmaster, Dainty?" he roared.

"Oh! No, sir! But—"

"Has it occurred to you that my time is of value?"

"I suppose so, sir—but—"



"You may sit down, boys," said Sammy Sparshott genially, "and eat the treacle. Finish it! Fail to do so and you will get six—hard! Go it!" Ginger & Co. piled desperately into the treacle. They ate and ate, and wondered with horror whether they would ever get to the end. "Oh, dear!" gasped Sandy Bean. "Grooogh!"

"Then give me your promise, and get out of my study."

Jim drew a deep breath.

"I promise, sir!" he said quietly.

"Good enough," barked Sammy.

"Good-night, Dainty!"

Dainty left the study and went out of Big School into the starlit quad. As he walked across to White's House, there was a voice from the shadows—the voice of Ginger Rawlinson.

"Bag that White's tick!"

The treacle had damped the spirits of Ginger & Co.; but Ginger, at least, seemed still ready for a rag.

"Oh, can it!" groaned Bacon. "I'm feeling sick!"

"I'm feeling horrid!" groaned Bean.

Jim Dainty chuckled.

"Well, I'm not feeling too fit," growled Ginger, "but I'm going to take it out of that White's tick!"

Ginger charged at Jim Dainty. Nothing loth, Dainty put up his hands and waited for him to come on. Then he suddenly remembered his promise to the Head!

Instead of waiting for Ginger, he turned and ran for his House. Ginger Rawlinson stared after him.

"My hat! He's funkling! Stop, you White's funk!" roared Ginger.

Jim Dainty paused, and then ran on. After him came the running footsteps of a pursuer. Trafford of the Sixth loomed up in the quad.

"What are you doing out of your House, Rawlinson?"

"Oh! Ah! Just going in, Trafford."

"Do—and take a hundred lines," said the captain of Grimslade.

Ginger, with a grunt, went back to Redmayes with his comrades. Jim Dainty, unpursued further, arrived rather breathless at White's. He looked in the junior Common-room for Dawson. Dawson was not there, but Pulley called out:

"What the thump have you locked Dawson in the study for?"

"Oh, my hat! I'd forgotten that!"

Jim ran quickly along the passage to Study No. 10, put in the key, and unlocked the door.

"Ach! Here is tat peast and a prute!" exclaimed Fritz Splitz, as Jim entered. "I would give him a peating tat would make him pellow like a pull, but he would have no chance against a Cherman, so it would not be fair blay. I tink you petter give him a peating, Tawson."

Dawson came across the study to Jim, his hands up, and his eyes gleaming over them. Dick Dawson was the best-tempered fellow in the Fourth; but he was fairly on the warpath now.

"You rotter!" he said. "You cheeky rotter! Put up your hands!"

Dainty put his hands into his pockets. Smack!

Dawson's open hand came across his face with a smack that rang like a pistol-shot.

"Now will you put up your hands?" shouted Dawson furiously.

Jim's face crimsoned. His hands flew from his pockets. But he remembered his promise, and put them back again.

"No!" he said, his voice trembling.

"I won't! I'm not going to fight you, Dawson."

He turned and left the study. Dawson stared after him in sheer amazement. There was a cackle from Fritz Splitz.

"Ach! Tat Tainty is a funk!" he exclaimed. "Mein gootness! I tink tat he is vun peastly goward!" Fritz put his fat face out of the study doorway, and yelled after Dainty. "Yah! Goward!"

Dainty turned round, his face flaming. He made one stride towards Fritz. He might have forgotten, at that moment, his promise to the Head. But the look on his face was enough for Fritz. The

fat Rhinelander bolted back into the study, and dodged behind Dick Dawson.

"Ach! Geep him off!" he roared.

"Go away, Tainty! I tink not tat you are vun goward. Nein! Nein! I tink tat you are almost as prave as a Cherman, mein goot Tainty! Ja! Ja wohl! Go away! Oh, please go away!"

Dainty glared into the study for a moment, and then strode away. Why he did not kick him was a mystery to Fritz. But it was a great relief.

"Ach! I tinks tat he is a goward after all, pefore," he said. "I vill not tell him so, but I tink tat he is vun funk, isn't it. Vat do you tink, mein goot Tawson?"

"I think I'll kick you out of the study!" growled Dawson.

And he did—and Fritz departed, roaring.

Funk!

"DAINTY, old man!" It was after third school the next day, and Dawson slipped his arm through Dainty's as the juniors came out.

Dainty, with a grim brow, shook his arm off.

"Well, what?" he grunted.

"I'm sorry!" muttered Dawson. "I was rather a beast in the study! I—

I'm glad you stopped me from breaking bounds. I've heard since that Trafford was in the quad, and ten to one I'd have been spotted." He paused. "Look here, Dainty! I was a fool to say I'd take that note for Fenwick; only a fellow doesn't like to say 'No' when a chap asks him a thing civilly."

"He should if it's a wrong thing!" snapped Dainty.

"I know, and I own up I was wrong, and I know you meant to act like a pal! I'm sorry! We had a scrap your first day here, and you got away with it. You could get away with it again if you liked, so you needn't mind that smack! Wash it out, old chap!"

"All serene," said Jim, his face clearing.

He liked Dawson; all the more, per-

haps, because he had discerned in him a streak of good-natured weakness quite unlike his own character. Dainty could be good-natured enough, but there was no weakness about him. Had Fenwick of the Fifth asked him to carry that note down to Middlemoor, Jim's answer would have been short and sharp.

Jim was glad enough to be friends again with his study-mate. It was a relief in another way, too. A smacked face inevitably meant a scrap, and Dainty's promise to the Head barred him from scrapping. Jim's position would have been awkward enough had not Dawson made the first advances. But he was destined to find that that promise to "Sammy" was to land him in plenty of trouble.

Tommy Tucker came into Study No. 10 at tea-time, with Pulley and Bates and two or three more of the Fourth.

"Feeling fit, Dainty?" he asked.

"Fit as a fiddle," answered Jim.

"What about it?"

"We've picked you out for Ginger," explained Tucker. "All this term those Redmayes ticks having been making out that they're cock House, and that we haven't got a man in White's who can stand up to their red-headed freak. It's true, too. Dawson's tried it on twice and got whopped each time. Dawson was our best man, but you've licked him, and we all think you could handle Ginger Rawlinson. Anyhow, you're not afraid to try."

"In the gym, with the gloves on," said Pulley. "Fancy their faces over in Redmayes if Ginger gets licked!"

"We've told Rawlinson," went on Tommy Tucker cheerfully. "He laughed. He said he'd bring all his friends to see you whopped. You've got to put your beef into it, Dainty."

"Dainty can whop him," said Dick Dawson. "I've had that in my mind ever since we scrapped on his first day here. You're on, Jim?"

Jim's face was crimson. Twenty-four hours ago he would have jumped at it. It was a sore point with White's that they had no man who could stand up to Ginger Rawlinson. Jim was more than willing to play up as junior champion of the House. But it was impossible now. Instead of flogging him for going to a Fifth Form study and picking a row with a senior, Sammy Sparshott had exacted a promise from him. That promise was not to be broken.

His silence rather puzzled the White's juniors.

"You're on?" repeated Dawson.

Dainty shook his head.

"No! Can't be done! Wash it out."

"You're afraid of Ginger?" roared Tucker.

"No, confound you! But I'm not going to fight him, or anybody!"

"Well, he's rather tough, I know, but you've got a good chance if you're not afraid to try it on!" urged Tucker.

"Look here, I've told him that you're going to stand up to him in the gym."

"Go and tell him I'm not, then!" growled Dainty.

Tucker gave a snort of disgust.

"You're ready enough to fight fellows in your own House," he snapped. "How was I to know you funkled a Redmayes cad?"

Dainty jumped to his feet.

"If you call me a funk, you a rotter—"

"Funk!" shouted Tucker.

Jim Dainty came round the table. Then he paused, seemed to swallow something with difficulty, and went back to his chair.

"All right," he said in a low voice. "Call me what you like, and be hanged to you!"

With sneering looks the juniors left the study. Dawson stared blankly at Jim Dainty. Fritz Splitz goggled at



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him with saucer eyes, almost forgetting to grab the last piece of cake in his surprise.

"Mein gootness! So you are vun funk after all, before, Tainty," he said. "I am dishgusted mit you!"

"You fat freak!" roared Jim.

"Ach! Call me not names, you Tainty!" said Fritz contemptuously. "You are vun funk, nicht war? Ach! You are not goot enough to sit to tea mit a prave Cherman! I am dishgusted!"

"Kick that fat fool out of the study, Jim," said Dawson.

Dainty did not stir or speak. Fritz von Splitz goggled at him uneasily for a moment. But as Jim did not move he grinned.

"Ach! I likes to see tat funk kick me!" he jeered. "I tinks tat he is afraid! He knows petter tan to kick a prave Cherman!"

"Shut up, you podgy Hun!" growled Dainty.

"Go and eat goke!" retorted Fritz. "You give me pack-chat, and I trow mein gup of tea in your face."

Jim half-rose and sat down again. Dawson could only stare at him. Fritz grinned with triumph. What was the cause of this sudden attack of funk was a mystery to Fritz; but there seemed no doubt about it. If Dainty was afraid, there was no need for Fritz to be afraid; that was how the podgy Rhinelander worked it out in his obtuse brain. He picked up his cup from his saucer, jerked his fat arm, and shot the contents full into Jim Dainty's flushed face.

Splash!
There was a roar of rage from Dainty and he leaped to his feet, his chair flying backwards.

For a second Fritz trembled. But to his amazement and relief the new boy at Grimslade did not jump at him. It was not easy for Dainty to restrain his rage, but he restrained it. Instead of slaughtering the fat Rhinelander on the spot, he took out his handkerchief and mopped the streaming tea from his face.

Dawson rose to his feet. Without a word, but with contempt in his face, he walked out of the study. Jim caught his look as he went, and set his lips bitterly. He would have told his chum of that promise to Sammy, but now he shut his teeth on it. If Dawson thought him a funk, let him think so and be hanged to him!

Fritz von Splitz cackled as Jim mopped away the tea. There was a strain of the bully in the fat German's nature, but hitherto he had had no chance of displaying it at Grimslade. Now he had a chance, and Friedrich von Splitz was not losing it.

"Take tat!" he grinned. "Mein gootness, I am dishgusted, Tainty! Now you get out of tis study. Oddervise I kicks you out before! Mein gootness, I tink tat you tink two times before you give me pack-chat vunce more!"

A fat paw descended on Jim Dainty's shoulder and he was swung towards the study doorway.

He turned on the podgy Rhinelander like a tiger. His hands flashed up, but they dropped again at once.

Sammy certainly could never have foreseen anything like this. Or had he? Jim wondered. Did Sammy think that a passionate, headstrong, wilful temper required a severe lesson, and was this one of Sammy's playful ways of driving a necessary lesson home? Jim Dainty was beginning to understand Sammy and his ways.

Anyhow, a promise was a promise. He did not touch the grinning, fat German. And Fritz, encouraged by impunity, lifted a pair of podgy fists and advanced on him in the most warlike way.

"Ach! Put up your hands, you funk!" roared Fritz in a voice that was heard far beyond Study No. 10. "Goward! Funk! Mein gootness, I

will give you a peating tat will make you pellow like a pull!"

Bang!
A fat fist landed on Jim's chest and he staggered through the study doorway. A dozen fellows in the passage stared at him in wonder, and stared still harder as the warlike Fritz followed him out.

"Stand up to it, Tainty, you funk!" roared Fritz. "Yah! Goward! Gold feet! Yah! Take tat!"

Bang!
It was another heavy thump, and Dainty backed away from it, but he got it all the same. Fritz, quite happy and glorious now, followed him up, hitting out right and left.

"Ach! Have a leedle bluck!" he roared. "Mein gootness, vat a goward! You are not fit for a prave Cherman to touch! Take tat—and tat—and tat!"

There was a buzz of amazement in the passage as Jim Dainty turned and scudded away. Fritz crowed with triumph.

"Funk!" roared a dozen voices.

That shout rang in Jim Dainty's ears as he went, crimson and breathless, into the quad.

Honours Divided!

DR. SPARSHOTT looked out of his study window, and smiled his genial smile. At a little distance a Third Form fag of Redmayes House was pulling the ear of a Fourth Form man of White's House.

Jim Dainty was the latter, and his face was crimson with rage and mortification. Dr. Sparshott saw him clench his fists convulsively; but he saw him unclench them again, and walk away, leaving the Redmayes fag hooting. That scene seemed to please the Head of Grimslade somehow.

He turned to Mr. White, who was in the study. It was three days since Dainty had made that promise to Sammy, and those three days had been days of purgatory to Jim. Perhaps Sammy thought that purgatory was good for him. Anyhow, he smiled.

"Not so much trouble with your new boy, Dainty, now, White?" he asked.

Billy White grunted.
"No! A few days ago he was continually fighting—now he seems to have lost all his spirit! I'd rather be punishing him for scrapping, than see him showing the white feather."

"The white feather!" repeated the Head.

"Absolute funk," grunted Billy White. "I'm ashamed to have him in the House."

"He keeps his temper?"

"I'd rather see him lose it!"

Sammy chuckled.

"He needs a lesson," he said. "He's getting it! Mind, White, I've asked no questions about his scrapping with that Fifth Form man in your House—but I've had an eye on Fenwick! Keep yours on him! But Dainty has to learn self-control. He's learning it! We've got original methods here, White! I shall be surprised if Dainty breaks his word."

"His word?" repeated Mr. White.

"His word to me not to fight again this term!" barked Sammy.

"Oh! Is that it? I never knew."

"You know now! The boy's full of beans, and he's showing it by letting that cheeky young scoundrel pull his ear before all Grimslade, rather than break his word. You'll be proud of Dainty in your House some day."

Jim Dainty might have been comforted a little had he known how much Sammy knew, and how he was rising in Sammy's estimation. He was in need of comfort.

Grimslade was not a place for funks. Fritz Splitz was taken rather as a joke, and let off lightly. But any other fellow who showed the white feather was assured of a hectic time.

For three days Jim had been through it. Pride kept him from mentioning his promise to the Head. He would give no

explanation, and make no excuses. And when it spread over Grimslade that Dainty was a fellow who could be smacked or kicked with impunity, the Grimsladers let him learn what they thought of such a fellow.

Redmayes fags chased him in the quad and drove him back to his own House. In his own House fellows sneered at him, or turned their backs on him. How often they kicked him in the passages, as a disgrace to his House, he could not have counted.

In his study, Fritz Splitz bullied him without mercy. Fritz would have made Study No. 10 impossible for Dainty; but Dawson, though ashamed of his friend, kicked the fat German into good behaviour sometimes. The climax seemed to have come when a Redmayes fag pulled his ear in the quad, and hooted after him with scorn when he walked away with burning cheeks.

Dainty was feeling that he could not stand Grimslade much longer; he felt that he almost hated Sammy. It was Saturday now, a half-holiday, and he knew that there was something on among the juniors of his House and that he was the object of it.

If it was a ragging, he had to go through it as if he had been a fellow like Fritz. His eyes blazed at the thought; but there was no help for it—unless the Head let him off his promise. But what was the use of going to Sammy Sparshott and asking that?

"Here he is!" shouted Tommy Tucker, as Jim came into the House.

Dainty was surrounded. Dawson was with the crowd—the only one who was not contemptuously hostile. He touched Jim's arm.

"Look here, Dainty," he said. "You're playing some fool stunt! I can't believe you're really a funk. Whatever it is, chuck it! You're going to the gym now to meet Ginger Rawlinson."

"I'm not!" snapped Dainty savagely.

"The fellows have fixed it up, and you've got to. They've been chipping us to death, since you funk'd Ginger."

"I never funk'd him, you fool!"

"You're going to fight Ginger, or show up to all the school as a coward. That's your choice!" snapped Dawson.

"If you're pulling our leg, it's time you chucked it. You're going to be given a chance of standing up to Ginger, and wiping out the disgrace you've brought on the House. Will you?"

"No, I won't!"

"Then you'll be paraded round the quad, with white feathers sticking in your hair, and ducked in the fountain. That's your choice!"

"Bring him along!" shouted Bates.

Jim Dainty's eyes flashed fire. Hands were laid on him on all sides, and for a second it looked as if his passionate temper would break out. But he did not resist. White's juniors marched him out of the House, and the whole crowd headed for the gym.

At the door of that building Jim made a sudden tremendous effort, and tore himself loose. He darted away.

"After him!" roared Tucker. "Stop him, Ginger!"

Ginger & Co. were coming over from Redmayes. They jumped into Dainty's path, grinning, and collared him.

Dainty struggled savagely in their grasp. But it was only for a moment. Then he unexpectedly gave in, and Ginger & Co. held him easily.

"Trot him in!" shouted Pulley.

Ginger & Co., chuckling, marched Dainty into the gym. A swarm of Grimslade fellows were there, and mocking looks were turned on Jim's crimson face. Fenwick of the Fifth strolled across to him, and took the junior's ear between finger and thumb.

"You rotten little coward!" he said. "You've got to play up now! Take that as a tip!"

Jim gasped as his ear was twisted. Fenwick did not know how narrowly he

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screaming pandemonium that sounded far worse than it really was.

Straight across the narrow slit of beach Lee and Nipper headed, and when they slithered to a stop close to the nose of the sampan, Lee whirled round, shouting as he did so:

"Keep shootin, young 'un. Take my gun as well. I'll try to get this thing into the water."

Nipper grabbed the gun he held out and began shooting towards the oncoming mob. Lee put his powerful shoulder against the nose of the sampan and heaving with all his strength, moved the boat gradually into the water. Thankful was he in that moment that sampans, large or small, are made to slide through shallow water.

A howl of fear and rage greeted this effort of Lee's. There were only three of the roughs who had come ashore still on their feet; but with the fear of the dreaded Chen-tsi before them they came plunging on, reckless of the bullets which Nipper was sending their way.

The lad's fingers began to move faster. His own gun emptied and he flung it across to his other hand, catching Lee's gun on the reverse motion.

The next shot brought the leader of the trio to his knees. But the other two still kept on, and the lad was forced to place his shots higher before they, too, stumbled and went down.

The villagers were milling round like cattle ready to stampede. But, compared with the roughs who had led them, they were negligible.

All this time, Lee was working the sampan into deeper water. But he did not call to Nipper until he had scrambled aboard and hoisted the mat sail about halfway up. Then he sprang for the steering sweep, and as a gust of wind caught the sail, heeling the sampan over, he shouted to Nipper to come.

The lad turned and plunged through the water, and pitching the weapons aboard, he caught the moving gunwale and hauled himself on deck, while Lee, pressing the sweep far over, brought the boat round

so that she was moving parallel to the shore, gaining speed each moment.

Then, as coolly as if he were on the deck of a yawl in the Solent, Nipper began to haul on the mat sail.

When he had set it to his liking, he was actually grinning as he joined Lee by the steering sweep, and gazed back towards the island where they could see three or four futile sampans coming after them.

"Well, that's that, guv'nor," he chirped. "What next? Those birds will never overtake us."

Lee smiled grimly. "They won't," he rejoined, laying emphasis on the pronoun. "But you can wager this isn't the only craft Chen-tsi has out looking for us. And, with only the two of us, we could never navigate her up the river to Nanking even if we had the ghost of a chance of slipping through."

"What are we going to do, then?" "Get back into Shanghai if we can. I know a man in the Native City. We'll try new disguises and make a new start."

But they were not destined to reach Shanghai as Lee planned. The reason lay in the attack upon the Woosung forts, and a little later, they saw actual signs of the fighting in the manoeuvring of several aircraft which zoomed across the sky as they drew nearer and nearer to the south bank of the river.

At Lee's direction, Nipper had crawled under the curved mat shelter amidships, had found a plug in the bottom of the boat, and had poked out his head to report the fact, when, out of the grey clouds to the east, two black specks emerged, growing larger with each moment.

Lee watched them, knowing they must be rival planes shooting it out alone, then his gaze went to the shore about a hundred yards distant, and, finally, back to Nipper.

"Pull that plug, young 'un," he ordered. "We'll take to the water as she sinks."

Nipper disappeared for a minute. When he again scrambled back into view it was to announce that the water was rushing in.

Lee nodded and pointed to the two

fighting planes that were now almost directly overhead. They could hear the racketing of the machine-guns and, despite the precariousness of their own position, could not resist watching the masterly handling of one of the machines. The plane shot up suddenly until it was standing almost on its tail, then before the enemy could make an effective counter, the pilot had banked sharply and was on an even keel again, where he had the other at his mercy.

The next few moments of the combat were lost to Lee and Nipper, for a sudden lurch of the sampan warned them that she was about to take the plunge.

They moved together to the edge and as the craft settled still lower, they dived in, trusting themselves for the second time in twelve hours to the hazard of the Yangtze.

But this was an easy swim. They reached the bank together, conscious all the time of the continuous racket of the machine-guns overhead.

As they pulled themselves out and scrambled up the bank they paused, fascinated at what they saw.

One machine was coming earthwards at a terrific rate. The other had shot up to a much higher level and was turning almost vertically.

It was plain that the lower fighter was stricken, but whatever had happened, the pilot brought his machine to a bumpy landing.

It came to rest so close to Lee and Nipper that they could see distinctly into the cockpit, where one helmeted, goggled figure sprawled in a heap. Then they saw a second figure struggle to his feet, stand lurching for a moment, and then crash over the side of the cockpit.

As if this acted upon him like a physical shock, Nelson Lee motioned to Nipper and began to run towards the plane.

(Is this plane to prove a means of escape for Nelson Lee and Nipper? Look out for plenty of thrills and excitement in next week's chapters of G. Hamilton Teed's fine story.)

THE FOURTH FORM AT GRIMSLADE!

(Continued from page 87.)

escaped a drive that would have laid him on his back.

"Hand out the gloves, sergeant!" shouted Sandy Bean. "You're going to see no end of a scrap."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Sergeant Starkey snorted. The school sergeant of Grimslade had the scars of Flanders on his bronzed visage, and he loathed a coward. Snorting, he tossed out the gloves.

"Take your jacket off, Dainty!" he snapped.

"Shan't!"

"Take it off him!" shouted Fenwick. Jim's jacket was stripped off. The boxing-gloves were handed to him, and he dashed them aside. Pulley, Bates, and Tucker held him, while Dawson put the gloves on his hands.

Jim kept his hands down at his sides. Jeers and hisses on all sides only brought the colour to his cheeks. Ginger stared at him in blank amazement.

"You won't fight?" he asked.

"No, I won't!"

"It means a fearful ragging."

"Let it!"

"Collar him!"

A crowd of jeering fellows surged round the fellow who wouldn't fight. At that moment Dr. Sparshott strolled into the gym. The hands that had been laid on Dainty fell away at sight of the Head. Dr. Sparshott strolled up to the excited crowd.

"What is it, sergeant—boxing?" he asked. He smiled at Jim. "Dainty, you're not fighting—after your promise?"

"No!" almost snarled Dainty. Dr. Sparshott glanced round.

"Three days ago," he said, "I made Dainty promise not to fight again this term. Dainty is a man of his word, I believe."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Dawson.

"I think you've had a lesson, Dainty!" grinned Sammy. "I release you from that promise!"

"Oh!" gasped Jim. He stepped towards Ginger Rawlinson, and tapped him on the nose in his turn, hard.

"Now come on, you Redmayes rotter!"

"Come, come!" said Sammy genially.

"We'll have this in order—and I'll keep time for you! Now then, clear the ring! Shake hands!" Sammy Sparshott took out his watch. "Time!"

It was a great fight—a tremendous fight!

Fellows who had jeered at Dainty as a funk could scarcely believe their eyes as they watched him. Ginger Rawlinson was full of beans—and he went all out. It was Redmayes' against White's—Lancashire against Yorkshire—and nearly all Grimslade crowded into the gym to watch! Redmayes cheered on Ginger—and White's answered with roars for Dainty! Only one White's fellow watched with dismay. That was Fritz Splitz! Now that Fatty Fritz understood, he was wondering what was going to happen to him afterwards.

Round after round was fought. Six rounds—seven—eight—and still both the combatants came grimly up to the call of time.

"Go it, Ginger! Ginger for pluck!" yelled Redmayes.

"Back up, Dainty!" roared White's.

"Man down!" yelled Dawson.

Ginger was on his back. He struggled up gamely, as Sammy began to count. Jim Dainty dropped his hands, and grinned groggily. He could have knocked Ginger out at that moment, but he gave him the chance. And Ginger got through the round, and came up again for the ninth. And then fortune

favoured the red-headed champion, and Dainty was down hard, and Sammy had counted nine when he scrambled up desperately, and carried on till time was called.

The tenth round began, and both came up to the scratch gamely. It was a fierce round, both fighting hard for victory; but honours were easy at the finish.

Sammy Sparshott put away his watch. "Ten rounds is the limit!" he barked. "The fight ends in a draw—honours divided! Good men both!"

The Head's word was law. The great fight was over. Ginger leaned heavily on his chums, Bacon and Bean, as he left the gym. Jim Dainty wondered if he would be able to walk back to White's House. But he did not have to walk. A cheering crowd of White's juniors surrounded him, and he was hoisted on the shoulders of Dawson and Tucker, and carried back to the House shoulder-high.

With a roar of cheering he was carried into the House, up the study passage, and landed in Study No. 10.

"Mein goot Tainty!" Fritz Splitz came in unasily. "Mein goot, prave, blucky Tainty! I tinks tat I admire you more tan neffer vas! I tink you not a funk, Tainty, tat vas only a leedle choke. I tinks tat you are as prave as a Cherman— Ach! Kick me not on mein trousers— Ach! Peast and a prute— Whoooooocooop!"

The crash in the passage as Fatty Fritz landed almost shook White's House!

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