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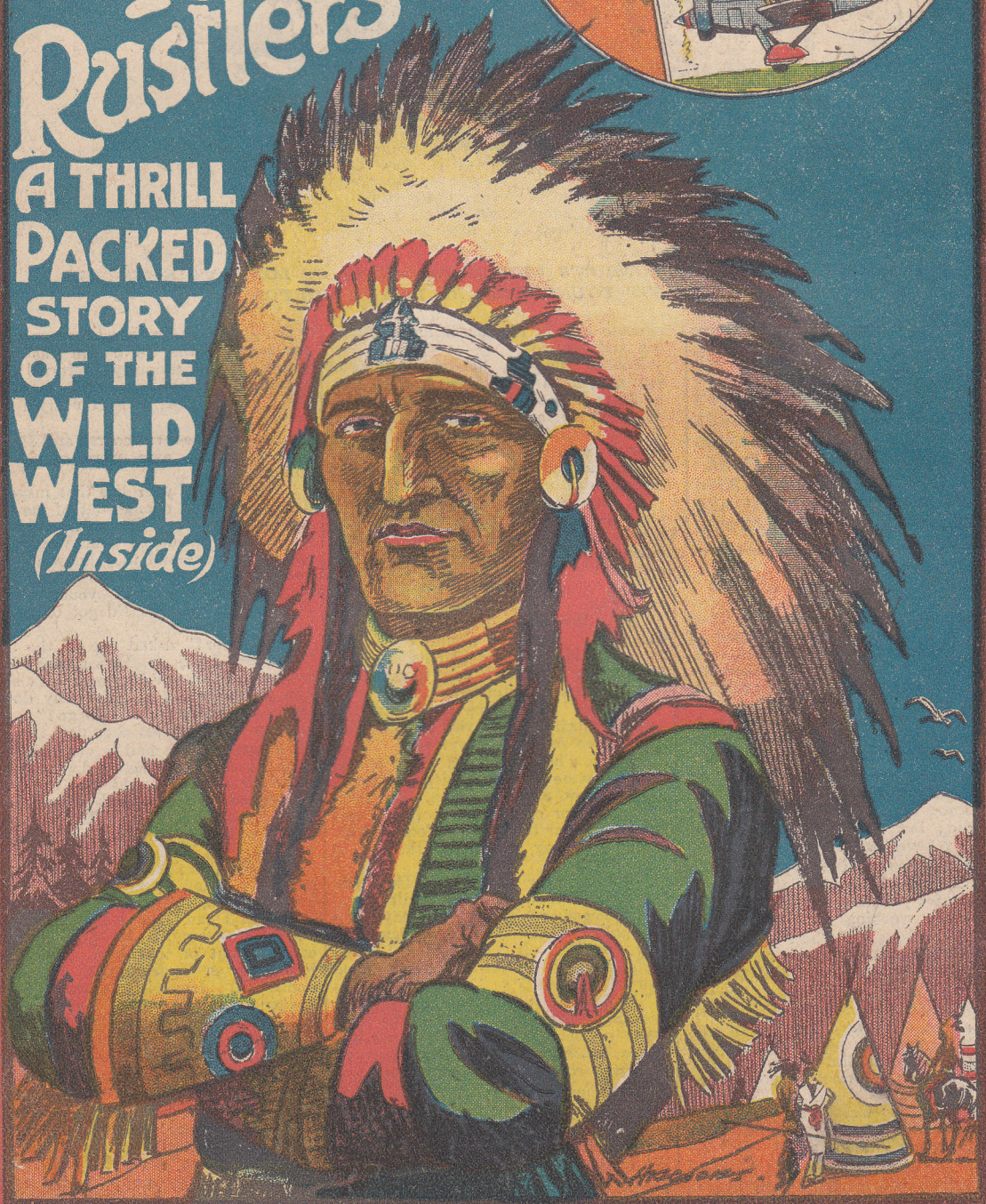
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# The RANGER

## 2

# "Red Rustlers"

A THRILL  
PACKED  
STORY  
OF THE  
WILD  
WEST  
(Inside)





# The Fourth Form at GRIMSLADE!



A NOTORIOUS GUNMAN DOES THE WORST DAY'S WORK OF HIS LIFE WHEN HE GIVES GRIMSLADE A "LOOK IN." JIM DAINTY, THE REBEL, CAPTURES HIM— BUT YOU WILL NEVER GUESS HOW HE DOES IT!

## Sammy Makes a Mistake!

**J**IM DAINTY jumped. "Oh!" he gasped. The impact of a cricket ball on the chin might have made any fellow jump.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Ginger Rawlinson.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Ginger, in class, the Fourth Form at Grimslade had been absorbing knowledge of South American manners and customs. Peck, the master of the Fourth, had described, to an interested Form, the use of the "bola."

The bola, Peck told them, was an iron ball on the end of a long rope, which was used to rope in animals or enemies, like the lasso in North America.

Ginger Rawlinson, of Redmayes House, had an enterprising mind. Into that enterprising mind flashed at once the idea of making a bola, and roping in some blighter of White's House.

A cricket ball in a net bag, tied to the end of a box rope, made the "bola," and Ginger, thus armed, sallied forth in quest of a victim.

Strolling in the quad, cheery and unsuspecting, Jim Dainty noticed Ginger lurking under the oaks, but did not give him any particular attention—till Ginger got going with the bola.

Then he did! Ginger made the discovery that the bola, like other instruments, requires practice to make perfect. The ball was intended to swing round Dainty, wind-

ing the rope round him and making him a prisoner, in the proper South American way. But something went wrong. Instead of swinging round the White's junior, the ball hit him on the chin—to Ginger's surprise, and still more to Jim Dainty's.

Jim Dainty sat down in the quad—hard. His hand went to his chin. He yelled.

Ginger ran towards him, coiling up the rope.

"Sorry, old man!" he exclaimed. "I didn't mean it to hit you! It's a bola, you know!"

"Oh!" gasped Dainty. "It's a bola, is it? I'll give you bola!"

He made one jump to his feet and another at Ginger Rawlinson. Ginger sprawled and roared.

Jim Dainty picked up the bola. As Ginger Rawlinson scrambled up he made a cast with it. What was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander!

Jim had better luck than Ginger had had. The ball spun round Ginger, winding the rope round him like a string round a top. The Redmayes junior suddenly found himself a prisoner. Jim Dainty started for White's House, keeping the rope taut, and dragging Ginger along at the end of it.

A roar of laughter went up when the quad was reached.

Dr. Sparshott, Head of Grimslade, grinned as he came on the scene. Sammy Sparshott had a sense of humour. But he ceased to grin quite suddenly as Ginger stopped abruptly, jerking the rope so that it caught the Head across the shins.

Before he knew what was happening Sammy Sparshott felt his legs plucked from under him, and he was extended on hands and knees with a sudden shock.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Jim Dainty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sammy Sparshott picked himself up rather dizzily. Fifty fellows were roaring with laughter; but they ceased to roar as the Head glanced round.

A TIP-TOP SCHOOL YARN, BY FAMOUS FRANK RICHARDS. AUTHOR OF THE GREYFRIARS STORIES NOW APPEARING IN THE "MAGNET."

"Dainty!" snapped the Head. "Yes, sir!" gasped Jim. "Take that—that contrivance off Rawlinson!"

Jim unwound the rope from the panting Ginger.

"Bring it to me!" Jim obediently handed over the bola.

"Quite a clever contrivance," said Dr. Sparshott. "Extremely useful on the llanos in South America, I believe, but entirely out of place in a school quadrangle. A bright idea, Dainty; but too bright for Grimslade. Stand still!"

"But, sir—"

"Silence, and stand still!" Sammy evidently supposed that it was Dainty's bola and Dainty's bright idea. From what he had seen, he could hardly have supposed anything else. Still, for once Sammy Sparshott had made a mistake! Seldom indeed did Sammy make a mistake; but to err is human, and Sammy was only human.

With a swing of his sinewy arm Sammy spun the ball round Jim Dainty as he obediently stood still.

"This will not do for Grimslade, Dainty," said Sammy genially. "I am sure you will realise as much by the time you have done with it."

"But, sir—" exclaimed Ginger.

"Silence, Rawlinson!"

Sammy Sparshott walked on to Big School, leading Dainty at the end of the rope. The Grimslade fellows stared after them, grinning. Dainty's face was crimson. Sammy walked with long strides, and Jim had to trot to avoid being pulled over.

Dr. Sparshott stopped at the big oak near his study window, and tied the end of the rope to the trunk. Then he knotted Jim's end.

"You may stay there till the dinner-bell, Dainty," he said. "By that time I am sure you will realise that the use of the bola had better be left to the South Americans. What?"

And the Head went in, leaving Jim Dainty a prisoner. It was Sammy's way to make the punishment fit the crime, so to speak; his methods were rather original.

It was half an hour to dinner. During that half-hour Jim Dainty had the time of his life.

Nearly all Grimslade gathered round him, and all of them were laughing. Fellows of his own House were sympathetic, but they laughed; fellows of Redmayes House were unsympathetic, and they laughed, too. Nobody ventured to release the hapless prisoner in sight of Sammy's window.

Jim's face grew redder and redder, till it resembled a freshly boiled beetroot. Had he been the original proprietor of that bola he could not have grumbled. But Ginger should have been in his place—and Ginger was among the crowd of hilarious fellows, laughing at him.

Not till the bell was ringing for dinner did Byles, the Head's man, come out and release the hapless Dainty. Dick Dawson caught his arm and hurried him away to White's House.

"Ach! Tat Sammy he is ferry funny!" chuckled Fritz Splitz. "Mein goot Tainty, do you not tink tat you look a colossal ass? I tink tat you look te piggest ass tat neffer was before! I tink—ach! Kick me not on mein trousers, you peast and a prute!"



Fritz fled yelling. Dainty glared at Dawson.

"What are you grinning at, you dummy?" he demanded.

Dawson tried not to grin.

"Funny, isn't it?" snapped Dainty. "Well, Sammy won't think it so funny when he goes through it himself! He's made me look a fool, and I'll make him look a fool!"

"Dainty, old chap—"

"Don't 'old chap' me, you cackling idiot! I'm going to make a bola, and give him what he gave me, and we'll see if he thinks it funny!" growled Dainty savagely; and he tramped into the House, leaving Dawson staring.

**The Hunted Man!**

**B**ANG!

The tyre went like a cannon-shot.

It was a half-holiday that day, and a good many Grimslade fellows were round about the gates when the car came spinning along the road across the moor from the distant town of Blackslade.

It came at a wild and reckless speed, the driver hunched over the wheel, fairly whizzing.

There was a fog on the Yorkshire moors that afternoon, and fog hanging about the quadrangle of Grimslade. Wisps of vapour floated into the Houses. Over the great Pike it was thick as pea-soup. Mist from the moor drifted on the road, and through it came the car from Blackslade like a bullet.

A score of fellows at the gateway stared at it as it shot up. It was almost opposite the gates when the tyre went.

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Ginger Rawlinson. "Look!"

The racing-car overturned in the twinkling of an eye. It crashed into the roadside hedge, wheels up. The Grimsladers stared with startled eyes. "He'll be killed!" gasped Dick Dawson.

There was a rush across the road to help the motorist. As if by a miracle, the reckless driver had escaped injury. He had been tossed from the car as it hit the hedge, and lay sprawling on the grass by the roadside, gasping for breath, dazed and dizzy.

Jim Dainty was the first to reach him. As he bent over the man he received a sudden shove on the chest and staggered back. The man leaped to his feet. He was a powerfully-built man, with a hard, clean-shaven face and eyes like flints. There was a fierce glitter in his eyes and his lips were drawn back from his teeth in a snarl.

"Stand back!" he snapped, as the Grimsladers crowded round him.

"Here comes another car. Look out!" yelled Dawson.

From the road over the moors another car shot into sight, coming on at racing speed. Uniformed men could be seen in it. Then the Grimsladers understood. It was a fugitive from the police who had crashed at the school gates.

"Hold him!" shouted Jim Dainty. "They're after him!"

"Look out!"

The flinty-eyed man's hand dived into his coat. It came out with a bluish barrel glimmering. It was an automatic.

"Hands off! Stand back!" he panted.

The schoolboys crowded back from the weapon, over which the desperate man's eyes glittered. He gave a swift glance at the oncoming car, turned, and raced along the road. A second later he had leaped a hedge and disappeared from sight.

With a grinding of brakes, the police car came to a halt. Some of the Grimslade fellows knew Inspector Rawson, of Blackslade, who stared out at the wrecked car.

"That's the car!" rapped the inspector. "Where's the man? You saw which way he went?"

"Over that hedge," said Jim Dainty, pointing. "What has he done?"

"Bank hold-up at Blackslade," said the inspector briefly.

And the police car rushed on again, to halt at the hedge where the bank-raider had leaped. Three constables tumbled in hot haste out of the car and followed the inspector through the hedge.

"We're on this, you men!" said Ginger Rawlinson.

"What-ho!" answered his chums, Streaky Bacon and Sandy Bean.

And the trio started; and a dozen more fellows followed.

"Come on, Dainty!" exclaimed Dick Dawson, catching Jim by the arm. "It's up to everybody to lend a hand."

"I'm not coming," grunted Dainty. "I've got my bola in my pocket, and in this fog I'm looking for a chance at Sammy."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" exclaimed Dawson impatiently. "You'd better let Sammy alone. Anyhow, I'm going."

He ran along the road after Ginger & Co. Dainty hesitated for a moment, then followed.

Crowds of Grimslade fellows gathered to stare at the wrecked car

and to join in the hunt for the man who had driven it. The news spread like wildfire over the school. It was sheer luck that it was a half-holiday that day. Almost all Grimslade had turned out, without asking the Head's leave, which would probably have been refused. Once the fellows were scattered, even Sammy could not have rounded them up again.

Both the Housemasters, and Dr. Sparshott himself, came out to take a hand as soon as they heard that a bank-raider was dodging on foot in the vicinity of the school. Grimslade was almost deserted.

Whooping and halloing rang through the mists on the moors. Grimslade fellows shouted to one another, spreading far and wide. More and more police arrived from Blackslade, and mounted men spread out in a wide cordon to cut off the desperate man's escape.

The news spread that the raider had wounded a man in Blackslade Bank and got away with hundreds of pounds in notes.

"Hold on, Dick!" muttered Jim Dainty suddenly as an athletic figure in a rough grey coat and cap loomed up in the mist. He thrust his hand into his coat pocket for the bola.

Dawson caught his arm. "You ass! That's not the man. That's the Head!"

"I know that!"

Dr. Sparshott loomed up, peering at the boys in the mist. He had a thick oaken cudgel in his hand.

"Let go, you fool!" hissed Dainty.

It was the chance he wanted. But Dick Dawson held on to his arm with a grip of iron. He was not letting Dainty rope in the Head of Grimslade, if he could help it.

Sammy recognised them the next moment.

"Get back to the school!" he said briefly. "I know what you're after here. Glad to see you so plucky. But the man is armed, and it is no work for schoolboys. Go back at once!"

The burly figure in the thick grey coat tramped on and disappeared in the mists, Sammy certainly never suspecting how narrow an escape he had had from the bola.

Dainty gave his companion a fierce look.

"You fool! I should have got him if—"

"And a flogging, too!" snapped Dawson.

Jim Dainty swung angrily away. Dawson shrugged his shoulders and walked back to the school. Fellows



Ginger stopped abruptly, jerking the rope so that it caught the Head across his shins. Before he knew what was happening, Sammy Sparshott felt his legs plucked from under him, and he was extended on hands and knees with a sudden shock. "Oh, crikey!" gasped Jim Dainty.



were gathered there again; Head and Housemasters sent in all the boys they came upon on the moor. Jim Dainty did not go in, however. In his present mood, the Head's order fell on deaf ears. He tramped on, peering through the mists, looking for a sign of the bank-raider, but still more keenly for a chance at "Sammy."

Figures loomed in the mist; shouting voices sounded in the distance. Jim Dainty plunged through a hedge, tramping through a dry ditch on the other side, thick with ferns and nettles and dead leaves. He gave a sudden convulsive start as the heap of vegetation under his feet stirred.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Jim.

Dead leaves and twigs, ferns and nettles were flung aside as a crouching figure, on which Jim had fairly trodden, leaped up.

He had a glimpse of a hard, desperate face, eyes as hard as flints—and then a blow was struck and he pitched over in the ditch.

The figure leaped away in the mist.

Jim Dainty scrambled up, dazed by the blow, blood streaming from a cut on his forehead. He staggered out of the ditch and shouted.

"This way! I've seen him!"

A burly figure in a greatcoat loomed up. It was Sammy.

"Dainty! You—what—"

"There he goes!" panted Jim. "He was hiding in the ditch. I trod on him. Look—"

The panting man was vanishing. Like a hound after a stag, Sammy Sparshott darted in pursuit. Jim reeled against a tree, sick and faint, and dabbed the blood from his face with his handkerchief. Shouting and yelling and the crack of a pistol rang through the mist. The hunt was close on the heels of the bank-raider, and he was hard pressed. Shouting and tramping and panting died away in the direction of Grimslade.

With his head reeling and his handkerchief held to the cut on his forehead, Jim Dainty groped his way back to the school.

### In Desperate Hands!

"D AINTY, you're wanted in the Head's study at once!"

Yorke, of the Sixth, delivered the message to Jim Dainty in Study No. 10. Jim nodded and took his departure immediately. He could guess why the headmaster wanted to see him.

He crossed to Big School. The quadrangle was deserted; the dusk of evening was falling and darkening the drifting mist.

Dr. Sparshott was in his study. Apparently he had only just come in from the hunt on the moor. His big, heavy coat and the thick grey cap lay on the back of a chair with the oaken cudgel beside them. Sammy Sparshott looked tired. He gave the White's junior a grim glance, his eyes resting for a moment on Jim's bandaged forehead.

"Dainty!" he rapped out. "You disobeyed my order to return to the school, when I spoke to you on the moor."

Dainty was sullenly silent.

"You have received an injury," went on the Head. "Fortunately, it is slight—but it might have been serious. It is true, Dainty, that it was due to you that the bank-robber was unearthed from his hiding-place, and the police are now so close upon him that he can scarcely escape. That is a service that you have rendered. But obedience comes first. I shall cane you."

He picked up a cane, and pointed to a chair.

"Bend over that chair!"

Jim Dainty set his teeth. But he had

been long enough at Grimslade to learn that Sammy was not to be trifled with. In silence, with set teeth, he bent over the chair.

Six cuts came down, hard.

Dainty uttered no sound.

When the infliction was over, he rose, his face pale, and his eyes gleaming. Sammy laid down the cane.

"Go to Sergeant Starkey's house, and tell him that I shall be starting again in half an hour, and he is to be ready. Then return to your House!" said the Head.

Without a word, Dainty left the study, his eyes burning, his heart throbbing. Dr. Sparshott glanced after him rather curiously as the door closed. Then he threw himself into a chair, dismissing the junior from his mind.

For hours the Head had been tramping the moors, helping in the search for the elusive hold-up man. Strong and sinewy as he was, he was tired. But he was taking only a brief rest before going out again after a hurried tea.

Suddenly the Head of Grimslade gave a start.

There was a sound—a faint sound—in the study. In surprise, he glanced round towards the screen that stood across a corner of the room.

His eyes almost started from his head as he glimpsed a hard, white, desperate face peering round the screen at him.

For an instant Sammy stared at him blankly, then he leaped to his feet, to spring towards the cudgel standing against the chair.

"Stop!"

The voice came in a snarl as the fainty-eyed man leaped from behind the screen, automatic in hand.

The weapon was levelled at the Head of Grimslade.

"Stop, and stand silent! I'll shoot you like a dog!" hissed the bank-raider. "I'm desperate—take warning!"

Sammy Sparshott stopped, and stood still. He was a brave man, and fear was unknown to him. But he was unarmed—and the levelled automatic, within six feet of him, would have spat

death in another moment. Standing still, with a calm face, he faced the ruffian.

"You've got me!" said Sammy pleasantly. "I advise you to drop that gun, and give in! You'll never get away."

"Keep quiet!"

"I'm not shouting so long as you hold that gun!" smiled Sammy. "Take my advice and drop it! You're known—Gunner Joe, I think the inspector told me you were called. Your description's known—down to every rag on your back. You've got seven years to come! Don't make it a hanging job, Gunner."

"Keep quiet!" repeated the Gunner.

The Head of Grimslade shrugged his shoulders. Still keeping him covered with the automatic, Joe the Gunner stepped to the door, and turned the key in the lock. Then he picked up the oaken cudgel and threw it out of reach under the table. Sammy Sparshott watched him—curious to know the desperate man's game, and wary for a chance to turn the tables.

### Just Like Sammy!

"D AINTY, you reckless ass—"

"Leave me alone!"

"It means a frightful row if—"

"No bizney of yours! Get out!"

Dick Dawson, with an angry grunt, turned away, and left the obstinate new fellow to his own devices. Jim did not glance after him. His eyes were fixed on the path by the big oak near the Head's window.

It was not yet lock-up, but few fellows were out of the Houses in the dank, clinging mist and deepening dusk. Jim Dainty lurked in the shadow of the big oak, the "bola" in his hand. Sammy had given him a message to the school sergeant—which he had not delivered. From that message, he knew that Sammy would be coming down that path under the half-hour. It was his chance, and he was not missing it. Dick Dawson had done his best to persuade him, but in vain. Now he was gone—and Jim was glad of it.

With glinting eyes in the gloom, he watched. He had put in some practice with the "bola," and he could handle it. What Sammy had done to him, he was going to do to Sammy—regardless of the consequences. Sammy should learn not to make such mistakes. Jim heard a door open and shut, and his heart beat. Grim and determined, he watched the path that passed the big oak.

The expected tall figure, in the big, grey greatcoat and cap, loomed up in the mist. Jim Dainty did not hesitate for a second.

Whiz!

The ball flew, and spun round the grey-coated figure with lightning speed. It spun round and round the figure, too fast for the eye to follow it, pinning the arms down to the sides.

Almost in a twinkling, the rope was wound round and round the man in the big grey coat, round and round him twenty times at least before he knew what was happening.

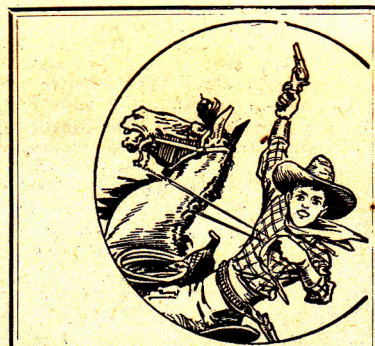
"That's for you, Sammy Sparshott!" Dainty jeered. "You can whop me if you like—when you get loose! Whop me as hard as you like—but not till you've looked a fool to all Grimslade!"

Dick Dawson came running up—he had not gone far. He caught Dainty by the arm.

"Jim! You mad ass!"

"Keep off!" snapped Dainty.

Not a word, so far, had come from the trapped man—only panting breathing. He was struggling frantically, madly, with the rope; but utterly in vain. His arms were as tightly fastened down to his sides as if they had been manacled there. Suddenly his voice was heard, as he found that it was impossible to get loose—rapping out a furious oath that made the two juniors jump.



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"That's not Sammy!" gasped Dawson. "Not—not Sammy!" Jim Dainty stared blankly. "It's Sammy—who else can it be in Sammy's coat? But—what—"

He ran towards the struggling man, and barely dodged a savage kick. Fierce and furious curses poured from the prisoner. Dodging another kick, Jim jumped in and jerked the cap from his head. Then, even in the misty dusk, he could see only too well that it was not Sammy. He stared almost in stupefaction at the low-browed face and flinty eyes.

"It's the man!" he gasped. "Oh, my hat! It's the bank-robber!"

Loud through the misty quad rang the shouts of the two astonished juniors, calling all Grimslade to the spot. From both Houses came a rush of feet. Masters and boys arrived in a swarm, and every eye was fixed in amazement on the captured hold-up man. Mr. White shouted to Sykes, the porter, to call in the nearest constable—there were a good many round the school now. Round the struggling, foaming gunman, all Grimslade surged and buzzed.

"Who caught this man?" exclaimed Mr. Redmayes. "How did it happen? Who—"

"I did!" said Jim Dainty coolly. "I took him for the Head, in the Head's coat."

"You—you—you took him for the Head!" gasped Mr. White. "You dared—"

"You can slang me later, sir," said Dainty, with undisturbed coolness. "Hadn't you better see what's happened to the Head? That coat was in Dr. Sparshott's study when I was there half an hour ago."

"Good heavens! The Head!"

There was a rush to Dr. Sparshott's study. The door was locked; the key gone. Mr. Redmayes and Mr. White rapped on the panels together. Within the study a wriggling sound was heard; but there was no answer.

"Dr. Sparshott!" shouted Mr. White.

Only the writhing, wriggling sound replied.

"Good heavens! What has happened?" gasped the Housemaster. "The man has been in this room, that is clear—probably he has the key."

Billy White rushed out into the quad again. Joe the Gunner was not struggling now; a dozen hands were on him; and Inspector Rawson was fastening the handcuffs on his wrists. The key was quickly found, and Mr. White rushed back to the study and unlocked the door. A crowd poured in as the door was thrown open and the light switched on.

Sammy Sparshott, bound and gagged, lay wriggling on the floor. Only his eyes were eloquent. Quickly enough the Head was released and helped to his feet. He gasped spasmodically for breath.

"Thank you, White—thank you, Redmayes! The bank-robber was here—he is in the school. Not a moment must be lost—"

"He is caught, sir!" gasped Mr. White.

"Oh, good!" said Sammy. "He fancied—and I fancied—that he would get clear in my coat! How did they get him?"

"A junior—Dainty, of my House—caught the man."

"What?"

"The police are taking the man away now, sir," said Byles, looking in. "They have found on him the money he took from Blackslade Bank."

"Send Dainty to me!" said the Head. "White, how on earth did a Fourth Form junior capture an armed gunman?"

"With a contrivance called, I think, a bola," answered the Housemaster. "He appears to have been watching—"

"Why?" Sammy was amazed. "He could not have known the man was here."

"I think he was watching for you, sir, and your greatcoat on the gunman deceived him," said the Housemaster drily.

Sammy Sparshott started. A junior with a bandaged forehead appeared in the doorway.

"You sent for me, sir!" said Jim Dainty coolly.

At a gesture from Sammy, he was left alone with the new boy at Grimslade. He fixed his eyes grimly on Jim's defiant face.

"You've caught the gunman, Dainty! You fancied it was I!"

"Yes!" said Jim. "You can whop me if you like—I know you're going to—and then I'll try again!"

"Why?" asked Sammy very quietly. "Are you a fellow to bear malice for a whopping that you know you asked for?"

Jim flushed. "No! It's not that. You made me look a fool in front of all Grimslade."

"To impress upon you that you should not use a bola in the quad—though, by gad, it has turned out very useful," said the Head. "Come, Dainty, you know very well—"

"It wasn't my bola! It was another fellow's—he caught me with it and I caught him, and you—"

Sammy whistled.

"I never knew that!" he said. "Gad, I made a mistake that time! Sorry, Dainty!"

"Oh, sir!" gasped Jim.

"Sorry—as man to man!" said Sammy, smiling. "Wash it out, Dainty—we all make our little mistakes! Cut!"

There was a curious expression on Jim Dainty's face when he came back into White's House. He tapped Dick Dawson on the arm.

"Kick me, old chap!" he said.

"Eh? What for?"

"For being such a silly idiot as to owe Sammy a grudge—a splendid man like Sammy."

Dawson chuckled.

"Well, you jolly well ought to be kicked," he said. "Here goes!"

*(Frank Richards has written another powerful story of the Chums of Grimslade in next week's RANGER, buddies! Order your copy now—The RANGER is selling like hot cakes!)*

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