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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ANDY AT YALE ***

ANDY AT YALE

OR

THE GREAT QUADRANGLE MYSTERY

BY

ROY ELIOT STOKES

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ANDY AT YALE

CHAPTER I

A HORSE-WHIPPING

"Come on, Andy, what are you hanging back for?"

"Oh, just to look at the view. It's great! Why, you can see for twenty miles from here, right off to the mountains!"

One lad stood by himself on the summit of a green hill, while, a little below, and in advance of him, were four others.

"Oh, come on!" cried one of the latter. "View! Who wants to look at a view?"

"But it's great, I tell you! I never appreciated it before!" exclaimed Andy Blair. "You can see——!"

"Oh, for the love of goodness! Come on!" came in protest from the objecting speaker. "What do we care how far we can see? We're going to get something to eat!"

"That's right! Some of Kelly's good old kidney stew!"

"A little chicken for mine!"

"I'm for a chop!"

"Beefsteak on the grill!"

Thus the lads, waiting for the one who had stopped to admire the fine view, chanted their desires in the way of food.

"Come on!" finally called one in disgust, and, with a half sigh of regret, Andy walked on to join his mates.

"What's getting into you lately?" demanded Chet Anderson, a bit petulantly. "You stand mooning around, you don't hear when you're spoken to, and you don't go in for half the fun you used to."

"Are you sick? Or is it a—girl?" queried Ben Snow, laughing.

"Both the same!" observed Frank Newton, cynically.

"Listen to the old dinkbat!" exclaimed Tom Hatfield. "You'd think he knew all about the game! You never got a letter from a girl in your life, Frank!"

"I didn't, eh? That's all you know about it," and Frank made an unsuccessful effort to punch his tormentor.

"Well, if we're going on to Churchtown and have a bit of grub in Kelly's, let's hoof it!" suggested Chet. "You can eat; can't you, Andy? Haven't lost your appetite; have you, looking at that blooming view?"

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"No, indeed. But you fellows don't seem to realize that in another month we'll never see it again, unless we come back to Milton for a visit."

"That's right!" agreed Ben Snow. "This *is* our last term at the old school! I'll be sorry to leave it, in a way, even though I do expect to go to college."

"Same here," came from Tom. "What college are you going to, Ben?"

"Hanged if I know! Dad keeps dodging from one to another. He's had all the catalogs for the last month, studying over 'em like a fellow going up for his first exams. Sometimes it's Cornell, and then he switches to Princeton. I'm for the last myself, but dad is going to foot the bills, so I s'pose I'll have to give in to him."

"Of course. Where are you heading for, Andy?"

"Oh, I'm not so sure, either. It's a sort of toss-up between Yale and Harvard, with a little leaning toward Eli on my part. But I don't have to decide this week. Come on, let's hoof it a little faster. I believe I'm getting hungry."

"And yet you would stop to moon at a view!" burst out Frank. "Really, Andy, I'm surprised at you!"

"Oh, cut it out, you old faker! You know that view from Brad's Hill can't be beat for miles around."

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"That's right!" chorused the others, and there seemed to have come over them all a more serious manner with the mention of the pending break-up of their pleasant relations. They had hardly realized it before.

For a few minutes they walked on over the hills in silence. The green fields, with here and there patches of woodland, stretched out all around them. Over in the distance nestled a little town, its white church, with the tall, slender spire, showing plainly.

Behind them, hidden by these same green hills over which they were tramping this beautiful day in early June, lay another town, now out of sight in a hollow. It was Warrenville, on the outskirts of which was located the Milton Preparatory School the five lads attended. They were in their last year, would soon graduate, and then separate, to go to various colleges, or other institutions.

School work had ended early this day on account of coming examinations, and the lads, who had been chums since their entrance at Milton, had voted to go for a walk, and end up with an early supper at Kelly's, a more or less celebrated place where the students congregated. This was at Churchtown, about five miles from Warrenville. The boys were to walk there and come back in the trolley.

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They had spent two years at the Milton school, and had been friends for years before that, all of them living in the town of Dunmore, in one of our Middle States. There was much rejoicing among them when they found that all five who had played baseball and football together in Dunmore, were to go to the same preparatory school. It meant that the pleasant relations were not to be severed. But now the shadow of parting had cast itself upon them, and had tempered their buoyant spirits.

"Yes, boys, it will soon be good-bye to old Milton!" exclaimed Chet, with a sigh.

"I wonder if we'll get anybody like Dr. Morrison at any of the colleges we go to?" spoke Ben.

"You can't beat him—no matter where you go!" declared Andy. "He's the best ever!"

"That's right! He knows just how to take a fellow," commented Tom. "Remember the time I smuggled the puppy into the physiology class?"

"I should say we did!" laughed Andy.

"And how he yelped when I pinched his tail that stuck out from under your coat," added Ben. "Say, it was great!"

"I'll never forget how old Pop Swann looked up over the tops of his glasses," put in Frank.

"Dr. Morrison was mighty decent about it when he had me up on the carpet, too," added Tom. "I thought sure I was in for a wiggling—maybe a suspension, and I couldn't stand that, for dad had written me one warning letter."

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"But all Prexy did was to look at me in that calm, withering, pitying way he has, and then say in that solemn voice of his: 'Ah, Hatfield, I presume you are going in for vivisection' Say, you could

have floored me with a feather. That's the kind of a man Dr. Morrison is."

"Nobody else like him," commented Andy, with a sigh.

"Oh, well, if any of us go to Yale, or Princeton, or Harvard, I guess we'll find some decent profs. there," spoke Ben. "They can't all be riggers."

"Sure not," said Andy. "But those colleges will be a heap sight different from Milton."

"Of course! What do you expect? This is a kindergarten compared to them!" exclaimed Frank.

"But it's a mighty nice kindergarten," commented Tom. "It's like a school in our home town, almost."

"I sure will be sorry to leave it," added Andy. "But come on; we'll never get to Kelly's at this rate."

The sun was sinking behind the western hills in a bank of golden and purple clouds. Two miles yet lay between the lads and their objective point—the odd little oyster and chop house so much frequented by the students of Milton. It was an historic place, was Kelly's; a beloved place where the lads foregathered to talk over their doings, their hopes, their fears, their joys and sorrows. It was an old-fashioned place, with little, dingy rooms, come upon unexpectedly; rooms just right for small parties of congenial souls—with tall, black settles, and tables roughened with many jack-knifed initials.

"We can cut over to the road, and get there quicker," remarked Andy, after a pause. "Suppose we do it. I don't want to get back too late."

"All right," agreed Tom. "I want to write a couple of letters myself."

"Oh, ho! Now who's got a girl?" demanded Chet, suspiciously.

"Nobody, you amalgamated turnip. I'm going to write to dad, and settle this college business. Might as well make a decision now as later, I reckon."

"We'll have to sign soon, or it will be too late," spoke Chet. "Those big colleges aren't like the small prep. schools. They have waiting lists—at least for the good rooms in the campus halls. That's where I'd like to go if I went to Yale—in Lawrance Hall, or some place like that, where I could look out over the campus, or the Green."

"There are some dandy rooms in front of Lawrance Hall where you can look out over the New Haven Green," put in Ben. "I was there once, and how I did envy those fellows, lolling in their windows on their blue cushions, puffing on pipes and making believe study. It was great!"

"Making believe study!" exclaimed Andy. "I guess they do study! You ought to see the stiff list of stuff on the catalog!"

"You got one?" asked Chet.

"Sure. I've been doping it out."

"I thought you said you hadn't decided where to go yet," remarked Frank.

"Well, I have," returned Andy, quietly.

"You have! When, for the love of tripe? You said a while ago—"

"I know I did. But I've decided since then. I'm going to Yale!"

"You are? Good for you!" cried Tom, clapping his chum on the back with such energy that Andy nearly toppled over. "That's the stuff! Rah! Rah! Rah! Yale! Bulldog!"

"Here! Cut it out!" ordered Andy. "I'm not at Yale yet, and they don't go around doing that sort of stuff unless maybe after a game. I was down there about a month ago, and say, there wasn't any of that 'Rah-rah!' stuff on the campus at all. But of course I wasn't there long."

"So that's where you went that time you slipped off," commented Chet. "Down at Yale. And you've decided to sign for there?"

"I have. It seemed to come to me as we walked down the hill. I've made my choice. I'm going to write to dad."

They walked on silently for a few moments following Andy's remarks.

"It was the King of France,
He had ten thousand men.
He marched them up the hill,
And marched them down again!"

Thus suddenly quoted Chet in a sing-song voice, adding:

"If we're going to get any grub at Kelly's, it's up to us to march down this hill faster than we've been going, or we'll get left. That other crowd from Milton will have all the good places."

"Come on then, fellows, hit her up!" exclaimed Frank. "Hep! Hep! Left! Left!" and they started

off at a good pace.

They reached the country road that led more directly to Churchtown, and swung off along this. The setting sun made a golden aurora that June day, the beams filtering through a haze of dust. The boys talked of many things, but chiefly of the coming parting—of the colleges they might attend.

As they passed a farmhouse near the side of the road, and came into view of the barnyard, they saw two men standing beside a team of horses hitched to a heavy wagon. One was tall and heavily built, evidently the farmer-owner. The other was a young man, of about twenty-two years, his left arm in a sling.

The boys would have passed on with only a momentary glance at the pair but for something that occurred as they came opposite. They saw the big man raise a horse-whip and lash savagely at the young man.

The lash cracked like the shot of a revolver.

"I'll teach you!" fairly roared the big man. "I'll teach you to soldier on me! Playin' off, that's what you are, Link Bardon! Playing off!"

"I'm not playing off! My arm is injured. And don't you strike me again, Mr. Snad, or I'll——"

"You will, eh?" burst out the other. "You'll threaten me, will you? Well, I'll teach you! Tryin' to pretend your arm is sprained so you won't have to work. I'll teach you! Take that!"

Again the cruel whip came down with stinging force. The face of the young man, that had flamed with righteous anger, went pale.

"Take that, you lazy, good-for-nothing!"

Again the whip descended, and the young man put up his uninjured arm to defend himself. The farmer rained blow after blow on his hired man, driving him toward a fence.

"Fellows! I can't stand this!" exclaimed Andy Blair, with sudden energy. "That big brute is a coward! Are you with me?"

"We sure are!" came in an energetic chorus from the others.

"Then come on!" cried Andy, and with a short run he cleared the fence and dashed up toward the farmer, who was still lashing away with the horse-whip.

CHAPTER II

GOOD SAMARITANS

"Here! Quit that!" exclaimed Andy, panting a bit from his exertion. "Drop that whip!"

The farmer wheeled around, for Andy had come up behind him. Surprise and anger showed plainly on the man's flushed face, and blazed from his blood-shot eyes.

"Wha—what!" he stammered in amazement.

"I said quit it!" came in resolute tones from Andy. "Don't you hit him any more! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Using a whip! Why don't you take some one your size, and use your hands if you have to. You're a coward!"

"That's right!" chimed in Chet Anderson.

"It's a blooming shame—that's what it is!" protested Tom Hatfield. "Let's make a rough-house of him, fellows!"

"What's that?" cried the farmer. "You threaten me, do you? Get out of my barnyard before I treat you as I did him! Get out, do you hear!"

"No!" exclaimed Andy. "We don't go until you promise to leave him alone," and he nodded at the shrinking youth.

"Say, I'll show you!" blustered the big farmer. "I'll thrash you young upstarts——"

"Oh no, you won't!" exclaimed Tom, easily. And when big Tom Hatfield, left guard on the Milton eleven, spoke in this tone trouble might always be looked for. "Oh, no you won't, my friend! And, just to show you that you won't—there goes your whip!"

With a quick motion Tom pulled the lash from the man's hand, and sent it whirling over the fence into the road.

"You—you!" blustered the farmer. He was too angry to be able to speak coherently. His hands were clenched and his little pig-like eyes roved from one to the other of the lads as though he were trying to decide upon which one to rush first.

"Take it easy, now," advised Tom, his voice still low. "We're five to one, and we'll certainly tackle you, and tackle you hard, if you don't be nice. We're not afraid of you!"

Perhaps the angry man realized this. Certainly he must have known that he would stand little chance in attacking five healthy, hearty youngsters, each of whom had the glow of clean-living on his cheeks, while their poise showed that they were used to active work, and ready for any emergency.

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"Get out of this yard!" roared the farmer. "What right have you got interfering between me and my hired man, anyhow? What right, I'd like to know?"

"The right of every lover of fair-play!" exclaimed Andy. "Do you think we'd stand quietly by and let you use a horse-whip on a young fellow that you ought to be able to handle with one hand? And he with his arm in a sling! To my way of thinking, you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

The farmer growled out something unintelligible.

"We ought to do you up good and brown!" exclaimed Tom, his fists clenched.

"He's only playing off on me—he ain't hurt a mite!" growled the farmer. "He's only fakin' on me."

"I certainly am not," spoke the young fellow in firm but respectful terms. "I sprained my arm unloading your wagon, Mr. Snad, and I can't drive the team any more to-day. I put my handkerchief around it because the sprain hurt me so. I certainly can't work!" His voice faltered and he choked. His spirit seemed as much hurt as his body—perhaps more.

"Huh! Can't work, eh? Then get out!" snarled Mr. Snad. "I want no loafer around here! Get out!"

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"I'm perfectly willing to go when you pay me what you owe me," said the helper, quietly.

"Owe you! I don't owe you nothin', you lazy lout!" snapped the farmer.

"You certainly do. You owe me twelve dollars, and as soon as you pay me I'll get out, and be glad to go!"

"Twelve dollars! I'd like to see myself giving you that much money!" grumbled the farmer. "You ain't wuth but ten dollars at the most, an' I won't pay you that for you busted my mowin' machine, an' it'll take that t' pay for fixin' it."

"That mowing machine was in bad order when you had me take it out," replied the young fellow, "and you know it. It was simply an accident that it broke, and not my fault in the least."

"Well, you'll pay for it, just the same," was the sneering reply. "Now be off!"

"Not until I get my wages. You agreed to pay me twelve dollars a month, and board me. My month is up to-day, and I want my money. It's about all I have in the world; I need it."

"You'll not get it out of me," and the farmer turned aside. Evidently he had given up the idea of further chastising his hired man. The presence of Andy and his chums was enough to deter him.

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"Mr. Snad, I demand my money!" exclaimed the young farm hand.

"You'll not get it! Leave my premises! Clear off, all of you," and he glared at the schoolboys.

"Mr. Snad, I'll go as soon as you give me my twelve dollars," persisted the youth, his voice trembling.

"You'll get no twelve dollars out of me," snapped the man.

"Oh, yes, I think he will," spoke Andy. "You'd better pay over that money, Mr. Snad."

"Eh? What's that your business?"

"It's the business of everyone to see fair play," said Andy.

"And we're going to do it in this case," added Tom, still in even tones.

"Are you? Well, I'd like to know how?" sneered the farmer.

"Would you? Then listen and you will hear, my friend," went on Tom. "Unless you pay this young man the money you owe him we will swear out a warrant against you, have you arrested, and use him as a witness against you."

For a moment there was a deep silence; then the farmer burst out with:

"Have me arrested! Me? What for?"

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"For assault and battery," answered Tom. "We saw you assault this young man with a horse-whip, and, while it might take some time to have him sue you for his wages, it won't take us any time at all to get an officer here and have you taken to jail on a criminal charge. The matter of the wages may be a civil matter—the horse-whipping is criminal."

"So, take your choice, Mr. Snad, if that's your name. Pay this young man his twelve dollars, or we'll cause your arrest on this assault charge. Now, my friend, it's up to you," and taking out his pocket knife Tom began whittling a stick picked from the ground. Andy and his chums looked admiringly at Tom, who had thus found such an effective lever of persuasion.

The angry farmer glanced from one to the other of the five lads. They gave him back look for look—unflinchingly.

"And don't be too long about it, either," added Tom, making the splinters fly. "We're due at Kelly's for a little feed, and then we want to get back to Milton. Don't be too long, my friend, unless you want to spend the night in jail."

The farmer gulped once or twice. The Adam's apple in his throat went up and down. Clearly he was struggling with himself.

"I—I—you——" he began.

"Tut! Tut!" chided Tom. "You'd better go get the money. We can't wait all day."

"I—er—I——" The farmer seemed at a loss for words. Then, turning on his heel, he started toward the house. He was beaten.

"I—I'll get it," he flung back over his shoulder. "And then I'll swear out warrants for your arrest. You're trespassers, that's what you are. I'll fix you!"

"Trespassers? Oh, no," returned Andy, sweetly. "We're only good Samaritans. Perhaps you may have read of them in a certain book. Also we are acting as the attorneys for this gentleman, in collecting a debt due him. We are his counsel, and the law allows a man to have his counsel present at a hearing. I hardly think an action in trespass would lie against us, Mr. Snad; so don't put yourself out about it."

"That's the stuff!"

"Good for you, Andy!"

"Say, you got his number all right!"

Thus Andy's chums called to him laughingly as the farmer went into the house.

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CHAPTER III

AN UNPLEASANT PROSPECT

"Say, I can't tell how much obliged to you I am," impulsively exclaimed the young fellow with his arm in a sling. "That—that——"

"He's a brute, that's what he is!" broke out Andy. "Don't be afraid to call him one."

"He sure is," came from Tom. "I just wish he'd rough it up a bit. I wouldn't have asked anything better than to take and roll him around his own barnyard. Talk about tackling a fellow on the gridiron—Oh me! Oh my!"

"It was mighty nice of you boys to take my part," went on the young fellow. "I'm not feeling very well. He's worked me like a horse since I've been here, and that, on top of spraining my arm, sort of took the tucker out of me. Then, when he came at me with the whip, just because I said I couldn't work any more——"

"There, never mind. Don't think about it," advised Chet, seeing that the youth was greatly affected.

"Do you live around here?" asked Andy.

"Well, I don't live much of anywhere," was the reply. "I'm a sort of Jack-of-all-trades. My name is Lincoln Bardon—Link, I'm generally called. I work mostly at farming, but I'll never work for Amos Snad again. He's too hard."

"Where are you going after you leave here?" asked Frank Newton.

"Oh, I've got a friend who works on a farm over in Cherry Hollow. I can go there and get a place. The farming season is on now, and there's lots of help wanted. But I sure am much obliged to you for helping me get my money. I've earned it and I need it. That mowing machine was broken when he had me take it out of the shed."

"How'd he come to use the whip?" asked Andy.

"It was when I came back with the team, and said I couldn't work any more on account of my

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arm. He has a lot of work to do," explained Link, "and he ought to keep two men. Instead, he tries to get along with one, and works him like a slave. I'm glad I'm going to quit."

"When I said my arm was hurt he didn't believe me. I insisted. One word led to another and he came at me with the lash. Then you boys jumped in. I can't thank you enough."

21

"That's all right," said Tom. "We were glad to do it. I like a good scrap!"

And to do him justice, he did—a good, clean, manly "scrap."

"I wonder if he will bring that money?" remarked Ben Snow. "He's gone a long time."

"Oh, he keeps it hidden away in an old boot," replied Link. "He'll have to dig it out. But don't let me detain you."

"We like the fun," spoke Andy. "We'll stick around for a while yet."

And, while the boys are thus "sticking around," may I be permitted to introduce them more formally to you, and speak just a word about them?

With their names I think you are already familiar. Andy Blair was a tall, good-looking lad, with light hair and snapping blue eyes that seemed to look right through you. Yet, withal, they were merry eyes, and dancing with life.

Chet Anderson was rather short and stocky, not to say fat; but if any of his friends mentioned such a thing Chet was up in arms at once. Chet, I might explain, was a contraction for Chetfield; the lad being named for his grandfather.

Ben Snow was always jolly. In spite of his name he was of a warm and impulsive nature, always ready to forgive an injury and continually seeking a chance to help someone. Clever, full of life and usually looking on the bright side, Ben was a humorous relief to his sometimes more sober comrades.

22

Quiet and studious was Frank Newton, a good scholar, always standing well in his class, and yet with his full share of fun and sport. He was a mainstay on the baseball team, where he had pitched many a game to victory.

With the exception of Tom Hatfield you have now met the lads with whom the first part of this story is chiefly concerned. Tom was one of the nicest fellows you could know. His parents were wealthy, but wealth had not spoiled Tom. He was happy-go-lucky, of a generous, whole-souled nature, always jolly and happy, and yet with a temper that at times blazed out and amazed his friends. Seldom was it directed against any of them; but when Tom spoke quietly, with a sort of ring like the clang of steel in his voice, then was the time to look out.

The five lads came from the same town, as has been said, and had been friends, more or less, all their lives. With their advent at Milton their friendship was cemented with that seal which is never broken—school-comradeship. You boys know this. You men who may chance to read this book know it. How many of you, speaking of someone, has not at one time said:

23

"Why, he and I used to go to school together!"

And is there anything in life better than this—an old school chum? It means so much.

But there. I started to tell a story, and I find myself getting off on the side lines. To get back into the game:

Link Bardon had hardly finished telling his good Samaritan boy friends of his trouble with Mr. Snad, when the burly farmer reappeared. Striding up to his hired man—his former employee—he thrust some crumpled bills into his hand, and growled:

"Now you get out of here as fast as you can. I've seen enough of you!"

"And I may say the same thing!" retorted Link. He was getting back his nerve. Perhaps Andy and his chums had contributed to this end.

"Huh! Don't you go to gettin' fresh!" snapped Mr. Snad.

"Don't let him get your goat!" exclaimed Tom, with a cheerful grin.

"I've had enough of you young upstarts!" cried the farmer, turning fiercely on Andy and his chums. "Be off!"

"Wait until we see if Link has his money all right," suggested Andy. "He might ring in a counterfeit bill on you if you don't watch out."

"Bah!" sneered the farmer.

24

Link counted over his wages. They were all right.

"Now I'll get my things and go," he said, calmly.

"And don't you ever come around askin' me for a job," warned his former employer.

"I guess there isn't much danger," spoke Tom, quietly. "Come on, fellows. I'm hungry enough to eat two of Kelly's steaks."

They followed Andy, who again lightly leaped the fence into the road. Link went on toward the house to pack up his few belongings. He waved his hand toward the boys, and they waved back. They hardly expected to see him again, and certainly Andy Blair never dreamed of the strange part the young farmer would play in his coming life at Yale. Such odd tricks does fate play upon us.

The Milton lads swung on down the road in the direction of Churchtown. It was early evening by now.

"Some doings!" commented Chet as he slipped his arm into that of Andy.

"I should say!" exclaimed Ben. "Andy, you took the right action that time."

"Well, I just couldn't bear to see that chap, with his arm in a sling, being beaten up by that brute of a farmer," was the reply. "It got my dander up."

25

"Same here," spoke Tom.

"You'd never know it, from the way you acted," put in Frank.

"Tom is always worst when he's quietest," remarked Andy. "Well, now for a good feed. Let's cut through here, hop a car, and get to Kelly's quicker."

"Go ahead, we're with you," announced Chet, and soon the lads were in the "eating joint," as they called it.

"Broiled steak with French fried potatoes, Adolph!"

"Yah!"

"I want an omelet with green peppers!"

"Liver and bacon for mine!"

"Ham and eggs! Plenty of gravy!"

"Yah!"

"Coffee with my order, Adolph!"

"Yah!"

"And say, I want some of those rolls with moon-seeds on top, Adolph! Don't forget!"

"Nein!"

"And my coffee comes with my steak, not afterward. Hoch der Kaiser!"

"Shure!"

"How's the soup, Adolph?"

"Fine und hot!"

"That's good! One on you, Tom!"

"Bring me a plate!"

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"Oh, say, Adolph, make my order a chop instead of those ham and eggs."

"Yah!"

"And, Adolph."

"Yes, sir."

"I want a glass of milk, with a squirt of vichy in it. Don't forget."

"Nein, I vunt!"

"And speed up, Adolph, we're all in a hurry."

"Shure. You vos allways in a hurry!"

The German waiter scurried away. How he ever remembered it all is one of the mysteries that one day may be solved. But he never forgot, and never made a mistake.

The boys were seated at a table in one of the small rooms of Kelly's. They stretched out their legs and took their ease, for they felt they had earned a little relaxation.

About them in other rooms, in small recesses made by the high-backed seats, were other students. There was a calling back and forth.

"Hello, Spike!"

"Stick out your head, Bender!"

"Over here, Buster—here's room!"

"There's Bunk now!"

You could not tell who was saying what or which, nor to whom, any more than I can. Hence the rather disjointed style of the preceding. But you know what I mean, for you must have been there yourself. If not, I beg of you to get into some such place where "good fellows," in the truest sense of the word, meet together. For where they congregate it is always "good weather," no matter if it snows or hails, or even if the stormy winds do blow—do blow—do blow!

But at last a measure of quietness settled down in Kelly's, and the chatter of voices was succeeded by the clatter of knives and forks.

Then came a reaction—a time when one settled back on one's bench, the first tearing edge of the appetite dulled. It was at this time that Tom Hatfield, leaning over to Andy, said:

"And so you are going to Yale?"

"Yes, I've made up my mind."

"Well, I congratulate you. It's a grand old place. Wish I was with you."

"Say, Andy!" piped up Chet Anderson, "if you go to Yale you'll meet an old friend of yours there."

"Who, for the love of bacon?"

"Mortimer Gaffington!"

Andy's knife fell to his plate with a clash that caused the other diners to look up hurriedly.

"Mortimer Gaffington!" gasped our hero. "For cats' sake! That's so. I forgot he went to Yale! Oh, wow! Well, it can't be helped. I've made my choice!"

CHAPTER IV

THE PICTURE SHOW

Andy's chums looked curiously at him. Chet's chance remark had brought back to them the memory of the old enmity between Andy Blair and Mortimer Gaffington, the rich young "sport" of Dunmore. It was an enmity that had happily been forgotten in the joy of life at Milton. Now it loomed up again.

"That's right, that cad Mort does hang out at New Haven," remarked Tom. "That is, he did. But maybe they've fired him," he added, hopefully.

"No such luck," spoke Andy, ruefully. "I had a letter from my sister only the other day, and she mentioned some row that Mort had gotten into at Yale. Came within an ace of being taken out, but it was smoothed over. No, I'll have to rub up against him if I go there."

"Well, you don't need to have much to do with him," suggested Frank.

"And you can just make up your mind that I won't," spoke Andy. "I'll steer clear of him from the minute I strike New Haven. But don't let's talk about it. Where's that waiter, anyhow? Has he gone out to kill a fatted calf?"

"Here he comes," announced Ben. "Get a move on there, Adolph!"

"Yah!"

"And don't wait for my French fried potatoes to sprout, either," added Chet.

"Yah, shure not!"

"Oh, look who's here!" exclaimed Tom, nodding toward a newcomer. "Shoot in over here, Swipes!" he called to a tall lad, whose progress through the room was marked by friendly calls on many sides. He was a general favorite, Harry Morton by name, but seldom called anything but "Swipes," from a habit he had of taking or "swiping" signs, and other mementoes of tradesmen about town; the said signs and insignia of business later adorning his room.

"Got space?" asked Harry, as he paused at the little compartment which held our friends.

"Surest thing you know, Swipes. Shove over there, Frank. Are you trying to hog the whole bench?"

"Not when Swipes is around," was the retort. "I'll leave that to him."

"Half-ton benches are a little out of my line," laughed the newcomer, as he found room at the table. "Bring me a rarebit, Adolph, and don't leave out the cheese."

"No, sir, Mr. Morton! Ho! ho! Dot's a goot vun! A rarebit mitout der cheese! Ach! Dot is goot!" and the fat German waiter went off chuckling at the old joke.

"What's the matter, Andy, you look as if you'd had bad news from your best girl?" asked Harry, clapping Andy on the shoulder. "Cheer up, the worst is yet to come."

"You're right there!" exclaimed Andy, heartily. "The worst *is* yet to come. I'm going to Yale——"

"Hurray! Rah! rah! That's the stuff! But talk about the worst, I can't see it. I wish I were in your rubbers."

"And that dub Mortimer Gaffington is there, too," went on Andy. "That's the worst."

"I don't quite get you," said Harry, in puzzled tones. "Is this Gaffington one of the bulldog profs. who eats freshmen alive?"

"No, he's a fellow from our town," explained Andy, "and he and I are on the outs. We've been so for a long time. It was at a ball game some time ago. Our town team was playing and I was catching. Mort was pitching. He accused me of deliberately throwing away the game, and naturally I went back at him. We had a fight, and since then we haven't spoken. He's rich, and all that, but I don't like him; not because I beat him in a fair fight, either. Well, he went to Yale last year, and I was glad when he left town. Now I'm sorry he's at Yale, since I'm going there. I know he'll try to make it unpleasant for me."

31

"Oh, well, make the best of it," advised Harry, philosophically. "He can't last for ever. Here comes my eats! Let's get busy."

"So Mort will be a sophomore when you get to New Haven, will he?" asked Frank of Andy.

"He will if he doesn't flunk, and I don't suppose he will. He's smart enough in a certain way. Oh, well, what's the use of worrying? As Harry says, here come the eats."

Adolph staggered in with a well-heaped tray containing Harry's order, and he and his chums finished their meal talking the while. The evening wore on, more students dropping in to make merry in Kelly's. A large group formed about the nucleus made by Andy and his chums. These lads were seniors in the preparatory school, and, as such, were looked up to by those who had just started the course, or who were finishing their first year. In a way, Milton was like a small college in some matters, notably in class distinction, though it was not carried to the extent it is in the big universities.

"What are you fellows going to do?" asked Harry, as he pushed back his chair. "I'm feeling pretty fit now. I haven't an enemy in the world at this moment," and he sighed in satisfaction. "That rarebit was sure a bird! Are you fellows out for any fun?"

32

"Not to-night," replied Andy. "I'm going to cut back and write some letters."

"Forget it," advised Harry. "It's early, and too nice a night to go to bed. Let's take in a show."

"I've got some boning to do," returned Frank, with a sigh.

"And I ought to plug away at my Latin," added Chet, with another sigh.

"Say, but you fellows are the greasy grinds!" objected Harry. "Why don't you take a day off once in a while?"

"It's easy enough for you, Swipes; Latin comes natural to you!" exclaimed Tom. "But I have to plug away at it, and when I get through I know less than when I started."

"And as for me," broke in Chet, "I can read a page all right in the original, but when I come to translate I can make two pages of it in English, and have enough Latin words left over to do half another one. No, Swipes, it won't do; I've got to do some boning."

"Aw, forget it. Come on to a show. There's a good movie in town this week. I'll blow you fellows. Some vaudeville, too, take it from me. There's a pair who roll hoops until the stage looks like a barrel factory having a tango dance. Come on. It's great!"

33

"Well, a movie wouldn't be so bad," admitted Tom. "It doesn't last until midnight. What do you say, fellows?"

"Oh, I don't know," came from Andy, uncertainly.

"I'll go if you fellows will," remarked Frank.

"Oh, well, then let's do it!" cried Tom. "I guess we won't flunk to-morrow. We can burn a little midnight electricity. Let 'er go!"

And so they went to the moving picture show. It was like others of its kind, neither better nor worse, with vaudeville acts and songs interspersed between the reels. There was a good attendance, scores of the Milton lads being there, as well as many persons from the town and surrounding hamlets.

Our friends found seats about the middle of the house. It was a sort of continuous performance, and as they entered a girl was singing a song on a well-lighted stage. Andy glanced about as he took his seat, and met the gaze of Link Bardon. He nodded at him, and the young farmer nodded

back.

"Who's that—a new fellow?" asked Harry, who was next to Andy.

"Not at school—no. He's a hired man we found being beaten up by an old codger of a farmer when we walked out this afternoon. We took his part and made the farmer trot Spanish. I guess Link is taking a day off with the wages we got for him," and he detailed the incident. 34

The show went on. Some of the students became boisterous, and there were hisses from the audience, and demands that the boys remain quiet. One lad, who did not train in the set of Andy and his friends, insisted on joining in the chorus with one of the singers, and matters got to such a pass that the manager rang down the curtain and threatened to stop the performance unless the students behaved. Finally some of the companions of the noisy one induced him to quiet down.

Following a long picture reel a girl came out to sing. She was pretty and vivacious, though her songs were commonplace enough. In one of the stage boxes were a number of young fellows, not from Milton, and they began to ogle the singer, who did not seem averse to their attentions. She edged over to their box, and threw a rose to one of the occupants.

Gallantly enough he tossed back one he was wearing, but at that moment a companion in front of him had raised a lighted match to his cigarette.

The hand of the young man throwing the rose to the singer struck the flaring match and sent it over the rail of the box straight at the flimsy skirts of the performer. 35

In an instant the tulle had caught fire, and a fringe of flame shot upward.

The singer ceased her song with a scream that brought the orchestra to a stop with a crashing chord, and the girl's cries of horror were echoed by the women in the audience. The girl started to run into the wings, but Andy, springing from his seat on the aisle, made a leap for the brass rail behind the musicians.

"Stand still! Stand still! Don't go back there in the draft!" cried Andy, as he jumped upon the stage over the head of the orchestra leader and began stripping off his coat.

CHAPTER V

FINAL DAYS

"Fire! Fire!" yelled some foolish ones in the audience. 36

"Keep still!" shouted Tom Hatfield, who well knew the danger of a panic in a hall with few exits. "Keep still! Play something!" he called to the orchestra leader, who was staring at Andy, dazed at the flying leap of the lad over his head. "Play any old tune!"

It was this that saved the day. The leader tapped with his violin bow on the tin shade over his electric light and the dazed musicians came to attention. They began on the number the girl had been singing. It was like the irony of fate to hear the strains of a sentimental song when the poor girl was in danger of death. But the music quieted the audience. Men and women sank back in their seats, watching with fear-widened eyes the actions of Andy Blair.

And while Tom had thus effectively stopped the incipient panic, Andy had not been idle. Working with feverish haste, he had wrapped his heavy coat about the girl, smothering the flames. She was sobbing and screaming by turns. 37

"There! There!" cried Andy. "Keep quiet. I have the fire out. You're in no danger!"

"Oh—oh! But—but the fire—"

"It's out, I tell you!" insisted Andy. "It was only a little blaze!"

He could see tiny tongues of flame where his coat did not quite reach, and with swift, quick pats of his bare hands he beat them out, burning himself slightly. He took good care not to let the flames shoot up, so that the frantic girl would inhale them. That meant death, and her escape had been narrow enough as it was.

As Andy held the coat closely about her he glanced over toward the box whence the match had come. He saw the horror-stricken young men looking at him and the girl in fascination, but they had not been quick to act. After all, it was an accident and the fault of no one in particular.

The stage was now occupied by several other performers, and the frantic manager. But it was all over. Andy patted out the last of the smouldering sparks. The girl was swaying and he looked up in time to see that she was going to faint.

"Look out!" he cried, and caught her in his arms.

"Back this way! Carry her back here!" ordered the manager, motioning to the wings. "Keep that music going!" he added to the orchestra leader.

They carried the unfortunate little singer to a dressing room, and a doctor was summoned. One of the stage hands brought Andy's coat to him. The garment was seared and scorched, and rank with the odor of smoke.

"If you don't want to wear it I'll see Mr. Wallack, and get another for you," offered the man.

"Oh, this isn't so bad," said Andy, slipping it on. "It's an old one, anyhow."

He looked curiously about him. It was the first time he had been behind the scenes, though there was not as much to observe in this little theatre as in a larger one. Beyond the dropped curtain he could hear the strains of the music and the murmur in the audience. The show had come to a sudden ending, and many were departing.

As Andy was leaving, to go back to his chums, the doctor came in hastily, and hurried to the room of the performer.

"Say, some little hero act, eh, Andy?" exclaimed Chet, as Andy rejoined his friends.

"Forget it!" was the retort. "Tom, here, had his wits about him."

39

"All right, old man. But you never got down the field after a football punt any quicker than you hurdled that orchestra leader, and made a flying tackle of that singer!" exclaimed Tom, admiringly. "My hat off to you, Andy, old boy!"

"Same here!" cried Chet.

The young men in the box were talking to the manager, and the one who had knocked the lighted match on the stage came over to speak to Andy, who was standing with his chums in the aisle near their seats.

"Thanks, very much, old man!" exclaimed the chap whose impulsive act had so nearly caused a tragedy. "It was mighty fine of you to do that. I had heart failure when I saw her on fire."

"You couldn't help it," replied Andy. "They ought not to allow smoking in places like this."

"That's right. Next time I throw a rose at a girl I'll look to see what's going to happen."

The theatre was almost deserted by now. All that remained to tell of the accident was the smell of smoke, and a few bits of charred cloth on the stage.

A man came out in front of the curtain.

"Miss Fuller wants to see the young fellow who put out the fire," he announced.

40

"That's you, Andy!" cried his chums.

"Aw, I'm not going back there."

"Yes, she would like to see you. She wants to thank you," put in the stage manager. "Come along."

Rather bashfully Andy went back. He found the singer—a mere girl—propped up on a couch. Her arms and hands were in bandages, but she did not seem to have been much burned.

"I'm sorry I can't shake hands with you," she said, with a smile. She was pale, for the "make-up" had been washed from her face.

"Oh, that's all right," responded Andy, a bit embarrassed.

"It was awfully good and brave of you," she went on, with a catch in her voice. "I don't—I don't know how to thank you. I—I just couldn't seem to do anything for myself. It was—awful," and her voice broke.

"Oh, it might have been worse," spoke Andy, and he knew that it wasn't just the thing to say. But, for the life of him, he could not fit proper words together. "I'm glad you're all right, Miss Fuller," he said. He had seen her name on the bills—Mazie Fuller. He wondered whether it was her right one, or a stage cognomen. At any rate, he decided from a casual glance, she was very pretty.

"You must give me your address," the girl went on. "I want to pay for the coat you spoiled on my account."

41

"Oh, that's all right," and Andy was conscious that he was blushing. "It isn't hurt a bit. I'll have to be going now."

"Oh, you must let me have your name and address," the girl went on.

"Oh, all right," and Andy pulled out a card. "I'm at Milton Prep.," he added, thinking in a flash that he would not be there much longer. But then he did not want her to send him a new coat.

"I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to leave now," said the doctor kindly. "She has had quite a shock, and I want her to be quiet."

"Sure," assented Andy, rather glad, on the whole, that he could make his escape. One of his hands was blistered and he wanted to get back to his room and put on some cooling lotion. He would not admit this before Miss Fuller, for he did not want to cause her any more pain.

The girl sank back on a couch as Andy went out of the dressing room. But she smiled brightly at him, and murmured:

"I'll see you again, some time."

"Sure," assented the lad. He wondered whether she would.

Then he rejoined his chums and they left the theatre. There was a little crowd in front, attracted by the rumor that an actress had been burned. As Andy and his friends made their way through the throng to a car he heard someone call:

"Dat's de guy what saved her!"

"You're becoming famous, Andy, my boy!" whispered Tom.

"Forget it," advised his chum.

The boys reached their dormitory with a scant minute or so to spare before locking-up time, for the rules were rather strict at Milton. There were hasty good-nights, promises to meet on the morrow, and then quiet settled down over the school.

Andy went to his room, and for a minute, before turning on the light, he stood at the window looking over the campus. Many thoughts were surging through his brain.

"It sure has been one full little day," he mused. "The scrap with the farmer, dousing the sparks on that girl, and—deciding on going to Yale!"

"Jove, though, but I'm glad I've made up my mind! Yale! I wonder if I'll be worthy of it?"

Andy leaned against the window and looked out to where the moonlight made fantastic shadows through the big maples on the green. Before his eyes came a picture of the elm-shaded quadrangle at Yale, which once he had crossed, hardly dreaming then that he would ever go there.

"Yale! Yale!" he whispered to himself. "What a lot it means! What a lot it might mean! What a lot it often doesn't signify. Oh, if I can only make good there!"

For some time Andy had been vacillating between two colleges, but finally he had settled on Yale. His parents had left him his choice, and now he had made it.

"I must write to dad," he said. "He'll want to know."

It was too late to do it now. They had not come back as early as they had intended. The bell for "lights out," clanged, and Andy hastily prepared for bed.

"Only a few more days at old Milton," he whispered to himself. "And then for Yale!"

The closing days of the term drew nearer. Examinations were the order of the day, and many were the anxious hearts. There was less fun and more hard work.

Andy wrote home, detailing briefly his decision and telling of the affair of the theatre. For it got into the papers, and Andy was made quite a hero. He wanted his parents to understand the true situation.

A letter of thanks came from the theatre manager, and with it a pass, good for any time, for Andy and his friends. In the letter it was said that Miss Fuller was in no danger, and had gone to the home of relatives to recover from the shock.

Andy was rather surprised when he received, one day, a fine mackinaw coat, of the latest style. With it was a note which said:

"To replace the one you burned."

There was no name signed, but he knew from whom it came.

CHAPTER VI

THE BONFIRE

"This way, freshmen! This way!"

"Over here now! No let-outs!"

"Keep 'em together, Blink! Don't let any of 'em sneak away!"

"Wood! Everybody bring wood!"

"Look out for that fellow! He's a grind! He'll try to skip!"

"Wood! Everybody get wood!"

The cries echoed and re-echoed over the campus at Milton. It was the final night of the term. The examinations were over and done. Some had fallen by the wayside, but Andy and his chums were among those elected.

They had passed, and they were to move on out of the preparatory school into the larger life of the colleges.

And, as always was the case on an occasion of this kind, a celebration was to mark the closing of the school for the long summer vacation. The annual bonfire was to be kindled on the campus, and about it would circle those lads who were to leave the school, while their mates did them honor.

46

Thus it was that the cries rang out.

"Wood!"

"More wood!"

"Most wood!"

The town had been gleaned for inflammable material. The ash boxes of not even the oldest citizen were sacred on an occasion like this. For weeks the heap of wood had accumulated, until now there was a towering pile ready for the match.

And still the cries echoed from the various quarters.

"Freshmen, get wood!"

"On the job, freshmen!"

More wood was brought, and yet more. The pile grew.

"Gee, this is fierce!" groaned a fat freshman, staggering along under the burden of two big boxes. "Those fellows want too much. I'm going to quit!"

"Look out! Don't let 'em hear you!" warned a companion. "They'll keep you carting it all night if you kick."

"Kick! (puff) Kick! (puff) I ain't got wind enough to do any kickin'. I'm (puff) all (puff) in!"

47

"Oh, well, it's all in the game. We'll be out of this class next term, and we can watch the other fellows sweat! Cut along!"

"Wood! Wood over here!"

"Where's Andy Blair?"

"I don't know. Oh you Swipes! What you got!"

"All right! This'll make a flare, all right!"

"Oh, for the love of Peter! Look what Swipes has!"

Harry, otherwise "Swipes" Morton, was conveying four laboring and perspiring freshmen who were carting over the campus a big box that had ones contained a piano.

"Oh, you Swipes!"

"Where'd you crab that?"

"Say, ain't he the little peach, though!"

"Oh wow! What a lark!"

"I guess this won't make some nifty little blaze, eh?" demanded Harry. "Eh, Andy?"

"Sure thing! Where'd you get it?"

"Over back of Hanson's store. He used it for a coal box, but I made these boobs dump out the anthracite and cart it along. Maybe I ain't some nifty little wood gatherer, eh?"

"You sure are, Swipes!" came the admiring retort from many voices.

"Wood!"

"More wood!"

48

Still the pile grew apace. And with it grew the fun, the jollity, the excitement, the cries and the spirit of the school.

Dr. Morrison, the head master, and his teachers, had wisely retired to their rooms. On such an occasion as this it is not wise on the part of discerning professors to see too much. There are matters to which one must shut one's eyes. And Dr. Morrison, from contact with many boys, was wise in his day and generation.

For he knew it would be only honest, clean fun; and what matter if there was much noise and shouting? What matter if the fire blazed high? The boys never so far forgot themselves as to endanger the school buildings by their beacon, which was kindled well out on the big campus.

What if numerous rules were cracked or broken? It only happened once a year. And what if ginger pop and sandwiches were surreptitiously introduced into the dormitories? That, too, need not be seen by the authorities.

"Wood! More wood!"

"Where's Tom Hatfield?"

"Yes, and Chet Anderson?"

"Over here boys!"

"Heads up!"

"Slap on Swipes's piano box!"

"Oh, what a find!"

You could not have told who was saying which or what. It was all one happy, unintelligible jumble.

"Light her up!"

It was the signal for the kindling of the fire.

A score of matches flared in the darkness of the June night. The straw and paper piled under the chaos of wood blazed with puffs of flame. The wood caught and the tongues of fire leaped high, bringing into bold relief the faces of the lads who joined hands and circled about the ruddy beacon.

"Hurray!"

"That's the stuff!"

"Let her burn!"

"Say, that's a dandy, all right!"

"Biggest in years!"

"Well, we want to give the boys a good send-off!"

"Look at old Swipes's piano box sizzle!"

The shouting and excitement grew. The fire blazed higher and higher. The campus was bright with yellow gleams.

"Here's good-bye to old Milton!" chanted Andy.

"That's right! Good-bye to the old school!" echoed Chet, and there was not much joy in his tones.

"Now, fellows, the old song. q|Milton Forever!" called Ben, and the melody burst forth.

Hardly was it finished than the silence that succeeded was broken by the strident tooting of an auto horn.

"What's that?" cried Andy. "Who's coming here in a car?"

"On the campus, too! It's against the rules!" cried Chet.

"It's some fresh fellow from town trying to butt in," someone called.

"Come on!" yelled Andy. "We'll upset him, fellows! The nerve of him!"

CHAPTER VII

LINK AGAIN

There was a rush of the celebrating seniors toward the place where the disturbance arose. Then others left the big bonfire to see the fun.

An automobile horn tooted discordantly—defiantly, Andy thought.

“Who has had the nerve to come in here, of all nights—on the one when we have our fire?” he thought. “It can’t be any of the freshmen; they wouldn’t dare.”

“What are you going to do?” asked Ben in Andy’s ear, as he trotted beside his chum.

“We’ll upset his apple cart—that’s the least we’ll do, for one thing.”

“I should say yes!” chimed in Chet. “Surely!”

They had now reached the spot where, from all appearances, was located the center of disturbance. A crowd of the freshmen, whose labors in gathering wood for the fire had now ceased, were gathered around a large touring car that, in defiance of all rules and customs, had been run to the very center of the school campus.

52

“Come down out of that!”

“Get away from here!”

“You fellows have nerve!”

“Puncture their tires!”

These are only a few of the cries and threats hurled at those in the auto—four young fellows who seemed anxious to make trouble not only for themselves, but for the school boys, whose celebration they had interrupted.

The campus was a sort of sacred place. It stood in the midst of the school buildings and dormitories, and, though visitors were always welcome, there was a rule against vehicles crossing it, for the turf was the pride not only of the students, but the faculty as well. So it is no wonder that the sight of a heavy auto rolling over the lawn aroused the ire of all.

“Get out of the way there, you fellows, if you don’t want to be run over!” snapped the youth at the steering wheel of the auto. “I’ll smash through you in another minute!”

“Oh, you will, eh?”

“Isn’t he the sassy little boy!”

“Yank him out of there!”

The freshmen surrounding the auto thus reviled those in the car.

The auto had come to a stop, but the engine was still running, free from the gears. Now and then, as he saw an opening, the lad at the wheel would slip in his clutch and the car would advance a few feet. Then more of the school boys would swarm about it, and progress would be impeded.

53

“Smash through ‘em, old man!” advised one on the rear seat. “We don’t want to stay here all night!”

“That’s right; run ‘em down,” advised his companion. “We’re—we’re—what are we, anyhow?” he asked, and it did not need a look at him to tell the cause of his condition. In fact, all in the auto were in a rather hilarious state, and the running of the car over the campus had been the result of a suggestion made after a too-long lingering in a certain road-house, where stronger stuff than ginger ale was dispensed.

“We’re all right—noshin matter us,” declaimed one. “Run ‘em down, ole man!”

“Look out! I’m going through you!” cried the lad at the wheel. The freshmen in front of the car parted instinctively, but before the young chauffeur could put his threat into execution, Andy and his chums had reached the machine.

“Get out of here!” cried Andy, and, reaching up, he fairly pulled the steersman from his seat. The chap came down in a rush, nearly upsetting Andy, who, however, managed to yank the lad to his feet.

54

“Pull ‘em all out!” came the cry from Tom, and a moment later he, with the aid of Ben, Chet and Frank, had pulled from the car the other young men, who seemed too dazed to resist.

“Hop in that car, Peterson,” ordered Andy, to a freshman who could operate an auto. “Run it out to the street and leave it. Then we’ll rush these chaps out to it and chuck ‘em in. We’ll show ‘em what it means to run over our campus.”

All this time Andy had kept hold of the collar of the youth whom he had pulled from the car. Then the latter turned about, and raised his fist. He had been taken so by surprise that he at first had seemed incapable of action.

At this moment the big bonfire flared up brightly, and by its glare Andy had a look at the face of the lad with whom he had clashed. The sight caused him suddenly to drop his hold and exclaim:

“Mortimer Gaffington!”

“Huh! So it’s you, is it, Andy Blair? What do you mean by acting this way?” demanded Mortimer, the shock of whose rough handling had seemed to sober temporarily. “What do you mean? I

demand an apology! That's what I do. Ain't I 'titled to 'pology, fellers?" and he appealed to his chums.

"Sure you are. Make the little beggar 'pologize!" leered one. "If he was at Yale, now, we'd haze him good and proper."

"Yale!" cried Tom Hatfield. "Yale fires out such fellows as you!"

"Mortimer Gaffington!" gasped Andy. "I rather wish this hadn't happened. Or, rather I wish it had been anyone but he. I can see where this may lead."

"You goin' 'pologize?" asked Mortimer, trying to fix a stern gaze on Andy.

"Apologize! Certainly not!" cried Andy, indignantly. "It is you fellows who ought to apologize. What would you do if some one ran an auto over Yale Campus?"

"Ho! Ho! That's good. That's rich, that is!" laughed one who had been yanked out of his seat by Tom Hatfield. "That's a good joke, that is! An auto on Yale campus! Why we bulldogs would eat it up, that's what we'd do!"

"Well, that's what we'll do here!" cried Chet, angered by the supercilious tone of the lad. "Come on, boys; run 'em off Spanish fashion!"

It needed but this suggestion to further rouse the feelings of the Milton lads, and in an instant several of them had grabbed each of the trespassers. Andy stepped back from Mortimer. Because of the already strained relations between himself and this society "swell," he did not wish to take a part in the proceedings.

"Come on! Run 'em off!" was the rallying cry.

The auto had already been steered out on a road that circled the campus, and was soon in the street. Then, heading their victims toward the old gateway that formed the chief entrance to the school the Milton lads began running out the intruders.

"You wait! I—I'll fix you for this,—Andy Blair!" threatened Mortimer as he was rapidly propelled over the campus.

"Forget it!" advised Chet. "Rush 'em, fellows!"

And rushed off Mortimer and his companions were. They were fairly tossed into their auto, and then, with jeers and shouted advice not to repeat the trick, the school boys turned back to their fire.

Andy had lingered near the spot where he had hauled Mortimer out of the auto. He was thinking of many things. He did not forget what had happened to the intruders. Indeed it was nothing short of what they deserved, for they had deliberately tried to harass the school boys, and make a mockery of one of the oldest traditions of Milton—one that held inviolate the beautiful campus.

"Only I wish it had been someone else than I who got hold of Mort," mused Andy. "He'll be sure to remember it when I get to Yale, and he'll have it in for me. He can make a lot of trouble, too, I reckon. Well, it can't be helped. They only got what was coming to 'em."

With this thought Andy consoled himself, but he had an uneasy feeling for all that. The students came trooping back, after having disposed of Mortimer and his crowd.

"You missed the best part of the fun," said Chet to Andy. "Those fellows thought a cyclone struck them when we tossed 'em into the car. They don't know yet whether they're going or coming back," and he laughed, his mates joining in.

"Yes?" asked Andy, non-committally.

"What's up?" asked Tom, curiously. "You don't act as though it had any flavor for you. What's the matter?"

"Oh, well—nothing," said Andy. "Come on, let's get back to the fire, and have a last song. Then I'm going to pack. I want to leave on that early train in the morning."

"Same here. Come on, boys. Whoop her up once more for Old Milton, and then we'll say good-bye."

"I know what ails Andy," spoke Tom in a low tone to Frank, walking along arm in arm with him.

"What?"

"It's about that fellow Gaffington. Andy's sorry he had a run-in with him, and I don't blame Andy. He had trouble before, and this will only add to it. And that Gaffington is just mean enough, and small-spirited enough, to make trouble for Andy down there at Yale. He's a sport—but one of the tin-horn brand. I don't blame Andy for wishing it had been someone else."

"Oh, well, here's hoping," said Frank. "We all have our troubles."

"But those fellows won't trouble us again to-night," declared Chet, laughing. "They'll be glad to go home and get in bed."

"Did you know any of 'em, Andy, except Gaffington?" asked Tom.

"No, the others were strangers to me."

"How do you reckon they got here, all the way from New Haven?"

"Oh, they didn't come from Yale," declared Andy. "The university closed last week, you know. Probably Mort had some of his chums out to visit him in Dunmore. That was his car. And he wanted to show 'em the sights, and let 'em see he could run all over little Milton, so he brought 'em out here. It isn't such a run from Dunmore, you know."

"I reckon that's it," agreed Tom. "Well, they got more than they were looking for, that's one consolation. Now boys, whoop her up for the last time."

59

Again they gathered about the blazing fire, and sang their farewell song.

The annual celebration was drawing to a close. Another group of lads would leave Milton to go out into the world, mounting upward yet another step. From then on the ways of many who had been jolly good comrades together would diverge. Some might cross again; others be as wide apart as the poles.

The fire died down. The big piano box commandeered by "Swipes" was but a heap of ashes. The fun was over.

There were cheers for the departing senior lads, who, in turn, cheered the others who would take their places. Then came tributes to the industrious freshmen.

"Good night! Good night! Good night!" was shouted on all sides.

Less and less brilliant grew the fire. Now it was but a heap of glowing coals that would soon be gray, dead and cold ashes, typical in a way, of the passing of the senior boys. And yet, phoenix-like, from these same ashes would spring up a new fire—a fire in the hearts that would never die out. Such are school friendships.

Of course there were forbidden little feasts in the various rooms to mark the close of the term—spreads to which monitors, janitors and professors discreetly closed their eyes.

60

Andy and his friends gathered in his apartment for a last chat. They were to journey to their home town on the morrow and then would soon separate for the long summer vacation.

"Well, it was a rare old celebration!" sighed Tom, as he flopped on the bed.

"It sure was!" agreed Chet, with conviction. "I hope I have as much fun as this if I go to Harvard."

"Same here, only I think I'll make mine Princeton," added Ben. "Oh, but it's sort of hard to leave Milton!"

"Right you are," came from Andy, who was opening ginger ale and soda water.

And, after a time, quiet settled down over the school, and Dr. Morrison and his colleagues breathed freely again. Milton had stood steadfast through another assault of "bonfire night."

The next morning there were confused goodbyes, multiplied promises to write, or to call, vows never to forget, and protestations of eternal friendship. There were arrangements made for camping, boating, tramping and other forms of vacation fun. There were dates made for assembling next year. There was a confused rushing to and fro, a looking up of the time of trains, hurried searches for missing baggage.

61

And, after much excitement, Andy and his chums found themselves in the same car bound for Dunmore. They settled back in their seats with sighs of relief.

"Hear anything more of Mort and his crowd?" asked Tom of Andy.

"Not a thing."

"I did," spoke Chet. "They were nearly arrested for making a row in town after we got through with 'em."

"Hum!" mused Andy. "I s'pose Mort will blame me for that, too. Well, no use worrying until I have to."

At Churchtown, where the train stopped to give the boys at least a last remembrance of Kelly's place, several passengers got on. Among them was a young man who seemed familiar to Andy and his chums. A second look confirmed it.

"Why, that's the Bardon chap we took away from that farmer!" exclaimed Frank.

"That's right!" cried Andy. "Hello, Link!" he called genially. "What you doing here?"

"Oh, how are you?" asked the farm lad. "Glad to see you all again," and he nodded to each one in turn. He did not at all presume on his acquaintance with them, and was about to pass on, when Andy said:

62

"Sit down. How's your arm?"

"Oh much better, thank you. I've been working steadily since you helped me."

"That's good. Where are you bound for now?" went on Andy.

"Why, I'm going to look up an uncle of mine I haven't seen in years. I hear he has a big farm, and I thought I'd like to work for him."

"Where is it?" asked Andy.

"In a place called Wickford, Connecticut."

"Wickford!" exclaimed Andy. "Why that's near New Haven, and Yale—where I'm going this fall. Maybe I'll see you there, Link."

"Maybe," assented the young farmer, and then, declining Andy's invitation to sit with the school lads, he passed on down the car aisle.

CHAPTER VIII

OFF FOR YALE

Andy Blair had signed for Yale University. He had, as before noted, communicated to his father his desire to attend the New Haven institution, and Mr. Blair, who had given his son a free hand in the matter, had acquiesced.

Milton was well known among the various preparatory schools, and her final examinations admitted to Yale with few other formalities. So Andy had no trouble on that score, save in a few minor matters, which were easily cleared up.

He had matriculated, and all that remained was to select a room or dormitory. He had been studying over a Yale catalog, and looking at the accompanying map which gave the location of the various buildings.

"Now the question is," said Andy, talking it over with the folks at home, "the question is do I want to go to a private house and room, or had I better take a place in one of the Halls. I rather like the idea of a Hall room myself—Wright for choice—but of course that might cost more than going to a private house."

"If it's a question of cost, don't let that stand in the way," replied Mr. Blair, generously. "I'm not given to throwing money away, Andy, my boy, and a college education isn't a cheap thing, no matter how you look at it. But it's worth all it costs, I believe, and I want you to have the best.

"If you can get more into the real life of Yale by having a room in Wright Hall, or in any of the college dormitories, why do so. There's something in being right on the ground, so to speak. You can absorb so much more."

"Good for you, Dad!" cried Andy. "You're a real sport. Then I vote for a Hall. I'll take a run down and see what I can arrange."

"But wouldn't a private house be quieter?" suggested Mrs. Blair. "You know you'll have to do lots of studying, Andy, and if you get in a big building with a lot of other students they may annoy you."

"Oh, I guess, Mother," said Bertha, Andy's sister, "that he'll do his share of annoying, too."

"Come again, Sis. Get out your little hammer, and join the anvil chorus!" sarcastically commented Andy.

"No, but really," went on Mrs. Blair, "wouldn't a private house be quieter, Andy?"

"Not much more so, I believe," spoke the prospective Yale freshman. "When there's any excitement going on those in the private houses get as much of it as those in the college buildings. But, as a matter of fact, when there's nothing on—like a big game or some of the rushes—Yale is as quiet as the average Sunday school."

"Why, the day I was there I walked all around and nothing happened. The fellows came and went, and seemed very quiet, not to say meek. I walked over the campus, and I expected every minute some big brute of a sophomore would smash my hat down over my eyes, and give a qbRah! Rah! yell. But nothing like that happened. It was sort of disappointing."

"Well, you need quiet if you're going to study," went on Mrs. Blair. She had an idea that Yale was a sort of higher-grade boarding school, it seemed.

"Then I'll decide on Wright Hall," remarked Andy. "That is, if I can get in."

Then followed some correspondence which resulted in Andy being informed that a room on the

campus side of Wright Hall, and on the second floor, was available. The only trouble was that it was a double room, and Andy would have to share it with another student.

"Hum!" he exclaimed when he had this information. "Now I'm up against it once more. Who can I get to go in with me? I don't want to take a total stranger, and yet I guess I'll have to."

66

"You might advertise for a roommate?" suggested his mother.

"I guess they don't do things that way at Yale," spoke Andy, with a smile.

"Why don't you wait until you get there, and maybe you'll find somebody in the same fix you are?" asked Bertha.

"I guess that is good advice," remarked Andy. "I'll take a run down there some time before term opening, and maybe I can get some nice chap wished on me. If Tom, or Chet, or some of the Milton lads, were coming to Yale it would be all right."

"Didn't any of them pick out Yale?" asked Mr. Blair.

"Not as far as I know."

"Oh, well, I guess you'll make out all right, son. A good roommate is a fine companion to have, so I hope you won't be disappointed. But there's no hurry."

The long summer vacation was at hand. Andy's people were to go to a lake resort, and soon after coming home from Milton, Andy, with his mother and sister, was installed in a comfortable cottage. Mr. Blair would come up over week-ends.

Chet Anderson and Tom Hatfield were at a nearby resort, so Andy knew he was in for a good summer of fun. And he was not disappointed. He and his chums spent much time on the water, living in their bathing suits for whole days at a time. But I will not weary you with a description of the various things they did. Sufficient to say that the vacation was like a good many others Andy had enjoyed, and expected to enjoy again. Nothing in particular happened.

67

The Summer wore on. The dog-days came and there loomed in the distance the Fall months. Tom had called on Andy one day, and they went out in the canoe together.

"Well, it will soon be study-grind again," remarked Tom, as he sent the light boat under a fringe of bushes out of the sun.

"Yes, and I won't be sorry," spoke Andy. "I'm anxious to see what life at Yale is like. I've got to take a run down in a week or so, to fix up about my room. You haven't heard of anyone I know who is going to be a freshman there; do you?"

"No, but I saw an old friend of yours the other day."

"You did! Who?"

"Remember that little actress you did the fireman-save-my-child act for this Spring?"

"Miss Fuller? Sure I do. Did you see her?"

68

"I did."

"Where?"

"Oh, at a vaudeville theater. She remembered me, too."

"Did she ask for me?"

"Naturally. I told her you were going to Yale, and she said she might see you there."

"How?"

"Why, she's playing a couple of weeks early in October at Poli's. You want to look her up."

"I sure will. You saw the mackinaw she sent me?"

"Yes, it'll come in handy for Yale. I wish I was with you, but I'm wished on to Cornell—I yell!"

"Oh, well, we can't all go to the same place, but it sure would be fine if we could."

Then they began to talk of the old days at Milton, until the shadows lengthened over the lake and it was time to paddle back to the cottage.

Andy took a run down to New Haven the next week, and made his final arrangements. He was walking about the now deserted quadrangle, looking up at the window of the room he had selected in Wright Hall, when he was aware that a youth of his own age was doing the same thing.

Something seemed to attract Andy to this stranger. There was a frank, open, ingenuous look in his face that Andy liked. And there was that in the air and manner of the lad which told he came of no common stock. His clothing betokened the work of a fashionable tailor, though the garments were quiet, and just a shade off the most up-to-date mode.

69

"Are you a student here?" asked the stranger of Andy.

"No, but I expect to be. I'm going to start in."

"So am I. Chamber is my name—Duncan Chamber, though I'm always called Dunk for short."

"Glad to know you. My name's Blair—Andy Blair."

They shook hands, and then followed the usual embarrassed pause. Neither knew what to say next. Finally Duncan broke the silence by asking:

"Got your room yet?"

"Up there," and Andy pointed to it.

"Gee! That's all right—a peach! I'm up a stump myself."

"How so?"

"Well, I've about taken one in Pierson Hall, but it's a double one, and I've got to share it with a fellow I don't take much of a leaning to. He's a stranger to me. I like it better here, though. Better view of the campus."

Andy took a sudden resolve.

"I'm about in the same boat," he said. "That's a double room of mine up there in Wright, and I haven't a chum yet. I don't know what to do. Of course I'm a stranger to you, but if you'd like to share my joint——"

"Friend Andy, say no more!" interrupted Duncan. "Lead me to thy apartment!"

Andy laughed. He was liking this youth more and more every minute.

The room was inspected. Andy was still the only one who had engaged it.

"It suits me to a T if I suit you," exclaimed Duncan. "What do you say, Blair? Shall we hitch it up?"

"I'm willing."

"Shake!"

They shook. Thus was the pact made, a union of friends that was to have a strange effect on both.

"Now that's settled I'll call the Pierson game off," said Dunk, as we shall call him from now on. "I'm wished onto you, Blair."

"I'm glad of it!"

The final arrangements were made, and thus Andy had his new roommate. They went to dinner together, and planned to do all sorts of possible and impossible things when the term should open.

Andy returned to the Summer cottage with the good news, and then began busy days for him. He replenished his stock of clothes and other possessions and selected his favorite bats and other sporting accessories with which to decorate his room. He had a big pennant enscribed with the name MILTON, and this was to drape one side wall. Dunk Chamber was from Andover, and his school colors would flaunt themselves on the opposite side of the room.

And then the day came.

Andy, spruce and trim in a new suit, had sent on his trunk, and, with his valise in hand, bade his parents and sister good-bye.

The family was still at the summer cottage, which would not be closed for another month. Then they would go back to Dunmore.

Yale was calling to Andy, and one hazy September morning he took the train that, by dint of making several changes, would land him in New Haven.

"And at Yale!" murmured Andy as the engine puffed away from the dingy station. "I'm off for Yale at last!"

CHAPTER IX

ON THE CAMPUS

Andy's train rolled into the New Haven station shortly before dusk. On the way the new student had been surreptitiously "sizing up" certain other young men in the car with him, trying to decide whether or not they were Yale students. One was, he had set that down as certain—a quiet,

studious-looking lad, who seemed poring over a book and papers.

Then Andy, making an excuse to get a drink of water, passed his seat and looked at the documents. They were a mass of bills which the young man evidently had for collection.

"Stung!" murmured Andy. "But he sure did look like a Yale senior." He was yet to learn that college men are not so different from ordinary mortals as certain sensational writers would have had him believe.

There was the usual bustle and rush of alighting passengers. Now indeed Andy was sure that a crowd of students had come up on the train with him for, once out of the cars their exuberance manifested itself.

73

There were greetings galore from one to another. Renewals of past acquaintance came from every side. There were hearty clappings on the backs of scores and scores, and re-clappings in turn.

Youths were tumbling out here, there, everywhere, colliding with one another, bumping up against baggage trucks, running through the station, one or two stopping to snatch a hasty cup of coffee and some doughnuts from the depot restaurant.

Andy stood almost lost for the moment amid the excitement. It had come on suddenly. He had never dreamed there were so many Yale men on the train. They gave no evidence of it until they had reached their own precincts.

Then, like a dog that hesitates to bark until he is within the confines of his own yard, they "cut loose."

Taxicab chauffeurs were bawling for customers. Hackmen with ancient horses sent out their call of:

"Keb! Keb! Hack, sir! Have a keb!"

The motor bus of the Hotel Taft was being jammed with prosperous looking individuals. Around the curve swept the clanging trolley cars.

"I guess I'll walk," mused Andy. "I want to get my mind straightened out."

He managed to locate an expressman to whom he gave the check for his trunk, with directions where to send it. Then, gripping his valise, which contained enough in the way of clothing and other accessories to see him through the night, in case his baggage was delayed, our hero started up State Street.

74

In the distance he could see, looming up, the lighted top stories of the Hotel Taft, and he knew that from those same stories one could look down on the buildings and campus at Yale. It thrilled him as he had not been thrilled before on any of his visits to this great American university.

He paid no attention to those about him. The sidewalks, damp with the hazy dew of the coming September night, were thronged with pedestrians. Many of them were college students, as Andy could tell by their talk.

On he swung, breathing in deep of the air of dusk. He squared back his shoulders and raised his head, widening his nostrils to take in the air, as his eyes and ears absorbed the other impressions of the place.

Past the stores, the hotels, the moving picture places Andy went, until he came to where Chapel Street cuts across State. At the corner a confectionery store thrust out its rounded doorway, and in the windows were signs of various fountain drinks.

75

"A hot chocolate wouldn't be so bad," thought Andy. "It's a bit chilly."

He went in rather diffidently, wondering if some of the pretty girls lined up along the marble counter knew that he was a Yale man.

He heard a titter of laughter and grew red behind the ears, fearing it might be directed against him.

But no one seemed to notice him, the girl who passed him out his check making change as nonchalantly as though he was but the veriest traveling man instead of a Yale student.

"Very blasé, probably," thought Andy, with a sense of resentment.

He stood on the steps a moment as he came out, and then walked toward the Green, with its great elm trees, now looming mistily in the September haze.

Three churches on Temple street seemed to stand as a sort of guard in front of the college buildings that loomed behind them. Three silent and closed churches they were.

Up Chapel street walked Andy, and he came to a stop on College street, opposite Phelps Gateway. Through the gathering dusk he could make out the inscription over it:

LUX ET VERITAS

"That's it! That's what I came here for," he said. "Light and truth! Oh, but it's great! Great!"

76

He drew in a long breath, and stood for a moment contemplating the beautiful outlines of the college buildings.

"Oh, but I'm glad I'm here!" he whispered.

Other students were pouring through the classic gateway. Andy crossed the street and joined them. Already lights were beginning to glow in Lawrance and Farnam Halls, where the sophomores had their rooms. Andy could see some of them lolling on cushions in their window seats. Yale blue cushions, they were.

He passed in through the gateway, his footsteps clanging back to his ears, reflected by the arch overhead. He emerged onto the campus, and started across it toward Wright Hall, with its raised courtyard, and its curtained windows of blue.

"I wonder if Dunk is there yet?" thought Andy. "Hope he is. Oh, it's Yale at last! Yale! Yale!"

He breathed in deep of the night air. He looked at the shadows of the electric lights of the campus filtering through the trees. He paused a moment.

A confusion of sounds came to him. Outside the quadrangle in which he stood he could hear the hum of the busy city—the clang of trolleys, the clatter of horses, the hoarse croak of auto horns. Within the precincts of the college buildings he could hear the hum of voices. Now and then came the tinkle of a piano or the vibration of a violin. Then there were shouts.

77

"Oh, you, Pop! Stick out your head!"

The call of one student to another.

"I wonder if they'll ever call me?" mused Andy.

He started across the campus. Coming toward him were several dark figures. Andy met them under a light, and started back. Before he had a chance to speak someone shouted at him:

"There he is now! The freshest of the fresh! Take off that hat!"

It was Mortimer Gaffington.

CHAPTER X

MISSING MONEY

78

For a moment Andy stood there, not knowing what to do or say. It was so unexpected, and yet he knew he must meet Mortimer at Yale—meet and perhaps clash with the lad who was now a sophomore—the lad who had such good cause now to dislike Andy.

On his part the young "swell" leered into Andy's face, then glanced sidelong at the youths who accompanied him. Andy recognized them as the same who had been in the auto that night of the bonfire at Milton.

"That's he!" exclaimed Mortimer; then to Andy: "I didn't think I'd meet you quite so soon, Blair! So you're here, eh?"

"Yes," answered Andy.

"Put a 'sir' on that!" commanded one of the other lads.

"Yes—sir!"

Andy took his own time with the last word. He knew the rites and customs of Yale, at least by hearsay, and was willing to abide by the unwritten laws that make a first-year man demean himself to the upperclassmen. It would not last long.

79

"That's better," commented the third lad. "Never forget your manners—er—what's your name?"

"Blair."

"Sir!" snapped the one who had first reminded Andy of the lapse.

"Sir!"

"You know him," put in Mortimer. "The fellow who put us out of the auto, eh?"

"Oh, sure, I remember now. Nervy little rat! It's a wonder I remember anything that happened that night. We were pretty well pickled. Oh, land, yes!"

He seemed proud of it.

"Take off that hat!" commanded Mortimer. "Don't forget you're a freshman here."

"And a fresh freshman, too," added one of his chums. "Take it off!"

Andy was perfectly willing to abide by this unwritten law also, and doffed his derby. He made a mental note that as soon as he could he would get a cap, or soft hat, such as he saw other students wearing.

"The brute has some manners," commented one of the trio.

"I'll teach him some more before I get through with him!" muttered Mortimer. He, as well as his two companions, seemed to have been dining, "not wisely but too well."

80

"Anything more?" asked Andy, good-naturedly. He knew that he must put up with insults, if need be, from Mortimer; for he realized that, in a way, class distinction at Yale is strong in its unwritten laws, and he wanted to do as the others did. It takes much nerve to vary from the customs and traditions of any country or place, more especially a big college. And Andy knew his turn would come.

He also knew that it was all done in good-natured fun, and really with the best intentions. For a first-year man is very likely to become what his name indicates—fresh—and there is need of toning down.

Besides, it is discipline that is good for the soul, and somewhat necessary. It makes for good in after life, in most cases, though of course there are some exceptions. Hazing, after all, is designed, primarily, to bring out a candidate's character. A lad who will give way to his temper if made to take off his hat to one perhaps below him in social station, or if he sulks when tossed in a blanket—such a lad, in after life, is very apt to do the same thing when he has to knuckle under to a business rival, or to go into a passion when he receives the hard knocks of life. So, then, hazing, if not carried to extremes, has its uses in adversity, and Andy had sense enough to realize this. So he was ready for what might come.

81

He knew, also, that Mortimer might, and probably would, be actuated by a mean spirit, and a desire for what he might think was revenge. But he was only one of a large number of college youths. Andy was willing to take his chances.

Andy looked over toward Wright Hall, with its raised courtyard. Lights were gleaming in the windows, and he fancied he could see his own room aglow.

"I hope Dunk is there," he thought.

"Shall we put him through the paces?" asked one of Mortimer's companions suggestively, nodding at Andy.

"Not to-night. We've got something else on," answered the society swell. "Trot along, Blair, and don't forget what we've told you. I'll see you again," he added, significantly.

The trio had come to a stop some little distance from Andy, and had stood with arms linked. Now they were ready to proceed. On the various walks, that traversed the big campus in the quadrangle of Yale, other students were hurrying to and fro, some going to their rooms, others coming from them. Some were going towards their eating clubs or to the University dining hall. And Andy was feeling hungry.

82

"Well, come on," urged Mortimer to his companions. "I guess we've started this freshman on the right road. Just see that you follow it, Blair. I'll be watching you."

"And I'll be watching you!" thought Andy. And at that moment he was gazing intently at Gaffington. As he looked, Andy saw something fall from below the flap of the coat of one of the trio, and land softly on the pavement. It fell limp, making no noise.

One of Mortimer's companions, who, Andy afterward learned, was Leonard, or "Len," Scott, reached his hand into his pocket, and brought it out with a strange look on his face.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, blankly, "my wallet's gone!"

"Gone!" exclaimed the other, Clarence Boyle by name. "Are you sure you had it?"

"I sure did!" said Len, feeling in various pockets. "Just cashed a check, too!"

"Come on back to your room and have a look for it," suggested Mortimer pulling his chum half-way around. "If it's gone I can lend you some. I'm flush to-night."

"But I'm sure I had it," went on Len. "I remember feeling it just as we came out of Lawrance. I had about fifty dollars in it!"

83

"Whew!" whistled Mortimer. "Some little millionaire, you are, Len. Never mind, I can let you have twenty-five if you need it." Andy knew that Mortimer's father was reputed to be several times a millionaire.

"But I don't like to lose that," went on Len. "I guess I will go back and have a look in my shack. If I can't find it I'll stick up a notice."

"You might have dropped it when we met that other bunch of freshmen and had the little argument with them about their hats," suggested Clarence.

"That's right," went on Mortimer, still pulling on Len's arm, as though to get him away from the spot. "Maybe one of the freshmen frisked it off you," he added, looking at Andy.

By this time the trio had turned half-way around, evidently to go back to Scott's room and look for the missing pocketbook. Andy had a clear view of the object that had fallen from under the coat of one of them.

"There is something," the freshman said, pointing to the object on the pavement. "I saw one of you drop it. Perhaps it is the pocketbook."

Len wheeled and made a grab for it.

"That's mine!" he cried. "It must have worked up out of my pocket and fallen. Thanks!" he added, warmly, to Andy.

With a quick motion Len opened his wallet. A strange look came over his face as he cried:

"It's empty!"

"Empty!" gasped Mortimer. "Let's see!"

He leaned forward, as did Clarence, all three staring into the opened pocketbook. Andy looked on curiously.

"It was one of those freshmen!" declared Mortimer, with conviction. "They must have slipped their hand up in your coat when we were frisking them, and taken out the money."

"But how could they when I still had the pocketbook?" asked Len, much puzzled.

"They must have taken out the bills, and put the wallet back," went on Mortimer, quickly. "They didn't get it all the way in your pocket and it tumbled out when you were standing here. Lucky we noticed it or we wouldn't have known what happened. Come on back. We'll find those freshmen."

And, without another look at Andy, they wheeled and hurried across the campus toward Vanderbilt Hall.

"Huh! That's queer!" mused Andy, as he continued on his way toward Wright. "I'm glad I saw that wallet when I did."

CHAPTER XI

"ROUGH HOUSE"

"Oh, you, Dunk!"

"Stick out your noodle, Chamber!"

"Where are you?"

These were the cries that greeted Andy as he entered the passage leading to his room in Wright Hall—the room he was to share with Duncan Chamber. Down the hall he saw a group of lads who had evidently come to rouse Andy's prospective chum. Somehow, our hero felt a little hurt that he had to share his friend with others. But it was only momentarily.

"Open up there, Dunk! Open up!"

Thus came the appeal, and fists banged on the door. It was opened a crack, and the rattle of a chain was heard.

"Get on to the beggar!"

"He must think we're a bunch of sops!"

"Don't be afraid, Dunky, we're only your sweethearts!"

Thus the three callers gibed him.

"Oh, it's you fellows, is it?" asked Chamber, flinging wide the door, and letting out a flood of light. "I thought I was in for a hazing, so I was keeping things on the safe side. Come on in. I'm just straightening up."

The three tumbled into the room. Andy followed, and at the sound of his footsteps coming to a pause outside the portal Dunk peered out.

"Oh, hello, Blair!" he greeted, cordially! "I thought you were never coming! Put her there, old man! How are you?"

He caught Andy's hand in a firm pressure with a mighty slap, and hauled him inside.

"Fellows, here's my roommate!" went on Dunk. "Andy Blair. I hope you'll like him as well as I do. Blair, these are some luckless freshmen like ourselves. Take 'em in the order of their beauty—Bob Hunter—never hit the bull's eye in his life; Ted Wilson—just Ted, mostly; Thad Warburton—no end of a swell, and money to burn! Shake!"

They shook in turn, looking into each other's eyes with that quick appraising glance that means so much. Andy liked all three. He hoped they would like him.

"So this is your hangout, eh, Dunk?" asked Ted, when the little formality of introduction was over.

"Yes, Andy had this picked out and kindly agreed to share it with me."

"I sure was glad to!" said Andy, heartily.

"Some swell little joint," commented Thad Warburton, looking around.

"Wait until we get her fixed up," advised Dunk. "Then we'll have something to show you! I haven't decided on a bed yet," he added to Dick. "Pick out the one you want."

"I'm not particular. They all look alike to me."

"Yes, they're just the same. Fed your face yet?"

"No, but I'm hungry. Thought I'd wait for you."

"Say, where is your eating joint?" asked Thad.

"I haven't picked out one yet," answered Andy. "I was thinking of going to the Hall—"

"Oh, that's no fun!" cried Bob. "Come with us. We have a swell place. Run by one of our Andover crowd. Good grub and a nice bunch of fellows."

"I'm willing," agreed Andy.

"We could try it for a while," assented Dunk, "and if we didn't like it we could switch to the University Hall. What do you say, Andy?"

"I'm with you. The sooner the quicker. I'm starved."

"All right, then, we'll let the room go until after grub. I was going to stick up a few of my things, but they can wait. Get your trunk, Andy?"

"Did it come? I gave a man the check."

"Not yet. Sounds like it now."

There was a bumping and thumping out in the corridor, and an expressman came in with Andy's baggage. It was stowed away in a corner and then the five lads prepared to set out for the "eating joint."

"It's around on York street, not far from Morey's," volunteered Thad.

"Oh, yes, Morey's!" exclaimed Andy. "I've heard lots about that joint. I wish we could get in there."

"No freshman need apply," quoted Dunk, with a laugh. "That's for our betters. We'll get there some day."

"Oh, I say—" began Ted, as they were about to go out. He looked at Andy rather queerly.

"What is it?" asked our hero, with a frank laugh. "Am I togged up wrong?"

"Your—er—derby," said Bob, obviously not liking to mention it.

"Oh, yes, that's right!" chimed in Dunk. "Hope you don't mind, Andy, but a cap or a crusher would be in better form."

Andy noticed that the others had on soft hats.

"Sure," he said. "I was going to get one. I had a soft hat at Milton, but it's all initialed, and covered with dates from down there. I don't suppose that would go here."

"Hardly," agreed Dunk. "I've got an odd one, though. Stick it on until you get yours," and he hauled a soft hat from under a pile of things on his dresser.

Andy hung up his offending derby and clapped the other on the back of his head. Then the five sallied forth, locking the door behind them.

Their feet echoed on the stone flagging of the open courtyard as they headed out on the campus. Past Dwight Hall, the home of the Young Men's Christian Association, they went, out into High street and through Library to York. The thoroughfares were thronged with many students now, for it was the hour for supper.

Calls, cries, hails, gibes, comments and appeals were bandied back and forth. For it was the

beginning of the term, and many of the new lads had not yet found themselves or their places. It was all pleasurable excitement and anticipation.

Huddled close together, talking rapidly of many things they had seen, or hoped to see—of the things they had done or expected to do, Andy, Dunk, and their chums walked on to the eating place. Dunk informed Andy, in a whisper, that his three friends had been at Phillips Academy, in Andover, with him.

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“Over here!”

“This way!”

“Lots of room!”

“Shove in, Hunter!”

“There’s Wilson!”

“Dunk Chamber, too! Oh, you, Dunk!”

“Oh! Thad Warburton, give us your eye!”

It was a call to health, and several lads arose holding aloft foaming mugs of beer. For a moment Andy’s heart failed him. He did not drink, and he did not intend to, yet he realized that to refuse might be very embarrassing. Yet he resolved on this course.

There were more good-natured cries, and healths proposed, and then Andy and his companions found room at the table. Dunk introduced Andy to several lads.

“Oh, you, Dunk, your eyes on us!”

Several lads called to him, holding aloft their steins. Dunk hesitated a moment and then, with a quick glance at Andy, let his glass be filled. Rising, he gave the pledge and drank.

Andy felt a tug at his heart strings. He was not a crank, nor a stickler for forms or reforms, yet he had made up his mind never to touch intoxicants. And it gave him a shock to find his roommate taking the stuff.

91

“Well, he’s his own master,” thought Andy. “It’s up to him!”

And then, amid that gay scene—not at all riotous—there came to Andy the memory of a half-forgotten lesson.

“Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Andy wanted to close his mind to it, but that one question seemed to repeat itself over and over again to him.

“Have some beer?”

The voice of a waiter was whispering to him.

“No—not to-night,” said Andy, softly. And what a relief he felt. No one seemed to notice him, nor was his refusal looked upon as strange. Then he noticed with a light heart that only a few of the lads, and the older ones at that, were taking the beverage. Andy noticed, too, with more relief, that Dunk only took one glass.

The meal went on merrily, and then Andy and Dunk, refusing many invitations to come to the rooms of friends, or downtown to a show, went to their own room.

“Let’s get it in shape,” proposed Dunk.

“Sure,” agreed Andy, and they set to work.

Each one had brought from home certain trophies—mementoes of school life—and these soon adorned the walls. Then there were banners and pennants, sofa cushions—the gift of certain girls—and photographs galore.

92

“Well, I call this some nifty little joint!” exclaimed Dunk, stepping back to admire the effect of the photograph of a pretty girl he had fastened on the wall.

“It sure is,” agreed Andy, who was himself putting up a picture.

“I say, who’s that?” asked Dunk, indicating it. “She’s some little looker, if you don’t mind me saying so.”

“My sister.”

“Congrats! I’d like to meet her.”

“Maybe—some day.”

“Who’s this—surely not your sister?” asked Dunk, indicating another picture. “I seem to know her.”

“She’s a vaudeville actress, Miss Fuller.”

"Oh, ho! So that's the way the wind blows, is it? Say, you are going some, Andy."

"Nothing doing! I happened to save her from a fire——"

"Save her from a fire! Worse and more of it. I must tell this to the boys!"

"Oh, it wasn't anything," and Andy explained. "She sent me a mackinaw in place of my burned coat, and her picture was in the pocket. I kept it."

"I should think you would. She's a peach, and clever, too, I understand. She's billed at Poli's."

"Yes, I'm going to see her."

"Take me around, will you?"

"Sure, if you like."

"I like all right. Hark, someone's coming!" and Dunk slipped to the door and put on the chain.

"What's the matter?" asked Andy.

"Oh, the sops are around and may come in and make a rough house any minute."

But the approaching footsteps did not prove to be those of vengeful sophomores. They were the three friends, Bob, Thad, and Ted, who were soon admitted.

As they were sitting about and talking there was a commotion out in the hall. The door, which Dunk had neglected to chain after the admission of his friends, was suddenly burst open, and in came, with a rush, Mortimer Gaffington and several other sophomores.

"Rough house!" was their rallying cry.

"Rough house for the freshies!"

"Rough house!"

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CHAPTER XII

A FIERCE TACKLE

94

Andy and his chums were taken completely by surprise. The approach of Mortimer and the other sophomores had been so silent that no warning had been given.

Immediately on gaining admittance to the room the intruders began tossing things about. They pulled open the drawers of the dresser, scattering the garments all over. They tore down pictures from the walls and ripped off the banners and pennants.

"Rough house!" they kept repeating. "Rough house on the freshmen!"

One of the sophomores pushed Bob and Ted over on Andy's bed, together.

Then Gaffington pulled from his pocket a handful of finely chopped paper of various colors—"confetti"—and scattered it in a shower over everyone and everything.

"Snow, snow! beautiful snow!" he declaimed. "Shiver, freshmen!"

A momentary pause ensued. Andy and his chums were getting back their breaths.

"Well, why don't you shiver?" demanded Mortimer. "That's snow—beautiful snow—all sorts of colored snow! Shiver, I tell you! It's snowing! Little Eva in Uncle Tom's Cabin—Eliza crossing the ice! Shiver now, you freshmen, shiver!"

He was laughing in a silly sort of way.

"That's right—shiver!" commanded some of Mortimer's companions.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" jeered the society swell at Andy. "Why don't you shiver?"

"I've forgotten how," said Andy, calmly.

"Hang you, *shiver!*" and Mortimer fairly howled out the word. He started toward Andy, with raised arm and clenched fist.

Among the possessions disturbed by the intruders was Andy's favorite baseball bat, which he had brought with him. Instinctively, as he retreated a step, his fingers clutched it. He swung it around and held it in readiness. Mortimer recoiled, and Andy, seeing his advantage, cried:

"Get out of here! All of you. Come on, fellows, put 'em out!"

95

He raised the bat above his head, without the least intention in the world of using it, but the momentum swung it from his hand and it struck Mortimer on the forehead.

The lad who had led the "rough house" attack staggered for a moment, and then, blubbering, sank down in a heap on the floor.

A sudden silence fell. In an instant Andy had sunk down on his knees beside his enemy and was feeling his pulse and heart. There was only a slight bruise on the forehead.

"You—you've killed him!" whimpered one of the sophomores.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Dunk. "He's only over-excited." This was putting it mildly. Mortimer had been "celebrating," and had really fainted. "That was only a love tap," went on Dunk. "Chuck a little water in his face and he'll be all right."

This was done and proved to be just what was needed. Mortimer opened his eyes.

"What—what happened?" he asked, weakly. "Where—where am I?"

"Where you don't belong," replied Dunk, sharply. "It's your move—get out!"

"You—you struck me!" went on Mortimer, accusingly to Andy.

"No, indeed, I did not! I thought you were coming for me, and so I raised the bat. It slipped."

"I guess that's right, old man," said one of the sophomores, frankly. "I saw it. Mort has been going it too heavily. We'll get him out of here. No offense, I hope," and he looked around the dismantled room. "This is the usual thing."

"Oh, all right," said Dunk. "We're not kicking. I guess we held up our end."

"You sure did," returned one of the sophomores, as he glanced at the wilted Mortimer. "Come on, fellows."

Andy, feeling easier now that he was sure Mortimer was not badly hurt, looked at the other lads. Two of them he recognized as the ones who had been with Gaffington when the loss of the money was discovered. Andy wondered whether it had been found, but he did not like to ask.

"I—I'll get you for this! I'll fix you!" growled Mortimer, as his chums led him out of the room. "You—you—" and he swayed unsteadily, gazing at Andy.

"Oh, dry up and come on!" advised Len Scott. "We'll go downtown and have some fun."

They withdrew and the dazed freshmen began helping Andy and Dunk straighten up the room. It took some time and it was late when they finished. Then, thinking the day had been strenuous enough, Andy and Dunk declined invitations to go out, and got ready for bed.

So ended Andy's first day at Yale.

There was a hurried run to chapel next morning, and Andy, who had to finish arranging his scarf on the way, found that he was not the only tag-ender. Chapel was not over-popular.

That Len Scott did not recover his lost money was made evident the next day, for there were several notices posted in various places offering a reward for the return of the bills. Andy heard, indirectly, that Len and Mortimer made half-accusations against the freshmen they had "frisked" earlier in the evening, and had been soundly trounced for their impudence.

Andy told Dunk of his connection in the affair and was advised to keep quiet, which Andy thought wise to do. But the loss of the money did not seem to be of much permanent annoyance to Len, for a few days later he was again spending royally.

Andy began now to settle down to his life at Yale. He was duly established in his room with Dunk, and it was the congregating place of many of their freshmen friends. Andy and Dunk continued to eat at the "joint" in York street, though our hero made up his mind that he would shift to University Hall at the first opportunity. He hoped Dunk would come with him, but that was rather doubtful.

"I can try, anyhow," thought Andy.

Our hero did not find the lessons and lectures easy. There was a spirit of hard work at Yale as he very soon found out, and he had not as much leisure time as he had anticipated, which, perhaps, was a good thing for him. But Andy wanted to do well, and he applied himself at first with such regularity that he was in danger of becoming known as a "dig." But he was just saved from that by the influence of Dunk, who took matters a little easier.

Following the episode of the "rough house," Andy did not see Mortimer for several days, and when he did meet him the latter took no notice of our hero.

"I'm just as pleased," Andy thought. "Only it looks as though he'd make more trouble."

Candidates for the football team had been called for, and, as Andy had made good at Milton, he decided to try for at least a place on the freshman team.

So then, one crisp afternoon, in company with other candidates, all rather in fear and trembling, he hopped aboard a trolley to go out to Yale Field.

Dunk was with him, as were also Bob, Ted, and Thad, who likewise had hopes. There was talk and laughter, and admiring and envying glances were cast at the big men—those who had played on the varsity team last year. They were like the lords of creation.

The car stopped near the towering grandstands that hemmed in the gridiron, and Andy swarmed with the others into the dressing rooms.

“Lively now!” snapped Holwell, one of the coaches. “Get out on the field, you fellows, and try tackling the dummy.”

A grotesque figure hung from a cross beam, and against this the candidates hurled themselves, endeavoring to clasp the elusive knees in a hard tackle. There were many failures, some of the lads missing the figure entirely and sliding along on their faces. Andy did fairly well, but if he looked for words of praise he was disappointed.

This practice went on for several days, and then came other gridiron work, falling on the ball, punting and drop kicking. Andy was no star, but he managed to stand out among the others, and there was no lack of material that year.

Then came scrimmage practice, the tentative varsity eleven lining up against the scrub. With all his heart Andy longed to get into this, but for days he sat on the bench and watched others being called before him. But he did not neglect practice on this account.

Then, one joyful afternoon he heard his name called by the coach.

“Get in there at right half and see what you can go,” was snapped at him. “Don’t fuddle the signals—smash through—follow the interference, and keep your eyes on the ball. Blake, give him the signals.”

The scrub quarter took him to one side and imparted a simple code used at practice.

“Now, scrub, take the ball,” snapped the coach, “and see what you can do.”

There was a quick line-up. Andy was trembling, but he managed to hold himself down. He looked over at the varsity. To his surprise Mortimer was being tried at tackle.

“Ready!” shrilly called the scrub quarter. “Signal—eighteen—forty-seven—shift—twenty-one—nineteen—”

It was the signal for Andy to take the ball through right tackle and guard. He received the pigskin and with lowered head and hunched shoulders shot forward. He saw a hole torn in the varsity line for him, and leaped through it. The opening was a good one, and the coach raved at the fatal softness of the first-team players. Andy saw his chance and sprinted forward.

But the next instant, after covering a few yards, he was fiercely tackled by Mortimer, who threw him heavily. He fell on Andy, and the breath seemed to leave our hero. His eyes saw black, and there was a ringing in his ears as of many bells.

CHAPTER XIII

BARGAINS

“That’s enough! Get up off him! Don’t you know enough, Gaffington, to tell when a man’s down?”

Andy heard the sharp voice of the coach, Holwell, but the tones seemed to come from a great distance.

“Water here!”

“Somebody’s keeled over!”

“It’s that freshman, Blair. Plucky little imp, too!”

“Who tackled him?”

“Gaffington. Took him a bit high and fell on him!”

“Oh, well, this is football; it isn’t kindergarten beanbag.”

Dimly Andy heard these comments. He opened his eyes, only to close them again as he felt a dash of cold water in his face.

“Feel all right now?”

It was the voice of the coach in his ears. Andy felt himself being lifted to his feet. His ears rang, and he could not see clearly. There was a confused mass of forms about him, and the ground

seemed to reel beneath his feet.

Then like another dash of cold water came the thought to him, sharply and clearly:

"This isn't playing the game! If I'm going to go over like this every time I'm tackled I'll never play for Yale. Brace up!"

By sheer effort of will Andy brought his staggering senses back.

"I—I'm all right," he panted. "Sort of a solar plexus knock, I guess."

"That's the way to talk!" exclaimed the coach, grimly. "Now then, fellows, hit it up. Where's that ball? Oh, you had it, did you, Blair? That's right, whatever happens, keep the ball! Get into the play now. Varsity, tear up that scrub line! What's the matter with you, anyhow? You're letting 'em go right through you. Smash 'em! Smash 'em good and hard. All right now, Blair?"

"Yes, sir."

"Get in the game then. Scrub's ball. Hurry up! Signal!"

Sharp and incisive came his tones, like some bitter tonic. Not a word of praise—always finding fault; and as for sympathy—you might as well have looked for it from an Indian ready to use his scalping knife. And yet—that is what made the Yale team what it was—a fighting machine.

104

Once more came the line-up, the scrub quarter snapping out his signals.

Andy took his old place. He was rapidly feeling better, yet his whole body ached and he felt as though he had fallen from a great height. He was terribly jarred, for Mortimer had put into the tackle all his fierce energy, adding to it a spice of malice.

Andy heard the signal given for the forward pass, and felt relieved. He could take another few seconds to get his breathing into a more regular cadence. He looked over at Mortimer, who grinned maliciously. Andy knew, as well as if he had been told, that the tackle had been needlessly fierce. But there was no earthly use in speaking of it. Rather would it do him more harm than good. This, then, was part of the "getting even" game that his enemy had marked out.

"He won't get me again, though!" thought Andy, fiercely. "If he does, it will be my own fault. Wait until I get a chance at him!"

It came sooner than he expected. The forward pass on the part of the scrub was a fluke and after a few more rushing plays the ball was given to the varsity to enable them to try some of their new plays.

105

Several times Mortimer had the pigskin, and was able to make good gains. Then the wrath of the coach was turned against the luckless scrubs.

"What do you fellows mean?" cried Holwell. "Letting 'em go through you this way! Get at 'em! Break up their plays if you can! Block their kicks. They'll think they're playing a kid team! I want 'em to work! Smash 'em! Kill 'em!"

He was rushing about, waving his hands, stamping his feet—a veritable little cyclone of a coach.

"Signal!" he cried sharply.

It came from the varsity quarter, and Andy noticed, with a thrill in his heart, that Gaffington was to take the ball.

"Here's where I get him!" muttered Andy, fiercely.

There was a rush—a thud of bodies against bodies—gasps of breaths, the cracking of muscles and sinews. Andy felt himself in a maelstrom of pushing, striving, hauling and toppling flesh. Then, in an instant, there came an opening, and he saw before him but one player—Mortimer—with the ball.

Like a flash Andy sprang forward and caught his man in a desperate embrace—a hard, clean tackle. Andy put into it all his strength, intent only upon hurling his opponent to the turf with force enough to jar him insensible if possible.

106

Perhaps he should not have done so, you may say, but Andy was only human. He was playing a fierce game, and he wanted his revenge.

Into Mortimer's eyes came a look of fear, as he went down under the impact of Andy. But there was this difference. Mortimer's previous experience had taught him how to take a fall, and he came to no more hurt through Andy's fierce tackle than from that of any other player, however much Andy might have meant he should. Our hero did not stop to think that he might have injured one of the varsity players so as to put him out of the game, and at a time when Yale needed all the good men she could muster. And Gaffington, in spite of his faults, was a good player.

There was a thud as Andy and Mortimer struck the earth—a thud that told of breaths being driven from their bodies. Then Andy saw the ball jarred from his opponent's arms, and, in a flash he had let go and had rolled over on it. An instant later there was an animated pile of players on both lads, smothering their winded "Downs!"

"That'll do! Get up!" snapped the coach. "What's the matter with you, Gaffington, to let a freshman get you that way and put you out of the game? Porter!" he shouted and a lad came running from the bench, pulling off his sweater as he ran, and tossing it to a companion. He had been called on to take Gaffington's place, and the latter, angry and shamed-faced, walked to the side lines.

As he went he gave Andy a look, as much as to say:

"You win this time; but the battle isn't over. I'll get you yet."

As for Andy, his revenge had been greater than he had hoped. He had put his enemy out of the game more effectively than if he had knocked the breath from him by a tremendous tackle.

"Good tackle, Blair!" called the scrub captain to him, as the line-up formed again. "That's the way to go for 'em!"

The coach said nothing, but to the varsity captain he whispered:

"Keep your eye on Blair. If he keeps on, he may make a player yet. He's a little too wild, though. Don't say anything that will give him a swelled head."

The practice went on unrelentingly, and then the candidates were ordered back to the gymnasium on the run, to be followed by a shower and a brisk rub.

Glowing with health and vigor, and yet lame and sore from the hard tackle, Andy went to his room, to find Dunk Chamber impatiently waiting for him.

"Oh, there you are, you old mud lark!" was the greeting. "I've been waiting for you. Come on around to Burke's and have some ale and a rarebit."

"No thanks. I'm in training, you know."

"That's so. Been out on the field?"

"Yes. I wonder you don't go in for that."

"Too much like work. I might try for the crew or the nine. I'm afraid of spoiling my manly beauty by getting somebody's boot heel in the eye. By the way, you don't look particularly handsome. What has somebody been doing to you?"

"Nothing more than usual. It's all in the game."

"Then excuse me! Are you coming to Burke's? You can take sarsaparilla, you know. Thad and his bunch are coming."

"Sure, I don't mind trailing along. Got to get at a little of that infernal Greek, though."

"All right, I'll wait. The fellows will be along soon."

And as Andy did a little of necessary studying he could not help wondering where Dunk would end. A fine young fellow, with plenty of money, and few responsibilities. Yale—indeed any college—offered numberless temptations for such as he.

"Well, I can't help it," thought Andy. "He's got to look out for himself."

And again there seemed to come to him that whisper:

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Surely Dunk was a college brother.

Andy had scarcely finished wrestling with his Homer when there came a series of loud and jolly hails:

"Oh, you Dunk!"

"Stick out your top, Blair!"

"Here come the boys!" exclaimed Dunk. "Now for some fun!"

The three friends trooped in.

"Some little practice to-day, eh, Blair?" remarked Bob Hunter.

"And some little tackle Gaffington gave you, too!" added Thad.

"Yes, but Andy got back at him good and proper, and put him out of the game," remarked Ted. "It was a beaut!"

"Did you and Mortimer have a run-in?" asked Dunk quickly.

"Oh, no more than is usual in practice," replied Andy, lightly. "He shook me up and I came back at him."

"If that's football, give me a good old-fashioned fight!" laughed Dunk. "Well, if we're going to have some fun, come on."

As they were leaving the room they were confronted by two other students. Andy recognized one as Isaac Stein, more popularly known as Ikey, a sophomore, and Hashmi Yatta, a Japanese student of more than usual brilliancy.

"Oh boys, such a business!" exclaimed Ikey. He was a Jew, and not ashamed of it, often making himself the butt of the many expressions used against his race. On this account he was more than tolerated—he had many friends out of his own faith. "Such a business!" he went on, using his hands, without which he used to say he could not talk.

"Well, what is it now?" asked Dunk with good-humored patience. "Neckties or silk shirts?" for Ikey was working his way through college partly by acting as agent for various tradesmen, getting a commission on his sales. Dunk was one of his best customers.

"Such a business!" went on Ikey, mocking himself. "It is ornaments, gentlemen! Beautiful ornaments from the Flowery Kingdom. Such vawses—such vawses! Is it not, my friend Hashmi Yatta?" and he appealed to the Japanese.

"Of a surely they are beautiful," murmured the little yellow lad. "There is some very good cloisonne, some kisku, and one or two pieces in awaji-yaki. Also there is some satsuma, if you would like it."

"And the prices!" interrupted Ikey. "Such bargains! Come, you shall see. It is a crime to take them!"

"What's it all about?" asked Dunk. "Have you fellows been looting a crockery store?"

"No, it is Hashmi here," said the Jew. "I don't know whether his imperial ancestors willed them to him, or sent them over as a gift, but they are wonderful. A whole packing case full, and he'll sell them dirt cheap."

"What do we want of 'em?" asked Andy.

"Want of 'em, you beggar? Why they'll be swell ornaments for your room!"

That was an appeal no freshman could resist.

"What do you say?" asked Dunk, weakly. "Shall we take a look, Andy?"

"I don't mind."

"You will never regret it!" vowed Ikey. "It is wonderful. Such bargains! It is a shame. I wonder Hashmi can do it."

"They are too many for me to keep," murmured the Jap.

"And so he will sell some," interrupted Ikey, eagerly.

"And pay you a commission for working them off, I suppose," spoke Thad.

Ikey looked hurt.

"Believe me," he said, earnestly, "believe me, what little I get out of it is a shame, already. It is nothing. But I could not see the bargains missed. Come, we will have a look at them. You will never regret it!"

"You ought to be in business—not college," laughed Dunk, as he slipped into a mackinaw. "Come on, Andy, let's go and get stuck good and proper."

"Stuck! Oh, such a business!" gasped Ikey, with upraised hands. "They are bargains, I tell you!"

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CHAPTER XIV

DUNK REFUSES

"This way, fellows! Don't let anybody see us come in!"

Thus cautioned Ikey as he led his "prospective victims," as Dunk referred to himself and the others, through various back streets and alley ways.

"Why the caution?" Andy wanted to know, stumbling over an unseen obstruction, and nearly falling.

"Hush!" whispered the Jew. "I want you, my friends, to have the pick of the bargains first. After that the others may come in. If some of the seniors knew of these vawses there wouldn't be one left."

"Oh, well we mustn't let that happen!" laughed Dunk. "I know I'm going to get stuck, but lead on,

Horatio. I'm game."

"Stuck, is it?" cried Ikey, and he seemed hurt at the suggestion. "Wait until you have seen, eh, Hashmi?"

"Of a surely, yes. They are beautiful!"

"And so cheap; are they not, Hashmi?"

"Of a surely, yes."

"Where are you taking us, anyhow?" demanded Thad. "I thought we were going to Burke's."

"So we are, later," said Dunk. "I want to see some of this junk, though. Our room does need a bit of decoration, eh, Andy?"

"Yes, it can stand a few more things."

"But where are we going, anyhow?" Bob demanded. "This looks like a chop-suey joint."

"Hush!" cautioned Ikey again. "Some of the fellows may be around. There is a Chinese restaurant upstairs."

"And what's downstairs?" asked Andy.

"Why, Hashmi had to hire a vacant room to put the packing box in when it came from Japan," explained Ikey. "It was too big to take up to his joint. Besides, it's filled with straw, you know, so the vawses couldn't smash. He's just got it in this vacant store temporarily. You fellows have the first whack at it."

"Well, let's get the whacking over with," suggested Andy. "I had all I wanted at Yale Field this afternoon."

They came to a low, dingy building, at the side of which ran a black alley.

"In here—mind your steps!" warned Ikey.

They stumbled on, and then came to a halt behind the college salesman. He shot out a gleam of radiance from a pocket electric flashlight and opened a door.

"Hurry up!" he whispered, and as the others slipped in he closed and locked the portal. "Are the shades down, Hashmi?" he asked.

"Of a surely, yes."

"Then show the fellows what your ancestors sent you."

There was the removal of boards from a big packing case that stood in the middle of a bare room. There was the rustle of straw, and then, in the gleam of the little electric flash the boys saw a confused jumble of Japanese vases and other articles in porcelain, packed in the box.

"There, how's that?" demanded Ikey, triumphantly, as he picked one up. "Wouldn't that look swell on your mantel, Dunk?"

"It might do to hold my tobacco."

"Tobacco! You heathen! Why, that jar is to hold the ashes of your ancestors!"

"Haven't any ancestors that had ashes as far as I know," said Dunk, imperturbably. "I can smoke enough cigar ashes to fill it, though."

"Hopeless—hopeless," murmured Ikey. "But look—such a bargain, only seven dollars!"

"Holy mackerel!" cried Andy. "Seven dollars for a tobacco jar!"

"It isn't a tobacco jar, I tell you!" cried Ikey. "It's like the old Egyptian tear vawses, only different. Seven dollars—why it's worth fifteen if it's worth a cent. Ain't it, Hashmi?"

"Of a surely, yes," said the Jap, with an inscrutable smile.

"But he'll let you have it for just a little more than the wholesale price in Japan, mind you—in Japan!" cried Ikey. "Seven dollars. Think of it!"

"What about your commission?" asked Thad, with a grin.

"A mere nothing—I must live, you know," and Ikey shrugged his shoulders. "Do you want it, Dunk? Why don't you fellows pick out something? You'll wait until they're gone and be kicking yourselves. They're dirt cheap—bargains every one. Look at that vawse!" and he held up another to view in the pencil of light from the flash torch.

"It would do for crackers, I suppose," said Andy, doubtfully.

"Crackers!" gasped Ikey. "Tell him what it is for, Hashmi. I haven't the heart," and he pretended to weep.

"This jar—he is for the holding of the petals of roses that were sent by your loved ones—the perfumes of Eros," murmured the poetical Japanese.

"Oh, for the love of tripe! Hold me, I'm going to faint, Gertie!" cried Bob. "Rose petals from your loved ones! Oh, slush!"

"It is true," and Hashmi did not seem to resent being laughed at. "But it would do for crackers as well."

"How much?" asked Andy.

"Only five dollars—worth ten," whispered Ikey.

"Well, it would look nice on my stand," said Andy weakly. "I—I'll take it."

"And I guess you may as well wish me onto that dead ancestor jar," added Dunk. "I'm always getting stuck anyhow. Seven plunks is getting off easy."

"You will never regret it," murmured Ikey. "Where is that paper, Hashmi? Now don't you fellows let anyone else in on this game until I give the word. I'm taking care of my friends first, then the rest of the bunch. Friends first, say I."

"Yes, if you're going to stick anybody, stick your friends first," laughed Dunk. "They're the easiest. Go ahead, now you fellows bite," and he looked at Bob, Thad and Ted.

"What's this—a handkerchief box?" asked Ted, picking up one covered with black and gold lacquer.

"Handkerchief box! Shades of Koami!" cried Ikey. "That, you dunce, is a box made to—Oh, you tell him, Hashmi, I haven't the heart."

"No, he wants to figure out how much he's made on us," added Andy.

"That box—he is for the retaining of the messages from the departed," explained the Japanese.

"You mean it's a spiritualist cabinet?" demanded Thad. "I say now, will it do the rapping trick?"

"You misapprehend me," murmured Hashmi. "I mean that you conserve in that the letters your ancestors may have written you. But of a courseness you might put in it your nose beautifiers if you wish, and perfume them."

"Nose beautifiers—he means handkerchiefs," explained Ikey. "It's a bargain—only three dollars."

"I'll take it," spoke Thad. "I know a girl I can give it to. No objection to putting a powder puff in it; is there, Hashmi?"

"Of a surely, no."

More of the wares from the big box were displayed and the two other lads took something. Then Dunk insisted on having another look, and bought several "vawses," as Ikey insisted on calling them.

"They'll look swell in the room, eh, Andy? he asked.

"They sure will. I only hope there's no more rough house or you'll be out several dollars."

"If those rusty sophs smash any of this stuff I'll go to the dean about it!" threatened Dunk, well knowing, however, that he would not.

"Such bargains! Such bargains!" whispered Ikey, as he let them out of the side door, first glancing up and down the dark alley to make sure that no other college lads were lying in wait to demand their share of the precious stuff. The coast was clear and Andy and his chums slipped out, carrying their purchases.

"Are you coming?" Dunk asked of Ikey.

"No, I'll stay and help Hashmi pack up the things. If you want any more let me know."

"Huh! You mean you'll stay and count up how much you've stuck us!" said Dunk. "Oh, well, it looks like nice stuff. But I've got enough for the present. I've overdrawn my allowance as it is."

"Well, we'll leave this junk in your room, Andy, and then go out and have some fun," suggested Thad.

They piled their purchases on the beds in Andy's and Dunk's room in Wright Hall and then proceeded on to Burke's place, an eating and drinking resort for many students.

There was a crowd there when Andy and his chums entered and they were noisily greeted.

"Oh, you Dunk!"

"Over here! Lots of room!"

"Waiter, five more cold steins!"

"None for me!" said Andy with a smile.

"That's all right—he's trying for the team," someone said, in a low tone.

"Oh!"

Through the haze of the smoke of many pipes Andy saw some of the football crowd. They were all taking "soft stuff," which he himself ordered.

Then began an evening of jollity and clean fun. It was rather rough, and of the nature of horseplay, of course, and perhaps some of the lads did forget themselves a little, but it was far from being an orgy.

"I'm going to pull out soon," spoke Andy to Dunk, when an hour or so had passed.

"Oh, don't be in a rush. I'll be with you in a little while."

"All right, I'll wait."

Again to Andy had come the idea that he might, after all, prove a sort of "brother's keeper" to his chum.

The fun grew faster and more furious, but there was a certain line that was never overstepped, and for this Andy was glad.

The door opened to admit another throng, and Andy saw Mortimer and several of his companions of the fast set. How Gaffington kept up the pace and still managed to retain his place on the football team was a mystery to many. He had wonderful recuperative powers, though, and was well liked by a certain element.

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"Hello, Dunk!" he greeted Andy's roommate. "You're looking pretty fit."

"Same to you—though you look as though you'd been having one."

"So I have—rather strenuous practice to-day. Oh, there's the fellow who did me up!" and he looked at Andy and, to our hero's surprise, laughed.

"It's all right, old man—no hard feelings," went on Mortimer. "Will you shake?"

"Sure!" exclaimed Andy, eagerly. He was only too anxious not to have any enmity.

"Put her there! Shake!" exclaimed the other. "You shook me and I shook you. No hard feelings, eh?"

"Of course not!"

"That's all right then. Fellows, I'll give you one—Andy Blair—a good tackier!" and Mortimer raised his glass on high.

"Andy Blair! Oh, you Andy! Your eye on us!"

And thus was Andy pledged by his enemy. What did it mean?

Faster grew the fun. The room was choking blue with tobacco smoke, and Andy wanted to get away.

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"Come on, Dunk," he said. "Let's pull out. We've got some stiff recitations to-morrow."

"All right, I'm willing."

Mortimer saw them start to leave, and coming over put his arm affectionately around Dunk.

"Oh, you're not going!" he expostulated. "Why, it's early yet and the fun's just starting. Don't be a quitter!"

Dunk flushed. He was not used to being called that.

"Yes, stay and finish out," urged others.

Andy felt that it was a crisis. Yet he could say nothing. Dunk seemed undecided for a moment, and Mortimer renewed his pleadings.

"Be a sport!" he cried. "Have a good time while you're living—you're a long time dead!"

There was a moment's hush. Then Dunk gently removed Mortimer's arm and said:

"No, I'm going back with Blair. Come on, Andy."

And they went out together.

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CHAPTER XV

DUNK GOES OUT

"Look at that!"

"Why, it's the same stuff!"

"There's a rose jar like the one I bought for seven dollars marked two seventy-five!"

"Oh, the robber! Why, there's a handkerchief box, bigger than the one he stuck me with, and it's only a dollar!"

"Say, let's rough-house Ikey and that Jap!"

Andy, Dunk, and their three friends were standing in front of a Japanese store, looking in the window, that held many articles associated with the Flowery Kingdom. Price tags were on them, and the lads discovered that they had paid dearly for the ornaments they had so surreptitiously viewed in the semi-darkness, under the guidance of Ikey Stein.

This was several days after they had purchased their bric-a-brac and meanwhile they had seen Ikey and Hashmi going about getting other students into their toils.

"Say, that was a plant, all right!" declared Dunk. "I'm going to make Ikey shell out."

"And the Jap, too!" added Andy. "We sure were stuck!"

For the articles in the window were identical, in many cases, with those they had bought, but the prices were much less.

"I thought there was something fishy about it," commented Thad. "Never again do I buy a pig in a poke!"

"I'll poke Ikey when I catch him," said Bob.

"Here he comes now," spoke Ted, in a low voice. "Don't seem to see him until he gets close, and then we'll grab him and make him shell out!"

So the five remained looking steadfastly in the window until the unsuspecting Ikey came close. Then Andy and Dunk made a quick leap and caught him.

"What—what is it?" asked the surprised student.

"We merely want your advice on the purchase of some more art objects," said Andy, grimly. "You're such an expert, you know."

"Some other time—some other time! I'm due at a lecture now!" pleaded Ikey, squirming to get away.

"The lecture can wait," said Dunk. "Look at that vawse for the holding of the rose petals from your loved one. See it there—now would you advise me to buy it? It's much cheaper than the one you and your beloved Hashmi stuck me with."

Ikey looked at the faces of his captors. He saw only stern, unrelenting glares, and realized that his game had been discovered.

"I—er—I—" he stammered.

"Come, what's your advice?" demanded Dunk. "Did I pay too much?"

"I—er—perhaps you did," admitted Ikey, slowly.

"Then fork over the balance."

"And what about my cracker jar—for the ashes of dead ancestors?" asked Andy. "Was I stuck, too?"

"Oh, no, not at all. Why, that is a very rare piece."

"What about that one in the window?" demanded Andy. "That's only rare to the tune of several dollars less than I paid."

"Oh, but you are mistaken!" Ikey assured him. "It takes an expert to tell the difference. You can ask Hashmi—"

"Hashmi be hanged!" cried Dunk, giving the captured one a shake. A little crowd had gathered in the street to see the fun.

"I—I'll give you whatever you think is right," promised Ikey. "Only let me go. I shall be late."

"The late Mr. Stein," laughed Andy.

"What about the rare satsuma piece you wished onto me?" demanded Ted.

"And that cloisonne flower vawse that has a crack in it?" Thad wanted to know.

"That's because it's so old," whined Ikey. "It is more valuable."

"There's one in the window without a crack for three dollars less," was the retort.

"Oh, well, if you fellows are dissatisfied with your bargains—"

"Oh, we're not going to back down," said Andy, "but we're not going to pay more than they're

worth, either. It was a plant, and you know it. Now you shell out all we paid above what the things are marked at in this window, and we'll call it square—that is, if you don't go around blabbing how you took us in."

"All right! All right!" cried Ikey. "I'll do it, only let me go!"

"No; pay first! Run him over to our rooms," suggested Dunk. They were not far from the quadrangle, and catching hold of Ikey they ran him around into High Street and through the gateway beside Chittenden Hall to Wright. There, up in Andy's and Dunk's room, Ikey was made to disgorge his cash. But they were merciful to him and only took the difference in price.

"Now you tell us how it happened, and we'll let you go," promised Andy.

"It was all Hashmi's fault," declared Ikey. "I believed him when he said his brother in Japan had sent him a box of fine vawses. Hashmi said he didn't need 'em all, and I said maybe we could sell 'em. So I did."

"That was all right; but why did you stick up the price?" asked Andy.

"A fellow has to make money," returned Ikey, innocently enough, and Dunk laughed.

"All right," said Andy's roommate. "Don't do it again, that's all. Who is Hashmi's brother?"

"One of 'em keeps that Jap store where you were looking in the window," said Ikey, edging out of the room, "and the other is in Japan. He sent the stuff over to be sold in the regular way, but that sly Hashmi fooled me. Never again!"

"And you passed it on to us," said Andy with a laugh.

"Well, it's all in the game."

"Still, we've got the stuff," said Ted.

They had, but had they known it all they would have learned that, even at the lowered price they were paying dearly enough for the ornaments, and at that Hashmi and Ikey divided a goodly sum between them.

The college days passed on. Andy and Dunk were settling down to the grind of study, making it as easy as they could for themselves, as did the other students.

Andy kept on with his football practice, and made progress. He was named as second substitute on the freshman team and did actually play through the fourth quarter in an important game, after it had been taken safely into the Yale camp. But he was proud even to do that, and made a field goal that merited him considerable applause.

Mortimer had dropped out of the varsity team. There was good reason, for he would not train, and, though he could play brilliantly at times, he could not be depended on.

"I don't care!" he boasted to his sporting crowd. "I can have some fun, now."

Several times he and his crowd had come around to ask Dunk to go out with them, but Dunk had refused, much to Mortimer's chagrin.

"Oh, come on, be a good fellow!" he had urged.

"No, I've got to do some boning."

"Oh, forget it!"

But Dunk would not, for which Andy was glad.

Then came a period when Dunk went to pieces in his recitations. He was warned by his professors and tried to make up for it by hard study. He was not naturally brilliant and certain lessons came hard to him.

He grew discouraged and talked of withdrawing. Andy did all he could for him, even to the neglect of his own standing, but it seemed to do no good.

"What's the use of it all, anyhow?" demanded Dunk. "I'll spend four mortal years here, and come out with a noddle full of musty old Latin and Greek, go to work in dad's New York office and forget it all in six months. I might as well start forgetting it now."

"You've got the wrong idea," said Andy.

"Well, maybe I have. Hanged if I see how you do it!"

"I don't do so well."

"But you don't get floored as I do! I'm going to chuck it!" and he threw his Horace across the room, shattering the Japanese vase he had bought.

"Look out!" cried Andy.

"Too late! I don't give a hang!"

Someone came along the hall.

"What are you fellows up to?" asked a gay voice. "Trying to break up housekeeping?"

"It's Gaffington!" murmured Andy.

"Come on in!" invited Dunk.

"You fellows come on out!" retorted the newcomer. "There's a peach of a show at Poli's. Let's take it in and have supper at Burke's afterward."

Dunk got up.

"Hanged if I don't!" he said, with a defiant look at Andy.

"That's the stuff! Be a sport!" challenged Mortimer. "Coming along, Blair?"

"No."

Mortimer laughed.

"Go down among the dead ones!" he cried. "Come on, Dunk, we'll make a night of it!"

And they went out together, leaving Andy alone in the silent room.

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CHAPTER XVI

IN BAD

131

The clock was ticking. To Andy it sounded as loud as a timepiece in a tower. The rhythmic cadence seemed to fill the room. Somewhere off in the distance a bell boomed out—a church bell.

Andy sat in a brown study, looking into the fireplace. A little blaze was going on the hearth, and the young student, gazing at the embers saw many pictures there.

For some time Andy sat without stirring. He had listened to the retreating footsteps of Dunk and Mortimer as the boys passed down the corridor, laughing.

Through Wright Hall there echoed other footsteps—coming and going—there was the sound of voices in talk and in gay repartee. Students called one to the other, or in groups hurried here and there, intent on pleasure. Andy sat there alone—thinking—thinking.

A log in the fireplace broke with a suddenness that startled him. A shower of sparks flew up the chimney, and a little puff of smoke shot out into the room. Andy roused himself.

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"Oh, hang it all!" he exclaimed aloud. "Why should I care? Let him go with that crowd—with Mort and his bunch if he likes. What difference does it make to me?"

He stood up, his arm on the mantel where had rested the Japanese vase purchased so mysteriously. Now only the fragments of it were there.

A comparison between that shattered vase and what might be the shattered friendship between himself and his roommate came to Andy, but he resolutely thrust it aside.

"What difference does it make to me?" he asked himself. "Let him go his own way, and I'll go mine."

He crossed to the book rack on the window sill, intending to do some studying. On the broad stone ledge outside the casement he kept his bottle of spring water. It was a cooler place than the room. Andy poured himself out a drink, and as he sipped it he said again:

"Why should I care what he does?"

Then, from off in the distance he heard the chimes of a church, playing "Adestes Fideles."

He stood listening—entranced as the tones came to him, softened by the night air.

And there seemed to whisper to him a still, small voice that asked:

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

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Andy shut the window softly, and, going back to his chair sat staring into the fire. It was dying down, the embers settling into the dead ashes. It was very still and quiet in the little room. All Wright Hall was very still and quiet now.

"I—I guess I'll have to care—after all," whispered Andy.

Footsteps were heard coming along the corridor, and, for a moment Andy had a wild hope that it might be Dunk returning. But as he listened he knew it was not his chum.

Someone knocked on the door.

"Come!" called Andy sharply. It could be none of his friends, he knew.

A messenger entered with a note, and, observing an unfamiliar handwriting, Andy wondered from whom it could be. He ripped it open and uttered an exclamation. He read:

"Dear Mr. Blair:

"I am doing a little engagement at Poli's. Won't you drop around and see me? I promise not to compel you to play the fireman.

"Sincerely yours,
"MAZIE FULLER."

"Jove!" murmured Andy. "I forgot all about her."

"Any answer?" asked the messenger.

"No."

The boy started out.

"Oh, yes. Wait a minute." Andy scribbled an acceptance.

"Here," he said, and handed the boy a quarter.

"T'anks!" exclaimed the urchin. Then with a roguish glance he added: "Gee, but you college guys is great!"

"Hop along!" commanded Andy briefly.

Should he go, after all? He had said he would and yet—

"Oh, hang it! I guess I'd better go!" he said aloud, just as though he had not intended to all along. He turned up the light and began throwing about a pile of neckties. He tried first one and then another. None seemed to satisfy him, and when he did get the hue that suited him it would not allow itself to be properly tied.

"Oh, rats!" Andy exclaimed. "Why should I care?"

Why indeed? It is one of the mysteries. "Vanity of vanities" and the rest of it.

As he entered Poli's Andy was aware that something unusual was going on. The ushers were grinning with good-natured tolerance, but there was rather an anxious look on the faces of some of the women in the audience. Some of their male escorts appeared resentful.

Andy had been obliged to purchase a box seat, as there were no vacant ones in the body of the house. As he sank into his chair, rather back, for the box was well filled, he saw a college classmate.

"What's up?" he asked, the curtain then being down to allow of a change of scene.

"Oh, Gaffington and his crowd are joshing some of the acts."

"Any row?"

"No, everybody takes it good-naturedly. Bunch of our fellows here to-night."

"Show any good?"

"Pretty fair. Some of the things are punk. There's a good number coming—Mazie Fuller—she's got a new act. And Bodkins—you know the tramp juggler—the one who does things with cigar boxes—he's coming on next. He's a scream."

"Yes, I know him. He's all right."

The curtain went up and from the wings came Miss Fuller. She had prospered in vaudeville, it seemed, for she had on a richer costume than the one she wore when she had been so nearly burned to death.

She was well received, and while singing her first number she looked about the house. Presently she caught the eyes of Andy—he had leaned forward in the box, perhaps purposely. Miss Fuller smiled at him, and at once a chorus of cries arose from the students in the different parts of the theater. Up to then, since Andy's entrance, there had been no commotion. Now it broke out again.

"Oh, get on to that!"

"The lad with the dreamy eyes!"

"Oh, you Andy Blair!"

Andy sank back blushing, but Miss Fuller took it in good part.

Her act went on, and was well received. She did not again look at Andy, possibly fearing to embarrass him. And then, as she retired after her last number—a veritable whirlwind song—

there came a thunder of applause, mingled with shrill whistles, to compel an encore.

Andy was aware of a disturbance in the front of the house. It was where a number of the students were seated, and Andy had a glimpse of Dunk Chamber. Beside him was Gaffington. Dunk had arisen and was swaying unsteadily on his feet.

"Sit down!"

"Keep him quiet!"

"Put him out!"

"Call the manager!"

"Make him sit down!"

Andy began to feel uneasy. He could see the unhappy condition of his roommate and those with him. The worst he feared had come to pass.

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Swaying, but still managing not to step on anyone, Dunk made his way to the aisle, and then, getting close to the box where Andy sat, climbed over the rail. The manager motioned to an usher not to interfere. Probably he thought it was the best means of producing quiet.

"Here I am, Andy," announced Dunk gravely.

"So I see," spoke Andy, his face blazing at the notice he was receiving. "Sit down and keep quiet. There's a good act coming."

"Hush!" exclaimed a number of voices as the curtain slid up, to give place to "Bustling Bodkins," the tramp juggler. The actor came out in his usual ragged make-up, and proceeded to do things with a pile of empty cigar boxes—really a clever trick. Dunk watched him with curious gravity for a while and then started to climb over the footlights on to the stage.

"No, you don't, Dunk!" cried Andy, firmly, and despite his chum's protests he hauled him back. Then he took Dunk firmly by the arm and marched him out of a side entrance of the show-house.

CHAPTER XVII

ANDY'S DESPAIR

138

"Pretty bad; was I, Andy?"

"Yes."

"Whew! What a headache! Any ice water left?"

"I'll get some."

"Never mind. What's there'll do."

It was morning—there always is a "morning after." Perhaps it is a good thing, for it is nature's protest against violations of her code of health.

Dunk drank deep of the water Andy handed him.

"That's better," he said, with a sigh. "Guess I won't get up just yet."

"Going to cut out chapel?"

"I should say yes! My head is splitting now and to go there and hear that old organ booming out hymns would snap it off my neck. No chapel for me!"

"You know what it means."

"Well, I can't be in much worse than I am. I'll straighten up after a bit. No lectures to-day."

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"You're going the pace," observed Andy. It was not said with that false admiration which so often keeps a man on the wrong road from sheer bravado. Andy was rather white, and his lips trembled.

"It does seem so," admitted Dunk, gloomily enough.

"Any more water there?" he asked, presently.

"I'll get some," offered Andy, and he soon returned with a pitcher in which ice tinkled.

"That sounds good," murmured his roommate. "Was I very bad last night?"

"Oh, so-so."

"Made a confounded idiot of myself, I suppose?" and he glanced sharply at Andy over the top of the glass.

"Oh, well, we all do at times."

"I haven't seen you do it yet."

"You will if you room with me long enough, Dunk."

"Yes, but not in the way I mean."

"Oh, well, I'm no moralist; but I hope you never will see me that way. Understand, I'm not preaching, but——"

"I know. You don't care for it."

"That's it."

"I wish I didn't. But you don't understand."

"Maybe not," said Andy slowly. "I'm not judging you in the least."

"I know, old man. How'd you get me home?"

"Oh, you were tractable enough. I got a taxi."

"I'll settle with you later. I don't seem to have any cash left."

"Forget it. I can lend you some."

"I may need it, Andy. Hang Gaffington and his crowd anyhow! I'm not going out with them again."

Andy made no reply. He had been much pained and hurt by the episode in the theater. Public attention had been attracted to him by Dunk's conduct; but, more than this, Andy remembered a startled and surprised look in the eyes of Miss Fuller, who came out on the stage when Dunk interrupted the tramp act.

"If only I could have had a chance to explain," thought Andy. But there had been no time. He had helped to take Dunk away. When this Samaritan act was over the theater had closed, and Andy did not think it wise to look up Miss Fuller at her hotel.

"I'll see her again," he consoled himself.

The chapel bell boomed out, and Andy started for the door.

"What a head!" grumbled Dunk again. "I say, Andy, what's good when a fellow makes an infernal idiot of himself?"

"In your case a little bromo might help."

"Got any?"

"No, but I can get you some."

"Oh, don't bother. When you come back, maybe——"

"I'll get it," said Andy, shortly.

He was late for chapel when he had succeeded in administering a dose of the quieting medicine to Dunk, and this did not add to the pleasures of the occasion. However, there was no help for it.

Somehow the miserable day following the miserable night ended, and Andy was again back in the room with Dunk. The latter was feeling quite "chipper" again.

"Oh, well, it's a pretty good old world after all," Dunk said. "I think I can eat a little now. Never again for me, Andy! Do you hear that?"

"I sure do, old man."

"And that goes. Put her there!"

They shook hands. It meant more to Andy than he would admit. He had gone, that afternoon, to the theater, where Miss Fuller was on for a matinee, and, sending back his card, with some flowers, had been graciously received. He managed to make her understand, without saying too much.

"I'm so glad it wasn't—you!" she said, with a warm pressure of her hand.

"I'm glad too," laughed Andy.

"No sir—never again!" said Dunk that evening, as he got out his books. "You hear me, Andy—never again!"

"That's the way to talk!"

It was hard work at Yale. No college is intended for children, and the New Haven University in

particular has a high aim for its students.

Andy “buckled down,” and was doing well. His standing in class, while not among the highest, was satisfactory, and he was in line for a place on the freshman eleven.

How he did practice! No slave worked harder or took more abuse from the coaches. Andy was glad of one thing—that Gaffington was out of it. There were others, though, who tackled Andy hard in the scrimmages, but he rather liked it, for there was no vindictiveness back of it.

As for Mortimer, he and his crowd went on their sporting way, doing just enough college work not to fall under the displeasure of the Dean or other officials. But it was a “close shave” at times.

143

Dunk seemed to stick to his resolution. He, too, was studying hard, and for several nights after the theater escapade did not go out evenings. Andy was rejoicing, and then, just when his hopes were highest, they were suddenly dashed.

There had been a period of hard work, and it was followed by a football disaster. Yale met Washington and Jefferson, and while part of the Bulldog’s poor form might be ascribed to a muddy field, it was not all that. There was fumbling and ragged playing, and Yale had not been able to score. Nor was it any consolation that the other team had not either. Several times their players had menaced Yale’s goal line, and only by supreme efforts was a touchdown avoided. As it stood it was practically a defeat for Yale, and everybody, from the varsity members to the digs, were as blue as the cushions in the dormitory window seats.

Andy and Dunk sat in their room, thankful that it was Saturday night, with late chapel and no lessons on the morrow.

“Rotten, isn’t it, Andy?” said Dunk.

“Oh, it might be worse. The season is only just opening. We’ll beat Harvard and Princeton all right.”

“Jove! If we don’t!” Dunk looked alarmed.

“Oh, we will!” asserted Andy.

144

Dunk seemed nervous. He was pacing up and down the room. Finally, stopping in front of Andy he said:

“Come on out. Let’s go to a show—or something. Let’s go down to Burke’s place and see the fellows. I want to get rid of this blue feeling.”

“All right, I’ll go,” said Andy, hesitating only a moment.

They were just going out together when there came the sound of footsteps and laughter down the corridor. Andy started as he recognized the voice of Gaffington.

“Oh Dunk! Are you there?” was called, gleefully.

“Yes, I’m here,” was the answer, and it sounded to Andy as though his chum was glad to hear that voice.

“Come out and have some fun. Bully show at the Hyperion. No end of sport. Come on!”

Mortimer, with Clarence Boyle and Len Scott, came around the corner of the corridor, arm in arm.

“Oh, you and Blair off scouting?” asked Gaffington, pausing before the two.

“We were going out—yes,” admitted Dunk.

“We’ll make a party of it then. Fall in, Blair!”

145

Andy rather objected to the patronizing tone of Mortimer, but he did not feel like resenting it then. Should he go?

Dunk glanced at his chum somewhat in doubt.

“Will you come, Andy?” he asked, hesitatingly.

“Yes—I guess so.”

“We’ll make a night of it!” cried Len.

“Not for mine,” laughed Andy. “I’m in training, you know.”

“Well, we’ll keep Dunk then. Come on.”

They set out together, Andy with many misgivings in his heart.

Noisy and stirring was the welcome they received at Burke’s. It was the usual story. The night wore on, and Dunk’s good resolutions slipped away gradually.

“Come on, Andy, be a sport!” he said, raising his glass.

Andy smiled and shook his head. Then a bitter feeling came into his heart—a feeling mingled with

despair.

"Hang it all!" he murmured to himself. "I'm going to quit. I'll let him go the pace as he wants to. I'm done with him!"

146

CHAPTER XVIII

ANDY'S RESOLVE

"Come on back!"

"Don't be a quitter!"

"It's early yet!"

"The fun hasn't started!"

These cries greeted Andy as he rose to leave Burke's place. His eyes smarted from the smoke of many pipes, and his ears rang with the echoes of college songs. His heart ached too, as he saw Dunk in the midst of the gay and festive throng surrounding Gaffington and his wealthy chums.

"I've got to turn in—training, you know," explained Andy with a smile. It was the one and almost only excuse that would be accepted. Two or three more of the athletic set dropped out with him.

"Goin', Andy?" asked Dunk, standing rather unsteadily at a table.

"Yes. Coming?" asked Andy pausing, and hoping, with all his heart, that Dunk would come.

"Not on your life! There's too much fun here. Have a good time when you're living, say I. You're an awful long time dead! Here you are, waiter!" and Dunk beckoned to the man.

147

Andy paused a moment—and only for a moment. Then he hardened his heart and turned to go.

"Leave the door open," Dunk called after him. "I'll be home in th' mornin'."

And then the crowd burst out into the refrain:

"He won't be home until morning,
He won't be home until morning."

Over and over again rang the miserable chant that has bolstered up so many a man who, otherwise, would stop before it was too late.

Andy breathed deep of the cool night air as he got outside. The streets were quiet and deserted, save for those who had come out with him, and who went their various ways. As Andy turned down a side street he could still hear, coming faintly to him through the quiet night the strains of:

"We won't go home until morning."

"Poor old Dunk!" mused Andy. "I hate to quit him, but I've got to. I'm not going to be looking after him all the while. It's too much work. Besides, he won't stay decent permanently."

148

He was angry and hurt that all his roommate's good resolutions should thus easily be cast to the winds.

"I'm just going to quit!" exclaimed Andy fiercely. "I've done all I could. Besides, it isn't my affair anyhow. I'll get another room—one by myself. Oh, hang it all, anyhow!"

Moody, angry, rather dissatisfied with himself, wholly dissatisfied with Dunk, Andy stumbled on. As he turned out of Chapel into High Street he saw before him two men who were talking earnestly. Andy could not help hearing what they said.

"Is the case hopeless?" one asked.

"Oh, no, I wouldn't say that."

"Yet he's promised time and again to reform, and every time he slips back again."

"Yes, I know. He isn't the only one at the mission who does that."

Andy guessed they were church workers.

"Don't you get tired?" asked the questioner.

"Oh, yes, often. But then I get rested."

"But this chap seems such a bad case."

"They're all bad, more or less. I don't mind that."

"And you're going to try again?"

"I sure am. He's worth saving."

Andy felt as though some one had dealt him a blow. "Worth saving!" Yes, that was it. He saw a light.

The two men passed on. Andy hesitated.

"Worth saving!"

It seemed as though some one had shouted the words at him.

"Worth saving!"

Andy's heart was beating tumultuously. His head and pulses throbbed. His ears rang.

He stood still on the sidewalk, near the gateway beside Chittenden Hall. His room was a little way beyond. It would be easy to go there and go to bed, and Andy was very tired. He had played a hard game of football that day. It was so easy to go to his room, and leave Dunk to look after himself.

What was the use? And yet—

"He is worth saving!"

Andy struggled with himself. Again he seemed to hear that voice whispering:

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Andy turned resolutely away from the college buildings. He set his face again down High Street, and swung out into Chapel.

"I'll go get him," he said, simply. "He's worth saving. Maybe I can't do it—but—I'll try!"

CHAPTER XIX

LINK COMES TO COLLEGE

With hesitating steps Andy pushed open the door of Burke's place and entered. At first he could make out little through the haze of tobacco smoke, and his return was not noticed. Most of the college boys were in the rear room, and the noise of their jollity floated out to Andy.

"I wonder if Dunk is still there?" he murmured.

He learned a moment later, for he heard some one call:

"Stand up, Dunk! Your eye on us!"

"He's in there—and I've got to save him!" Andy groaned. Then, with clenched teeth and a firm step he went into the rear room, among that crowd of roistering students.

Andy's reappearance was the signal for a burst of good-natured jibing, mingled with cries of approval.

"Here he comes back!"

"I knew he couldn't stay away!"

"Who said he was a quitter?"

From among the many glasses offered Andy selected a goblet of ginger ale. He looked about the tables, and saw Dunk at one, regarding him with a rather uncertain eye.

"There he is!" cried Andy's roommate, waving his hand. "That's him. My old college chum! I'm his protector! I always look after him. I say," and he turned to the youth beside him, "I say, what is it I protect my old college from anyhow? Hanged if I haven't forgotten. What is it I save him from?"

"From himself, I guess," was the answer. "You're all right, Dunk!"

"Come on, Dunk," said Andy good naturedly. "I'm going to the room. Coming?"

Instantly there was a storm of protest.

"Of course he's not coming!"

"It's early yet!"

"Don't you go, Dunk!"

Mortimer Gaffington, fixing an insolent and supercilious stare on Andy, said:

"Don't mind him, Dunk. You're not tied to him, remember. The little-brother-come-in-out-of-the-wet game doesn't go at Yale. Every man stands on his own feet. Eh, Dunk?"

"That's right."

"You're not going to leave your loving friends and go home so early; are you, Dunk?"

152

"Course not. Can't leave my friends. But Andy's my friend, too; ain't you, Andy?"

"I hope so, Dunk," Andy replied, gravely.

Somebody interrupted with a song, and there was much laughter. Mortimer alone seemed to be the sinister influence at work, and he hovered near Dunk as if to counteract the good intentions of Andy.

"Here you are, waiter!" cried Dunk. "Everybody have something—ginger ale, soda water, pop, anything they like. Cigars, too." He pulled out a bill—a yellow-back—and Andy saw Mortimer take it from his shaking fingers.

"Don't be so foolish!" exclaimed the sophomore. "You don't want to spend all that. Here, I'll hand out a fiver and keep this for you until morning. You can settle with me later," and Gaffington slipped the big bill into his own pocket, and produced one of his own—of smaller denomination.

"That's good," murmured Dunk. "You're my friend and protector—same as I'm Andy's protector. We're all protectors. Come on, fellows, another song!"

Andy was beginning to wonder how he would get his chum home. It was getting very late and to enter Wright Hall at an unseemly hour meant trouble.

"Come on, Dunk—let's light out," said Andy again, making his way to his roommate's side.

153

"No, you don't!"

"That game won't go!"

"Let Dunk alone, he can look out for himself."

Laughing and expostulating, the others got between Andy and his friend. It was all in good-natured fun, for most of the boys, beyond perhaps smoking a little more than was good for them, were not at all reckless. But the spirit of the night seemed to have laid hold of all.

"Come on, Dunk," appealed Andy.

"He's going to stay!" declared Mortimer, thrusting himself between Andy and Dunk, and sticking out his chin in aggressive fashion. "I tell you he's going to stay! We don't want any of your goody-goody methods here, Blair!"

Andy ignored the affront.

"Are you coming, Dunk?" he repeated softly.

Dunk raised his head and flashed a look at his roommate. Something in Dunk's better nature must have awakened. And yet he was all good nature, so it is difficult to speak of the "better" side. The trouble was that he was too good-natured. Yet at that instant he must have had an understanding of what Andy's plan was—to save him from himself.

"You want me to come with you?" he asked slowly.

154

"Yes, Dunk."

"Then I'm coming."

Mortimer put his arm around Dunk and whispered in his ear.

"You don't want to go," he insisted.

"Yes, he does," said Andy, firmly.

For a moment he and the other youth faced each other. It was a struggle of wills for the mastery of a character, and Andy won—at least the first "round."

"I'm going with my friend," said Dunk firmly, and despite further protests he went out with his arm over Andy's shoulder. There were cries and appeals to remain, but Dunk heeded them not.

"I'm going to quit," he announced. "Had enough fun for to-night."

Out in the clear, cool air Andy breathed free again.

"Shall I get a cab?" he asked. "There must be one somewhere around."

"Certainly not," answered Dunk. "I—I can walk, I guess."

They reached Wright Hall, neither speaking much on the way. Andy was glad—and sorry. Sorry

that Dunk had allowed his resolution to be broken, but glad that he had been able to stop his friend in time.

"Thanks, old man," said Dunk, briefly, as they reached their room. "You've done more than you know."

"That's all right," replied Andy, in a low voice.

Dunk went to chapel with Andy the next morning, but he was rather silent during the day, and he flunked miserably in several recitations on the days following. Truth to tell he was in no condition to put his mind seriously on lessons, but he tried hard.

Andy, coming in from football practice one afternoon, found Dunk standing in the middle of the apartment staring curiously at a yellow-backed ten-dollar bill he was holding in both of his hands.

"What's the matter?" asked Andy. "A windfall?"

"No, Gaffington just sent it in to me. Said it was one he took the other night when I flashed it at Burke's."

"Oh, yes, I remember," spoke Andy. "You were getting too generous."

"I know that part of it—Gaffington meant all right. But I don't understand this."

"What?" asked Andy.

"Why, this is a ten-spot, and I'm sure I had a twenty that night. However, I may be mistaken—I guess I couldn't see straight. But I was sure it was a twenty. Don't say anything about it, though—probably I was wrong. It was decent of Gaffington not to let me lose it all."

And Dunk thrust the ten dollar bill into his pocket.

It was several days after this when Andy, crossing the quadrangle, saw a familiar figure raking up the leaves on the campus.

"What in the world is he doing here—if that's him?" he asked himself. "And yet it does look like him."

He came closer. The young fellow raking up the leaves turned, and Andy exclaimed:

"Link Bardon! What in the world are you doing here?"

"Oh, I've come to college!" replied the young farm hand, smiling. "How do you do, Mr. Blair?"

"Come to college, eh?" laughed Andy. "What course are you taking?"

"I expect to get the degree B. W.—bachelor of work," was the rejoinder. "I'm sort of assistant janitor here now."

"Is that so! How did it happen?"

"Well, you know the last time I saw you I was on my way to see if I could locate an uncle of mine, just outside of New Haven. I didn't, for he'd moved away. Then I got some odd bits of work to do, and finally, coming to town with a young fellow, who, like myself was out of work, I heard of this place, applied for it and got it. I like it."

"Well, I'm glad you are here," said Andy. "If I can help you in any way let me know."

"I will, Mr. Blair. You did help a lot before," and he went on raking leaves, while Andy, musing on the strange turns of luck and chance, hurried on to his lecture.

CHAPTER XX

QUEER DISAPPEARANCES

"Come in!" cried Andy as a knock sounded.

"I'm not going out, I don't care who it is!" exclaimed Dunk, fidgeting in his chair. "I've just *got* to get this confounded Greek."

"Same here," said Andy.

The door was pushed open and a shock of dark, curly hair was thrust in.

"Like to look at some swell neckties!" a voice asked.

"Oh, come in, you blooming old haberdasher!" cried Andy with a laugh, and Ikey Stein, with a bundle under his arm, slid in.

"Fine business!" he exclaimed. "Give me a chance to make a little money, gentlemen; I need it!"

"No more of that Japanese 'vawse' business!" warned Dunk. "I won't stand for it."

"No, these are genuine bargains," declared the student who was working his way through college. "I'll show you. I got 'em from a friend of mine, who's selling out. I can make a little something on them, and you'll get swell scarfs at less than you'd pay for them in a store."

159

"Let's see," suggested Andy, rather glad of the diversion and of the chance to stop studying, for he had been "boning" hard. "But I don't want any satsuma pattern, nor yet a cloisonne," he added.

"Say, forget that," begged Ikey. "That Jap took me in, as well as he did you fellows."

"Well, if anybody can take *you* in, Ikey, he's a good one!" laughed Dunk.

"Oh, don't mind me!" exclaimed the merchant-student. "You can't hurt my feelings. I'm used to it. And I'm not ashamed of my nature, either. My ancestors were all merchants, and they had to drive hard bargains to live. I don't exactly do that, you understand, but I guess it's in my blood. I'm not ashamed that I'm a Jew!"

"And we're not ashamed of you, either!" cried Andy, heartily.

"Same here," added Dunk. "Trot out your ties, Ikey."

In spite of the fact that he sometimes insisted on the students buying things they did not really need, Ikey was a general favorite in the college.

"There's a fine one!" he exclaimed, holding up a hideous red and green scarf. "Only a dollar—worth two."

160

"Wouldn't have it if you paid me for it!" cried Andy. "Show me something that a fellow could wear without hearing it yell a block away."

"Oh, you want something chaste and quiet," suggested Ikey. "I have the very thing. There!" holding it up. "That is a mere whisper!"

"It's a pretty loud whisper," commented Dunk, "but at that it isn't so bad. I'll take it, if you don't want it, Andy."

"You're welcome to it. I want something in a golden brown."

"Here you are!" exclaimed Ikey, sorting over his stock.

He succeeded in selling Andy and Dunk two scarfs each, and tried to get them to take more, but they were firm. Then the merchant-student departed to other rooms.

"It's a queer way to get along," commented Andy, when he had finished admiring his purchases.

"Yes, but I give him credit for it," went on Dunk. "He meets with a lot of discouragement, and some of the fellows are positively rude to him, but he's always the same—good-natured and willing to put up with it. He's working hard for his education."

"Harder than you and I," commented Andy. "I wonder if we'd do it?"

161

"I'd hate to have it thrust on me. But I do give Stein credit."

"Yes, only for that Japanese vase business."

"Oh, well, I believe that oily Jap did put one over on him."

"Possibly. Oh, rats! Here come some of the fellows!"

The sound of footsteps was heard in the corridor. Andy glanced at Dunk. If it should prove to be Mortimer Gaffington, who, of late had tried in vain to get Dunk to go out with him, what was to be done? Andy caught his breath sharply.

But it proved to be a needless alarm, for Bob Hunter, Ted Wilson and Thad Warburton came in with noisy greetings.

"Look at the digs!"

"Boning away on a night like this!"

"qlCome into the garden, Maud!' Chuck that, you fellows, and let's go downtown. What's the matter with a picture show?"

It was Thad who asked this, but Bob, with a wry face, put his hand in his pocket and drew out seven cents.

"It doesn't look much like a picture show for me to-night," he said.

"Oh, I'll stake you!" exclaimed Ted. "Come on."

"Shall we?" asked Dunk doubtfully of Andy.

162

"Might as well, I guess," was the answer. Andy was glad it had not been Gaffington, and he

realized that it might be better to take this chance now of getting Dunk out, before the rich youth and his fast companions came along, as they might later in the evening. He knew that with Bob, Ted and Thad, there would be no long session at Burke's.

"I haven't done my Greek," objected Dunk, hesitatingly.

"Oh, well, I'll set the alarm clock, and we'll get up an hour earlier in the morning and floor it," suggested Andy.

"Burning the candle at both ends!" protested Dunk, with a sigh. "Ain't I terrible? But lead me to it!"

As they went out of Wright Hall, Andy looked across the campus and saw Gaffington, and some of his boon companions, approaching.

"Just in time," he murmured. When Gaffington saw Dunk in charge of his friends he and the others turned aside.

"That's when I got ahead of him!" exulted our hero.

They spent a pleasant evening, and Andy and Dunk were back in their room at a reasonable hour.

"I declare!" exclaimed Dunk, "I feel pretty fresh yet. I think I'll have another go at that Greek. We won't have to get up with the chickens then." 163

"I'm with you," agreed Andy, and they did more studying than they had done in some time.

"Well, I'm through," yawned Dunk, flinging his book on the table. "Now I'm going to hit the hay."

The next day Dunk was complimented on his recitation.

"Oh, I tell you it pays to bone a bit!" Andy cried, clapping Dunk on the back as they came out.

"That's right," agreed the other.

In the days that followed Andy watched Dunk closely. And, to our hero's delight, Gaffington seemed to be losing his influence. Several times Dunk refused to go out with him—refused good-naturedly enough, but steadfastly.

Andy tried to get Dunk interested in football, and did to a certain extent. Dunk went out to the practice, and Andy tried to get him to go into training.

"No, it's too late," was the answer. "Next year, maybe. But I like to see you fellows rub your noses in the dirt. Go to it, Andy!"

Link Bardon seemed to find his employment at Yale congenial. Andy met him several times and had some little talk with him. The young farmer said he hoped to get permanent employment at the college, his present position being only for a limited time. 164

Andy had received letters from some of his former chums at Milton. Among them were missives from Ben Snow and Chet Anderson. Chet wrote from Harvard, where he had gone, that he would see Andy at the Yale-Harvard game, while from Ben, who had gone to Princeton, came a similar message, making an appointment for a good old-fashioned talk at the annual clash of the Bulldog and Tiger.

"I'll be glad to see them again," said Andy.

It was about two weeks after the arrival of Link Bardon at Yale that some little disturbance was occasioned throughout the college, when an announcement was made at chapel one morning. It was from the Dean, and stated that a number of articles had been reported as missing from the rooms of various students.

"You are requested to keep your doors locked when you are out of your rooms," the announcement concluded.

There was a buzz of excitement as the students filed out.

"What does it mean?"

"Who lost anything?"

"I have," said one. "My new sapphire cuff buttons were swiped."

"I lost a ring," added another. 165

"And a diamond scarf pin I left on my dresser walked off—or someone walked off with it," spoke a third.

There were several other mysterious losses mentioned.

"How did it happen?" asked Andy of a fellow student who had said a few dollars had been taken from his dresser.

"Hanged if I know," was the answer. "I left the money in my room, and when I came back it was gone."

"Was the room locked?"

"It sure was."

"Did any of the monitors or janitors see anyone go in?"

"Not that I know of; but of course it could happen. There are a lot of new men working around here, anyhow."

Andy thought of Link, and hoped that the farmer lad would not be suspected on account of being a stranger.

But as the days went on the number of mysterious thefts grew. Every dormitory in the quadrangle had been visited, but the buildings outside the hollow square seemed immune.

166

CHAPTER XXI

A GRIDIRON BATTLE

Harvard was about to meet Yale in the annual football game between the freshman teams. The streets were filled with pretty girls, and more pretty girls, with "sporty" chaps in mackinaws, in raglans—with all sorts of hats atop of their heads, and some without hats at all.

There had been the last secret final practice on Yale Field the day before. That night the Harvard team and its followers had arrived, putting up at Hotel Taft.

Andy, in common with other candidates for the team, was sitting quietly in his room, for Holwell, the coach, had forbidden any liveliness the night before the game. And Andy had a chance to play.

True, it was but a bare chance, but it was worth saving. He had played brilliantly on the scrub team for some time, and had been named as a possible substitute. If several backs ahead of him were knocked out, or slumped at the last moment, Andy would go in. And, without in the least wishing misfortune to a fellow student, how Andy did wish he could play!

167

There came a knock at the door—a timid, hesitating sort of knock.

"Oh, hang it! If that's Ikey, trying to sell me a blue sweater, I'll throw him down stairs!" growled Andy. He was nervous.

"Come in!" called Dunk, laughing.

"Is Andy Blair—Oh, hello, there you are, old man!" cried a voice and Chet Anderson thrust his head into the room.

"Well, you old rosebud!" yelled Andy, leaping out of the easy chair with such energy that the bit of furniture slid almost into the big fireplace. "Where'd you blow in from?"

"I came with the Harvard bunch. I told you I'd see you here."

"I know, but I didn't expect to see you until the game. You're not going to play?"

"No—worse luck! Wish I was. Hear you may be picked."

"There's a chance, that's all."

"Oh, well, we'll lick you anyhow!"

"Yes, you will, you old tomcat!" and the two clasped hands warmly, and looked deep into each other's eyes.

"Oh!" exclaimed Andy. "I forgot. Chet, this is my chum, Duncan Chamber—Dunk for short. Dunk—Chet Anderson. I went to Milton with him."

168

The two shook hands, and Chet sat down, he and Andy at once exchanging a fund of talk, with Dunk now and then getting in a word.

"Did you come on with the team?" asked Andy.

"Yes, and it's some little team, too, let me tell you!"

"Glad to hear it!" laughed Andy. "Yale doesn't like to punch a bag of mush!"

"Oh, you won't find any mush in Harvard. Say, have you heard from Ben?"

"Yes, saw him at the Princeton game."

"How was he?"

"Fine and dandy."

"That's good. Then he likes it down there?"

"Yes. He's going in for baseball. Hopes to pitch on the freshman team, but I don't know."

"You didn't play against the Tiger?"

"No, there wasn't any need of me. Yale had it all her own way."

"She won't to-morrow."

"Wait and see."

Thus they talked until Chet, knowing that Andy must want to get rest, in preparation for the gridiron battle, took his leave, promising to see his friend again.

169

The stands were a mass of color—blue like the sky on one side of Yale Field, and red like a sunset on the other. The cheering cohorts, under the leadership of the various cheer leaders, boomed out their voices of defiance.

Out trotted the Yale team and substitutes, of whom Andy was one. Instantly the blue of the sky seemed to multiply itself as a roar shook the sloping seats—the seats that ran down to the edge of green field, marked off in lines of white.

"Come on now, lively!" yelled the coaches, hardly making their voices heard above the frantic cheers.

The players lined up and went through some rapid passes and kicking. Andy and the other substitutes took their places on the bench, enveloped in blankets and their blue sweaters.

Then a roar and a smudge of crimson, that flashed out from the other side of the field, told of the approach of the Harvard team.

"Harvard! Harvard! Harvard!"

It was an acclaim of welcome.

Andy watched Yale's opponents go through their snappy practice.

"They're big and beefy," he murmured, "but we can do 'em. We've got to! Yale has got to win!"

The captains consulted, the coin was flipped, and Harvard was to kick off. The teams gathered in a knot at either end of the field for a last consultation. Then the new ball was put in the center of the field.

170

Andy found difficulty in getting his breath, and he noticed that the other players beside him had the same trouble.

The whistle shrilled out, and the Harvard back, running, sent the yellow pigskin sailing well down the field. A wild yell greeted his performance. One of the Yale players caught it and his interference formed before him. But he had not run it back ten yards before he was tackled. Now would come the first line-up, and it would be seen how Yale could buck the crimson.

"Signal!" Andy could hear their quarterback yell, and then the rest was swallowed up in a hum of excitement in the songs and cheers with which the students sought to urge on the defenders of the blue.

There was a vicious plunge into the line, but the gain was small.

"They's holding us!" murmured Blake, at Andy's side.

"Oh, it's early yet," answered Andy. He wondered why his hands pained him, and, looking at them found that he had been clenching them until the nails had made deep impressions in his palms.

Again came a plunging, smashing attack at Harvard's line, and a groan from the Yale substitutes followed. The Yale back had been thrown for a loss.

171

"We've got to kick now," murmured Andy, and the signal came.

Then it was the Yale ends showed their fleetness and they nailed the Harvard man before he had gained much. An exchange of punts followed, both teams having good kickers that year.

Then came more line smashing, in which Yale gained a little. It was a fiercely fought game, so fierce that before five minutes of play Harvard had to take one man out, and Yale lost two, from injuries that could not be patched up on the field.

"I've got a chance! I've got a chance!" exulted Andy.

But it was not rejoicing at the other fellows' misfortunes. Unless you have played football you can not understand Andy's real feelings.

The first quarter ended with neither side making a score, and there was a consultation on both teams during the little breathing spell.

"We've got to do more line plunging," thought Andy, and he was right, for Yale began that sort of a game when the whistle blew again. The wisdom of it was apparent, for at once the ball began to go down toward Harvard's goal, once Yale got possession of the pigskin after an exchange of kicks.

"That's the way! That's the way!" yelled Andy. "Touchdown! Touchdown!"

This was being yelled all over the Yale stands. But it was not to be. After some magnificent playing, and bucking that tore the Harvard line apart again and again, time for the half was called, Yale having the ball on Harvard's eight-yard line. Another play might have taken it over.

But both teams had been forced to call on more substitutes, and Harvard lost her best punter. Yale suffered, too, in the withdrawal of Michaels, a star end.

The third quarter had not been long under way when, following a scrimmage, a knot of Yale players gathered about a prostrate figure.

"Who is it? Who is it?" was asked on all sides.

"Brooks—right half!" was the despondent answer. "This cooks our goose!"

"Blair—Blair!" cried the coach. "Get in there! Rip 'em up!"

A mist swam before Andy's eyes. Some one fairly pulled him from the bench, and his sweater was ripped off him, one sleeve tearing out. But what did it matter—he had a chance to play!

"We've got to buck their line!" the freshman captain whispered in his ear. "They're weak there, and we dare not kick too much. Our ends can't get down fast enough. I'm going to send you through for all you're worth."

"All right!" gasped Andy. His mouth was dry—his throat parched.

"Steady there! Steady!" warned the coach.

"Ready, Yale?" asked the referee.

"Yes!"

Again the whistle blew. Yale had the ball, and on the first play Andy was sent bucking the line with it. He hit it hard, and felt himself being pushed and pulled through. Some one seemed in his way, and then a body gave suddenly and limply, and he lurched forward.

"First down!" he heard some one yell. He had gained the required distance. Yale would not have to kick.

Panting, trembling, with a wild, eager rage to again get into the fight, Andy waited for the signal. A forward pass was to be tried. He was glad he was not to buck the line again.

The pass was not completed, and the ball was brought back. Again came a play—a double pass that netted a little. Yale was slowly gaining.

But now Harvard took a brace and held for downs so that Yale had to kick. Then the Crimson took her turn at rushing the ball down the field by a series of desperate plunges. Yale's goal was in danger when the saving whistle for the third quarter shrilled out.

"Fellows, we've got to get 'em now or never!" cried the Yale captain, fiercely. "Break your necks—but get a touchdown!"

Once more the line-up. Andy's ears were ringing. He could scarcely hear the signals for the cheering from the stands. He was called upon to smash through the line, and did manage to make a small gain. But it was not enough. It was the second down. The other back was called on, and went through after good interference, making the necessary gain.

"We've got 'em on the run!" exulted Yale.

The blue team was within striking distance of the Harvard goal. The signal came for a kick in an attempt to send the ball over the crossbar.

How it happened no one could say. It was one of the fumbles that so often occur in a football game—fumbles that spell victory for one team and defeat for another. The Yale full-back reached out his hands for the pigskin, caught it and—dropped it. There was a rush of men toward him, and some one's foot kicked the ball. It rolled toward Andy. In a flash he had it tucked under his arm, and started in a wild dash for the Harvard goal line.

"Get him! Get that man!"

"Smear him!"

"Interference! Interference! Get after him!"

"It's Blair! Andy Blair!"

"Yale's ball!"

"Go on, you beggar! Run! Run!"

“Touchdown! Touchdown!”

There was a wild riot of yells. With his ears ringing as with the jangle of a thousand bells, with his lungs nearly bursting, and his eyes scarcely seeing, Andy ran on.

He had ten yards to go—thirty feet—and between him and the goal was the Harvard full-back—a big youth. Andy heard stamping feet behind him. They were those of friends and foes, but no friends could help him now.

Straight at the Harvard back he ran—panting, desperate. The Crimson player crouched, waiting for him. Andy dodged. He was midway between the side lines. He circled. The Harvard back turned and raced after him, intent on driving him out of bounds. That was what Andy did not want, but he did want to wind his opponent. Again Andy circled and dodged. The other followed his every move.

Then Andy came straight at him again, with outstretched hand to ward him off. There was a clash of bodies, and Andy felt himself encircled in a fatal embrace. He hurled himself forward, for he could see the goal line beneath his feet. Over he went, bearing the Harvard player backward, and, when they fell with a crash, Andy reached out, his arms over his head, and planted the ball beyond the goal line. He had made the winning touchdown!

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CHAPTER XXII

ANDY SAYS “NO!”

Men were thumping each other on the back. Some had smashed their hats over other persons' heads. Others had broken their canes from much exuberant pounding on the floors of the stands.

Everyone was yelling. On one side there was a forest of blue flags waving up and down, sideways, around in circles. Pretty girls were clinging to their escorts and laughing hysterically. The escorts themselves scarcely noticed the said pretty girls, for they were gazing down on the field—the field about which were scattered eleven players in blue, and eleven in dull red, all motionless now, amazed or joyful, according to their color, over the feat of Andy Blair.

On the Harvard stands there was glumness. The red banners slumped in nerveless hands. It had come as a shock. They had been so sure that Yale could not score—what matter if the Crimson could not herself—if she could keep the mighty Bulldog from biting a hole in her goal line?

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But it was not to be. Yale had won. There was no time to play more. Yale had won—somewhat by a fluke, it is true, but she had won nevertheless. Flukes count in football—fumbles sometimes make the game—for the other fellow.

“Oh, you Andy Blair!”

“It’s a touchdown!”

“Yale wins!”

“Yale! Yale! Yale!”

Some one started the “Boola” song, and it was roared out mightily. Then came the locomotive cheer.

Slowly Andy got up from behind the Harvard goal line. The other player who had tackled him, but too late, himself arose. His face was white and drawn, not from any physical pain, though the fall of himself and Andy had not been gentle. It was from the sting of defeat.

“Well—well,” he faltered, gulping hard. “You got by me, old man!”

“I—I had to,” gasped Andy, for neither had his breath yet.

The other players came crowding up.

“It’ll be the dickens of a job to kick a goal from there with that wind,” spoke the Yale captain. “But we’ll try it.”

The whistle ending the game had blown, but time was allowed for a try at kicking the ball over the crossbar. A hush fell over the assemblage while the ball was taken out and the player stretched out to hold it for the kicker. The referee stood with upraised hand, to indicate when the ball started to rise—the signal that the Harvard players might rush from behind their goal in an attempt, seldom successful, to block the kick.

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The hand fell. There was a dull boom. The ball rose and sailed toward the posts as the Harvard team rushed out. And then fate again favored Yale, for a little puff of wind carried the spheroid just inside the posts and over the bar. The goal had been kicked, adding to Yale’s points. She had

won.

Once more the cheers broke forth, and Andy's team-mates surrounded him. They slapped him on the back; they called him all sorts of harsh-sounding but endearing names; they jostled him to and fro.

"Come on, now!" cried the Yale captain. "A cheer for Harvard! No better players in the world! Altogether, boys!"

It was a ringing tribute.

And then the vanquished, tasting the bitterness of defeat, sent forth their acclaim of the lads who had bested them.

Andy found himself in the midst of a mad throng, of which his own mates formed but a small part, for the field was now overflowing with the spectators who had rushed down from the stands. 180

Some one pushed a way through and grabbed Andy by the hand.

"You did it, old man! You did it!" a frantic voice exclaimed. "I give you credit for it, Andy!"

Andy found himself confronting Chet.

"I told you we'd win," answered Andy, with a laugh.

"Yes, but you never said you were going to do it yourself," spoke Chet, ruefully.

"Come on, fellows, up with him!" called the quarterback, and before Andy could stop them they had lifted him to their shoulders, while behind the students had formed themselves into a queue to do the serpentine dance.

Cheer after cheer was given, and then the team passed into the dressing rooms, and into comparative quiet. Comparative quiet only, for the players were babbling among themselves, living the game over again.

"And to think that a substitute did it, after we've thought ourselves the whole show all season," groaned one of the regulars.

"Oh, well, it was just an accident," said Andy, modestly.

"A mighty lucky accident for Yale, my friend!" exclaimed Holwell. "May there be more of such accidents!" 181

Back in the gymnasium, later, after a refreshing shower, Andy managed to get away from the admiring crowd, and finding Chet took him to his room. Dunk was there before them.

"This is a great and noble occasion!" he cried, as Andy came in. "I'm proud of you, my boy! Proud! Put her there!"

Andy sent his hand into that of his roommate with a resounding whack.

"We've got to celebrate!" cried Dunk. "The freshman football season is over. You break training. You've got to celebrate!"

"I don't mind—in a mild sort of way," laughed Andy.

"Oh, strictly proper—strictly proper!" agreed Dunk.

"I think I'd better be getting back," remarked Chet.

"No, stay and see the fun," insisted Dunk, and Chet agreed to do so.

There came a rush of feet along the corridor, and some one whistled "See the conquering hero comes!"

"There are some of the fellows now!" cried Dunk. "Oh! this is great. We must make this a noteworthy occasion. We must celebrate properly!" he was getting quite excited, and Andy began to worry somewhat, for he did not want his roommate to celebrate in the wrong way, and there was some danger lest he might. 182

"Where is he?"

"Lead me to him!"

"Oh, you Andy Blair!"

Bob, Ted and Thad came bursting into the room, which would not hold many more.

"Shake!" was the general command, and Andy's arm ached from the pump-handle process.

"What are you going to do?" asked Ted.

"We're going to eat!" cried Dunk. "This is on me—a little supper by ourselves at Burke's."

"Count us in on that!" cried some one out in the corridor, and Mortimer Gaffington and some of his cronies shoved their way into the room. "We want to have a share in the blow-out! Congratulations, old man!" and he pumped Andy's arm.

"Oh, what a night we'll have!" cried Clarence Boyle.

"The wildest and stormiest ever!" added Len Scott. "Yale's night!"

"Got to go easy, though!" cautioned Dunk.

"Oh, fudge on you and being easy!" laughed Mortimer. "This thing has to be done good and proper. Come on, let's go out. We'll smear this old town with a mixture of red and blue."

"That makes purple," laughed Dunk.

"No matter!" cried Mortimer. "Come on."

Andy could not very well refuse and a little later he found himself with some of the other football players, at a table in Burke's place.

The air was blue with smoke—veritable Yale air. There was laughter, talk, and the clatter of glasses on every side. The evening wore on, with the singing of songs, the telling of stories and the playing of the game all over again. It was such a night as occurs but seldom.

Andy noticed that Dunk was slipping back into his old habits. And, as the celebration went on this became more and more noticeable.

Finally, after a rollicking song, Dunk arose from his place near Andy and cried:

"Fellows—your eyes on me. I'm going to propose a toast to the best one among us."

"Name your man!"

Dunk was thus challenged.

"I'll name him in a minute," he went on, raising his glass on high. "He's the best friend I've got. I give you—Andy Blair!"

"Andy Blair!" was roared out.

"Stand up, Andy!"

He arose, a glass of ginger ale in his hand.

"We're goin' drink your health!" said Dunk.

"Thank you!" said Andy.

"Then fill up your glass!"

"It is filled, Dunk. Can't you see?"

"That's no stuff to drink a health in. Here, waiter, some real ale for Mr. Blair."

"No—no," said Andy quickly. "I don't drink anything stronger than soft stuff—you know it, Dunk."

For a moment there was a silence in the room. Andy felt himself growing pale.

"You—you won't drink with me?" asked Dunk slowly.

"I'd like to—but I can't—I don't touch it."

"He's a quitter!" cried Mortimer, angrily, from the other side of the table. "A rank quitter! He won't drink his own toast!"

"Won't you drink with me, Andy?" asked Dunk, in sorrowful tones.

"In soft stuff—yes."

"No, in the real stuff!"

"I can't!"

"Then, by Cæsar, you are a quitter, and here's where you and I part company!"

Dunk crashed his glass down on the table in front of Andy, and staggered away from his side.

CHAPTER XXIII

RECONCILIATION

Seldom had anything like that occurred before, and, for the moment every student in the room remained motionless, breathing hard and wondering what would come next. Andy, who had been pale, now was flushed. It was an insult; but how could he resent it?

There seemed no way. If Dunk wanted to break off their friendship that was his affair, but he might have done it more quietly. Probably all in the room, save perhaps Mortimer Gaffington, realized this. As for that youth, he smiled insultingly at Andy and murmured to Dunk, who was now passing to another table:

"That's the way to act. Be a sport!"

It was clear that if Andy dropped Dunk, Mortimer stood ready to take him up.

"Don't mind him, old chap. Dunk isn't just himself to-night," murmured Thad in Andy's ear. "He'll see differently in the morning."

"He'll have to see a good bit differently to see me," spoke Andy stiffly. "I can't pass that up."

"Try," urged Thad. "You don't know what it may mean to Dunk."

Andy did not reply. Some one started a song and under cover of it Andy slipped out, Chet following.

"Too bad, old man," consoled Andy's Harvard friend. "Is he often as bad as that?"

"Not of late. It's getting in with that Gaffington crowd that starts him off. I guess he and I are done now."

"I suppose so. But it's too bad."

"Yes."

Andy walked on in silence for a time, and then said:

"Come on up to the room and have a chat. I won't see you for some time now. Not till Christmas vacation."

"That's right. But I've got to get back to Cambridge. I'll go down and get a train, I guess. Come on to the station with me. The walk will do you good."

The two chums strolled through the lighted streets, which were much more lively than usual on account of the celebration of the football victory. But Andy and Chet paid little heed to the bustle and confusion about them.

When Andy got back to his room, after bidding Chet good-bye, Dunk had not come in. Andy lay awake some time waiting for him, wondering what he would say when he did come in. But finally he dozed off, and awaking in the morning, from fitful slumbers, he saw the other bed empty. Dunk had not come home.

"Well, if he's going to quit me I guess it can't be helped," remarked Andy. "And I guess I'd better give up this room, and let him get some one else in. It wouldn't be pleasant for me to stay here if he pulled out. I'd remember too much. Yes, I'll look for another room."

He went to chapel, feeling very little in the mood for it, but somehow the peaceful calm of the Sunday service eased his troubled mind. He looked about for Dunk, but did not see him. Perhaps it was just as well.

After chapel Andy went back to his room, and debated with himself what was best to be done. He was in the midst of this self-communion when there was a knock on the door, and to Andy's call of "Shove in!" there followed the shock of curly hair that belonged to nobody but Ikey Stein.

"Oh, dear!" groaned Andy in spirit. "That bargainer, at this, of all times."

"Hello, Andy," greeted Ikey. "Are you busy?"

"Too busy to buy neckties."

"Forget it! Do you think I'd come to you now on such a business!"

There was a new side to the character of Ikey—a side Andy had never before seen. There was a quiet air of authority about him, a gentle air that contrasted strangely with his usual carefree and easy manners that he assumed when he wanted to sell his goods.

"Sit down," invited Andy, shoving a pile of books and papers off a chair.

"Thanks. Nice day, isn't it?"

"Yes," answered Andy slowly, wondering what was the object of the call.

"Nice day for a walk."

"Yes."

"Ever go for a walk?"

"Sure. Lots of times."

"Going to-day?"

"I don't know. Are you?"

"Oh, I didn't mean with me. I've got a date, anyhow. Say, look here, Blair, if you don't mind me getting personal. If you were to take a walk out toward East Rock Park you might meet a friend of yours."

"A friend?"

"Yes."

"You mean——"

"Now look here!" exclaimed Ikey, and his manner was serious. "You may order me out of your room, and all that, but I'm going to speak what's in my mind. I want you to make up with Dunk!"

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"Make up with him—after what he did to me!"

"That's all right—I know. But I'm sure he'll meet you more than half-way."

"Well, he'll have to."

"Now, don't take that view of it," urged the kindly Jew. "Say, let me tell you something, will you?"

"Fire away," and Andy walked over and stood looking out of the window across the campus.

"It's only a little story," went on Ikey, "and not much of a one at that. When I was in prep school I had a friend—a very dear friend.

"He was what you call a sport, too, in a way, and how he ever took up with me I never could understand. I hadn't any money—I had to work like the dickens to get along. All my people are dead, and I was then, as I am now, practically alone in the world. But this fellow, who came of a good family, took me up, and we formed a real friendship.

"I think I did him good in a way, and I know he did me, for I used to have bitter feelings against the rich and he did a lot to show me that I was wrong. This friend went in a fast set and one day I spoke to him about it. I said he was throwing away his talents.

"Well, he was touchy—he'd been out late the night before—and he resented what I said. We had a quarrel—our first one—and he went out saying he never wanted to see me again. I had a chance to make up with him later, but I was too proud. So was he, I guess. Anyhow, when I put my pride in my pocket and went after him, a little later, it was too late."

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"Too late—how?" asked Andy, for Ikey had come to a stop and there was a break in his voice.

"He went out in an auto with his fast crowd; there was an upset, and my friend was killed."

Andy turned sharply. There were tears in the other's eyes, and his face was twitching.

"I—I always felt," said Ikey, softly, "that perhaps if I hadn't been so proud and hard that—maybe—maybe he'd be alive to-day."

There was silence in the room, broken only by the monotonous ticking of the clock.

"Thanks," said Andy, softly, after a pause. "I—I guess I understand what you mean, Stein." He held out his hand, which was warmly clasped.

"Then you will go for a walk—maybe?" asked Ikey, eagerly.

"I—I think I will," spoke Andy, softly. "I don't understand it; but I'll go."

"You—you'll find him there," went on Ikey. "I sent him out to—meet you!"

And before Andy could say anything more the peacemaker had left the apartment.

For several minutes Andy stood still. He looked about the room—a room suggestive in many ways of the presence and character of Dunk. There was even on the mantel a fragment of the Japanese vase he had broken that time.

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"I'll go to him," spoke Andy, softly.

He went out on the campus, not heeding many calls from friends to join them. When they noted his manner they, wisely, did not press the matter. Perhaps they guessed. Andy walked out Whitney Avenue to East Rock Road and turned into the park.

"I wonder where I'll find him?" he mused, as he gazed around.

"Queer that Ikey should put up a game like this."

Walking on a little way, Andy saw a solitary figure under a tree. He knew who it was. The other saw him coming, but did not stir.

Presently they were within speaking distance. Andy paused a moment and then, holding out his hand, said softly:

"Dunk!"

The figure looked up, and a little smile crept over the moody face.

"Andy!" cried Dunk, stepping forward.

The next moment their hands had met in a clasp such as they never had felt before. They looked into each other's eyes, and there was much meaning in the glance.

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"Andy—Andy—can you—forgive me?"

"Of course, Dunk; I understand."

"All right, old man. That is the last time. Never again! Never again!"

And Dunk meant it.

CHAPTER XXIV

LINK'S VISIT

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Busy days followed. After the football game, the quarrel of Dunk and Andy, and their reconciliation, brought about so effectively by Ikey Stein, little of moment happened except the varsity football games, which Andy followed with devoted interest, hoping that by the next term he would be chosen for a place on the team.

The students settled down to hard work, with the closing of the outdoor sporting season, and there were days of hard study. Yale is no place for weak students, and Andy soon found that he must "toe the mark" in more senses than one. He had to give his days and some of his nights to "grinding."

For some time Andy did not understand how Ikey had brought about the meeting of Dunk and himself—at least, he did not know how the peacemaker had induced Dunk to go to the park. But one day the latter explained.

Following the dramatic scene in Burke's, Dunk had gone out. Not wishing to face Andy he had stayed at a hotel all night. In the morning, while he was remorseful and nearly ill, Ikey, the faithful, had sought him out, having in some way heard of the quarrel. Ikey was not given to frequenting Burke's, but he had his own way of ferreting out news.

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To Dunk he had gone, then, and had told much the same story he had related to Andy, giving it a different twist. And he had so worked on Dunk's feelings, picturing how terribly Andy must feel, that finally Dunk had consented to go to the park.

"Well, I'm glad I did, old man!" said Dunk, clapping Andy on the back.

"And so am I. I'm only wondering whether Ikey faked that qlsob story' or not."

"What of it? It certainly did the business, all right."

"It sure did."

Dunk and Andy were better friends than ever, and, to the relief of Andy, Mortimer and his crowd ceased coming to the room in Wright Hall, and taking Dunk off with them.

Occasionally Andy's chum would go off with a rather "sporty" crowd, and sometimes Andy went also. But Dunk held himself well in hand, for which Andy was very glad.

"It's all your doing, old man!" said Dunk, gratefully.

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"Nonsense!" exclaimed Andy, but his heart glowed nevertheless.

The quiet and rather calm atmosphere of college life was rudely broken when one night, following a mild celebration over the victory of the basketball team, several robberies were discovered.

A number of rooms in the college buildings had been entered, and various articles of jewelry and some money had been taken. Freshmen were mainly the ones who sustained the losses, though no class was exempt.

"This is getting serious!" exclaimed Dunk, as he and Andy talked the matter over. "We'd better get a new lock put on our door."

"I'm willing, though I haven't got much that would tempt anyone."

"I haven't either, only this," and he pulled out a handsome gold watch. "I'm so blamed careless about it that most of the time I forget to carry it."

"Well, let's put on a lock, then. The one we have doesn't catch half the time."

"No, it's been busted too many times by the raiding sophs. I'll buy another first time I'm down town."

But the matter slipped Dunk's mind, and Andy did not again think of it.

The thefts created no little excitement, and it was said that a private detective agency had been engaged by the faculty. Of the truth of this no one could vouch.

Another warning was given by the Dean, and students were urged to see to the fastening of their doors, not only for their own protection, but in order not to put temptation in the way of servants.

Andy came in from a late lecture one afternoon, to find open the door of his room he had left locked, as he thought. At first he supposed Dunk was within, but entering the apartment he saw Link Bardon there. The helper arose as Andy came in and said, rather embarrassedly:

"Mr. Blair, I'm in trouble."

"Trouble!" exclaimed Andy. "What kind?"

"Well, I need money. You see I've got a sick sister and the other day she wrote to me, saying she'd have to have some money to buy an expensive medicine. I sent it to her. She said her husband would get his pay this week, and she'd send it back to me. Now she writes that he is sick, and can't earn anything, so she can't pay me back.

"I was counting on that money, for my wages aren't due for several days, and I have to pay my board. I don't like to ask my landlady to wait, and I thought maybe——"

"Of course I'll let you have some!" exclaimed Andy quickly. "How much do you need?"

"Oh, about seven dollars."

"Better have ten. You can pay me back when you like," said Andy as he extended the bill.

"I don't know how to thank you!" exclaimed Link, gratefully.

"Then don't try," advised Andy, with a smile.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MISSING WATCH

Andy was "boning" on his German, with which he had had considerable difficulty. The dusk was settling down that early December day, and he was thinking of lighting a lamp to continue work on his books, when he heard a familiar step, and a whistle down the corridor. Then a voice broke into a college refrain.

"Dunk!" murmured Andy. "It sounds good to hear him, and to know that there's not much more danger of our getting on the outs. He sure was worth saving—that is, what little I did toward it. He did the most himself, I fancy."

"Hello, old top, hard at it?" greeted Dunk, as he entered.

"Have to be," replied Andy. "You've no idea how tough this German is."

"Oh, haven't I? Didn't I flunk in it the other day? And on something I ought to have known as well as I do my first reader lesson? It's no cinch—this being at Yale. Wonder if I've got time to slip down town before we feed our faces?" and he began fumbling for his watch.

"What's on?" asked Andy, rather idly.

Then, as he saw Dunk giving his shoes a hasty rub, and delving among a confused mass of ties in a drawer, Andy added:

"The witness need not answer. It's a skirt."

"A which?" asked Dunk in pretended ignorance.

"A lady. I didn't know you knew any here, Dunk!"

"Huh! Think you've got the preserves all to yourself, eh? Well, I'll show you that you haven't."

"Who is she?" asked Andy.

"Friend of a friend of mine. I think I'll take a chance and go down just for a little while. Save some grub for me. I won't be long. May make a date for to-night. Want to fill in?"

"If there's room."

"Sure, we'll make room, and I'll get you a girl. Some of us are going to the Hyperion. Nice little play there," and Dunk went on "dolling up," until he was at least partly satisfied with himself.

Dunk was about to leave when a messenger came to announce that he was wanted on the 'phone in the public booth in Dwight Hall, where the Y. M. C. A. of Yale has headquarters.

"I guess that's her now," said Dunk, as he hurried out. "I told her to call up," and he rushed down the corridor.

Andy heard him call back:

"I say, old man, look out for my watch, will you? I must have left it somewhere around there."

"The old fusser," murmured Andy, as he rose from the easy chair. "When Dunk goes in for anything he forgets everything else. He'd leave his head if it wasn't fastened on, or if I didn't remind him of it," and Andy felt quite a righteous glow as he began to look about for the valuable timepiece belonging to his roommate.

"He must have it on him," went on Andy, as a hasty search about the room did not reveal it. "Probably he's stuck it in his trousers' pocket with his keys and loose change. He oughtn't to have a good watch the way he uses it. Well, it isn't here—that's sure."

Andy, a little later, turned on the electric light, but no glow followed the snapping of the button.

"Current off again—or else it's burned out," he murmured. A look in the hall outside showed him other lamps gleaming and he knew that his own light must be at fault.

"Guess I'll go get another bulb," he remarked.

When he returned with the new one he was aware that some one was in the darkened room.

"That you, Dunk?" he asked.

"No," answered a voice he recognized as that of Ikey Stein. "I saw you going down the hall and guessed what you were after, so I took the liberty of coming in and waiting. I've got some real bargains."

"Nothing doing, Ikey," laughed Andy, as he screwed the lamp in the socket and lighted up the room. "Got all the ties I need for my whole course in Yale."

"It isn't ties," said Ikey, and his voice was so serious that Andy wondered at it. "It's handkerchiefs," went on the student-salesman. "Andy, I'm in bad. I bought a big stock of these things, and I've got to sell 'em to get my money out of 'em. I thought I would have plenty of time, but I owe a bill that's due now, and the man wants his money. So I've got to sell these handkerchiefs quicker than I expected. I need the cash, so I'll let 'em go for just what I paid for 'em. I don't care if I don't make a cent."

"Let's see 'em," suggested Andy. The talk sounded familiar. It was "bargain" patter, but an inspection of the handkerchiefs showed Andy that they were worth what was asked for them. And, as it happened, he was in need of some. He bought two dozen, and suggested to Ikey several other students in Wright Hall on whom he might call.

"Thanks," said the salesman, as he departed after a lengthy visit in Andy's room. "I won't forget what you've done for me, Blair. I'm having a hard time, and some people try to make it all the harder. They think, because I'm a Jew, that I have no feelings—that I like to be laughed at, and made to think that all I care about is money. Wait! Some day I'll show 'em!" and his black eyes flashed.

Andy felt really sorry for him. Certainly Ikey did not work his way through college on any easy path.

"I'm only too glad to do this for you," said the purchaser. He could not forget what a service Ikey had rendered to him and Dunk, bringing them together when they were on the verge of taking paths that might never converge.

"Well, I'll see if I can't find some other easy mark like you," laughed Ikey as he went down the hall.

Andy was about to go to the "eating joint" alone when Dunk came in whistling gaily.

"Ah, ha! Methinks thou hast had a pleasant meeting!" Andy "spouted."

"Right—Oh!" exclaimed his roommate. "It's all right for to-night, too. I've got a peach for you."

"Light or dark?" asked Andy, critically.

"Dark! Say, but you're getting mighty particular, though, for a young fellow."

"The same to you. Where do we meet 'em, and where do we go?"

"I've got it all fixed. Hyperion. Come on, let's get through grub, I want to dress."

He began searching hurriedly through his pockets, a puzzled look coming over his face.

"Where in the world——" he began. "Oh, I know, I left it here."

"What?"

"My watch. I called to you about it when I went out to the telephone, and——"

"It isn't here. I looked."

"What!"

"Fact! Unless you stuck it in something."

"No, I left it right on my dresser, on a pile of clean handkerchiefs—hello, where'd these come from?" and he looked at the ones Andy had bought of Ikey.

"Oh, another bargain from our mutual friend," and Andy mentioned the price.

"That is a bargain, all right. I must get some. But look here, where's my watch?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Did you leave it here?"

"I certainly did. I remember now, I put it on the pile of handkerchiefs just before I went to last lecture. Then I came in here, to go out to keep my date, and I didn't have it. I was going to slip it in my pocket when I was called to the 'phone. Look here, here's the impression of it in the handkerchiefs," and Dunk pointed to a round depression in the pile of soft linen squares. It was just the shape of a watch.

"It was there," said Dunk slowly, looking at Andy.

"And now it's gone," finished his roommate. Then he remembered several things, and his start of surprise made Dunk look at his chum in a strange way.

"What's the matter?" asked Dunk.

"I'll tell you in a minute," said Andy. "I want to think a bit."

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CHAPTER XXVI

THE GIRLS

"Well?" asked Dunk, after a pause, during which Andy had sat staring at the fireplace. A blaze had been kindled there, but it had died down, and now there was only a mere flicker.

"Are you sure you left your watch on that pile of handkerchiefs?" asked Andy, slowly.

"Dead sure. I remember it because I thought at the time that I was a chump to treat that ticker the way I did, and I made up my mind I'd get a good chain for it and have my watch pocket lined with chamois leather. That's what made me think of it—the softness of the handkerchiefs. Why, Andy, you can see the imprint of it plainly enough."

"Yes, I guess you're right."

"And it's gone."

"Right again."

"Were you in the room all the time I was out?"

"Most all the while. I went to get a new electric lamp for the one that had burned out."

"Was anyone here besides you?"

Andy hesitated. Then he answered:

"Yes, two persons."

"Who?"

"Ikey Stein——"

"That——"

Andy held up a warning hand.

"Don't call any names," he advised. "Ikey did you and me a good service. We mustn't forget that."

"All right, I won't. Who else was in here?"

"Link Bardon."

"Who's he?"

"That farmer lad I was telling you about—the one we fellows saved from a beating."

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"Oh, yes. I remember."

"He's working here now. He came in to borrow some money. I found him here when I came back—our door was open."

"By Jove! That lock! I meant to get it fixed. Well, I can see what happened. The quadrangle mystery deepens, and I'm elected. The beggar got my watch!" Dunk started out.

"Where are you going?" asked Andy.

"To telephone for a locksmith. I'm going to have our door fixed. Don't laugh—the old saying—qllock the stable after the horse is stolen.' I know it."

"Wait a minute," suggested Andy. "While you're at it hadn't you better give notice of the robbery?"

"I suppose so. But what good will it do? None of the fellows have gotten back anything that's been taken. But I sure am sorry to lose that watch."

"So am I," spoke Andy. "Look here, Dunk, there are two persons who might have taken it—no, three."

"How three?"

"Counting me."

"Oh, piffle. But I suppose if I made a row it would look bad for Ikey and your friend Link."

"It sure would. I think maybe you'd better not make a row."

"You mean sit down and let 'em walk off with my watch without saying a word?"

"Oh, no. Report the loss, of course. But don't mention any names."

"Well, I wouldn't like to mention Ikey—for the honor of Yale, and all that, you know."

"I agree with you. And, for certain reasons, I wouldn't like you to mention Link. I don't know about him, but I believe he's as honest as can be. Of course he was in need of money, and if your watch lay in plain sight there'd be a big temptation. But I'd hate to think it."

"So would I, after what you've told me about him. I won't think it, until, at least, we get more information. It was my fault for leaving it around that way. It's too bad! Dad will sure be sorry to hear it's gone. I'm going to keep mum about it—maybe it will turn up."

"I hope so," returned Andy. "I hardly believe Link would take it, yet you never can tell."

"Anyhow, we'll get a new lock put on, and I'll report my watch," said Dunk. "Then we'll forget all about it and have some fun. Come on, I'm hungry. It isn't so much the money value of the thing, as the associations. Hang it all—what a queer world this is. Oh, but you should see the girls, Andy!"

"I'm counting on it!"

When they came back, after a hasty session at the "eating joint," there was a note for each of them tucked under the door, which they had managed to lock pending the attaching of the new mechanism.

"From Gaffington," announced Dunk, ripping his open. "He's giving a blow-out to-night. Wants me to come."

"Same here," announced Andy, reading his, and then glancing anxiously at his roommate.

"I'm not going," said Dunk, wadding up the missive and tossing it into the waste-paper basket.

"Neither am I," said Andy, doing the same.

They began to "doll up," which, being interpreted, means to attire oneself in one's best raiment, including the newest tie, the stiffest collar and the most uncomfortable shirt, to say nothing of patent leather shoes a size too small.

"Whew!" panted Andy, as he adjusted his scarf for the fourth or fifth time, "these bargains of Ikey's aren't what they're cracked up to be."

"I should say not. I don't believe they're real silk."

"Maybe not. They say the Japs can make something that looks like it, but which isn't any more silk than a shoestring."

"I believe you. Maybe Ikey has been dabbling in some more of Hashmi's stuff."

"I wouldn't wonder. Say, it's a queer way for a fellow to get through college, isn't it?"

"It sure is. Yet he's a decent sort of chap. Only for that affair of the vases."

"Oh, he made restitution in that case."

They went on dressing, with hurried glances at the clock now and then to make sure they would

not be late. From out in the raised court came a hail:

"Oh, you, Dunk!"

"Stick out your noddle, Blair!"

"Come on down!"

"That's Thad and his crowd," announced Andy.

"Let 'em holler," advised Dunk. "I'm not going with them."

"Oh, you Dunk!"

"Go on away!" called Dunk, shouting out of the window.

"Oh, for the love of mush!"

"Look at him!"

"Girls, all right!"

"Come on up and rough-house 'em!"

These cries greeted the appearance out of the window of the upper part of Dunk's body, attired in a gaudy waistcoat.

"Is that door locked, Andy?" gasped Dunk, hurriedly pulling in his head.

"Yes."

"Slip the bolt then. They'll make no end of a row if they get in!"

Andy slipped it, and only in time, for there came a rush of bodies against the portal, and insistent demands from Thad and his crowd to be admitted. Failing in that they besought Andy and Dunk to come out.

"Nothing doing! We've got dates!" announced Andy, and this was accepted as final.

They were just about to leave, quiet having been restored, when there came a knock.

"Who is it?" asked Dunk, suspiciously.

"Gaffington," was the unexpected answer. "Are you fellows coming to my blow-out."

Dunk looked at Andy and paused. Following the affair in Burke's, where Gaffington had incited Dunk against Andy, the rich youth from Andy's town had had little to say to him. He seemed to take it for granted that his condition that night was enough of an apology without any other, and treated Andy exactly as though nothing had occurred.

"Well?" asked Gaffington, impatiently.

"Sorry, old man," said Dunk, "but we both have previous engagements."

"Oh, indeed!" sneered Mortimer, and they could hear him muttering to himself as he walked away.

Then the two chums sallied forth. On the way Dunk reported the loss of his watch, to the discomfiture of the Dean, who seemed much disturbed by the successive robberies.

"Something must be done!" he exclaimed, pacing up and down the room.

Dunk also left word at the college maintenance office about the door that would not lock, and got the promise that it would be seen to.

"And now for the girls!" exclaimed Andy. "Do I know them?"

"No, but you soon will."

Andy was much pleased with the two young ladies to whom Dunk introduced him later. It appeared that one was a distant relative of Dunk's mother, and the two were visiting friends in New Haven. Dunk's "cousin," as he called her, had sent him a card, asking him to call, and he had made arrangements to bring Andy and spend the evening at the theatre.

Thither they went, happy and laughing, and to the no small envy of a number of college lads, the said lads making unmistakable signals to Dunk and Andy, between the acts, that they wanted to be introduced later.

But Andy and Dunk ignored their chums.

"Well, how did you like 'em?" demanded Dunk.

"Do you mean both—or one?" asked Andy.

"Huh, you ought to know what I mean?"

"Or—*who*, I suppose," and Andy smiled.

He and his chum had come back to their room after taking home the girls with whom they had spent the evening at the theatre. There had followed a little supper, and the affair ended most enjoyably. That is, it seemed to, but there was an undertone of irritation in Dunk's voice and he regarded Andy with rather a strange look as they sat in the room preparatory to going to bed.

"What did you and she find to talk about so much?" asked Dunk, suspiciously. "I brought Kittie Martin around for you."

"So I imagined."

"Yet nearly all the time you kept talking to Alice Jordan. Didn't you like Miss Martin?"

"Sure. She's a fine girl. But Miss Jordan and I found we knew the same people back home, where I come from, and naturally she wanted to hear about them." 214

"Huh! Well, the next time I get you a girl I'll make sure the one I bring along doesn't come from the same part of the country you do."

"Why?" asked Andy, innocently enough.

"Why? Good land, man! Do you think I want the girl I pick out monopolized by you?"

"I didn't monopolize her."

"It was the next thing to it."

"Look here, Dunk, you're not mad, are you?"

"No, you old pickle; but I'm the next thing to it."

"Why, I couldn't help it, Dunk. She talked to me."

"Bah! The same old story that Adam rung the changes on when Eve handed him the apple. Oh, forget it! I suppose I oughtn't to have mentioned it, but when I was all primed for a nice cozy talk to have you butting in every now and then with something about the girls and boys back in Oshkosh——"

"It was Dunmore," interrupted Andy.

"Well, Dunmore then. It's the same thing. I'll do—more to you if you do it again."

"I tell you she kept asking me questions, and what could I do but answer," replied Andy. 215

"You might have changed the subject. Kittie didn't like it for a cent."

"She didn't?"

"No. I saw her looking at you and Alice in a queer way several times."

"She did?"

"She did. So did Katy!" mocked Dunk, and his voice was rather snappish.

"Well, I didn't intend anything," said Andy. "Gee, but when I try to do the polite thing I get in Dutch, as the saying is. I guess I wasn't cut out for a lady's man."

"Oh, you're all right," Dunk assured his chum, "only you want to hunt on your own grounds. Keep off my preserves."

"All right, I will after this. Just give me the high sign when you see me transgressing again."

"There isn't likely to be any 'again,' Andy. They're going home to-morrow."

"I've got her address, anyhow," laughed Andy.

"Whose?" asked Dunk, suspiciously.

"Kittie Martin's. She's the one you picked out for me; isn't she?"

"Yes, and I wish you'd stick to her!" and with this Dunk tumbled into bed and did not talk further. Andy put out the light with a thoughtful air, and did not try to carry on the conversation. It was as near to a quarrel as the roommates had come since the affair of Burke's. 216

But matters were smoothed over, at least for a time, when, next day, came notes from the girls saying they had decided to prolong their visit in New Haven.

"Good!" cried Dunk. "We can take them out some more."

And this time Andy was careful not to pay too much attention to Miss Alice Jordan, though, truth to tell, he liked her better than he did Kittie Martin. And it is betraying no secret to confess that Alice seemed to like Andy very much.

The boys hired a carriage and took the girls for a drive one day, going to the beautiful hill country west of the new Yale Field.

As they were going slowly along they met a taxicab coming in the opposite direction. When it drew near Andy was somewhat surprised to find it contained Miss Mazie Fuller, the actress. She laughed and bowed, waving her hand to Andy.

"Who was that?" asked Dunk, who had been too busy talking to Alice to notice the occupant of the taxi.

"Miss Fuller," answered Andy.

"Oh, your little actress. Yes."

Andy blushed and Miss Martin, who sat beside the youth, rather drew away, while Alice gave him a queer, quick look.

"An actress?" murmured Miss Martin. "She looks young—a mere girl."

"That's all she is," said Andy, eagerly. Too eagerly, in fact. He rather overdid it.

"Tell 'em how you saved her life," suggested Dunk, laughing.

"Forget it," returned Andy, with another blush. "I'm tired of being a hero."

"Oh, I heard about that," said Miss Jordan. "There was something in the papers about it. She's real pretty, isn't she?" and again she looked queerly at Andy.

"Oh, yes," he admitted, taking warning now. "Say, tell me, shall we go over that cross road?"

"To change the subject," observed Miss Martin, with a little laugh, and a sidewise glance at Andy.

He was beginning to find that jealousy was not alone confined to Dunk.

The ride came to an end at last and Andy wondered just how he stood with Dunk and the girls.

"Hang it all!" he mused, "I seem to get in Dutch all along the line."

The girls left New Haven, having been given a little farewell supper by Dunk and Andy. The two boys had hard work to resist the many self-invited guests among their chums.

Several days later there came some letters to Dunk and Andy. One, to the latter, was from Miss Fuller, the actress, telling Andy that she expected to be in New Haven again, and asking Andy to call on her.

"You are going it!" said Dunk, when Andy told of this missive, and also mentioned receiving one from Miss Martin, thanking him for the entertainment he and Dunk had given to her and her chum. "You sure are going it, Andy! Two strings to your bow, all right."

"Never you mind me," retorted Andy. "I'm not on your side of the fence *this* time."

There was the sound of running feet in the corridor, and someone rushed past the room, the door of which was open.

"Did you see anyone pass?" cried Frank Carr, who roomed a few apartments away from Andy and Dunk. "Did someone run past here just now?"

"We didn't see nor hear anyone," answered Dunk. "Why?"

"Because just as I was coming upstairs I saw someone run out of my room. I thought of the quadrangle robberies at once, and took a look in. One of my books, and the silver vase I won in the tennis match, were gone. The thief came down this way!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE BOOK

Andy and Dunk, who had jumped up and come to the door of their room on hearing Frank's explanation, stood looking at him for a second, rather startled by his news. Then Andy, realizing that this might be a chance to discover who had been carrying on the mysterious quadrangle robberies, exclaimed:

"Come on down this way! The hall ends just around the corner and there's no way out. It's a blind alley, and if the fellow went down here we sure have him!"

"Good for you!" cried Dunk. "Wait until we get something to tackle him with in case he fights."

"That's so," said Andy. "Here, I'll take our poker, and you can have the fire tongs, Dunk."

From a brass stand near the fireplace Andy caught up the articles he mentioned.

"Where's something for me?" asked Frank.

"Here, take the shovel," spoke Dunk passing it over. "Say, what sort of a fellow was it you saw run out of your room?"

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"I didn't have much chance to notice, he went so like a flash."

"Was it—er—one of our fellows—I mean a college man—did he look like that?" asked Andy. He was conscious of the fact that he had rather stammered over this. Truth to tell, he feared lest Link might have yielded to temptation. Since the episode of Dunk's watch Andy had been doing some hard thinking.

"Well, the fellow did look like a college chap," admitted Frank, "but of course it couldn't be. No Yale man would be guilty of a thing like that."

"Of course not!" agreed Dunk. "But say, if we're going to make a capture we'd better get busy. Are you sure there's no way out from this corridor, Andy?"

"Sure not. It ends blank. The fellow is surely trapped."

They hurried out into the corridor, and started down it, armed with the fire irons. Though they had talked rather loudly, and were under considerable excitement, no attention had been attracted to them. Most of the rooms on that floor were not occupied just then, and if there were students in the others they did not come out to see what was taking place.

"Say, it would be great if we could capture the thief!" said Dunk.

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"Yes, and end the quadrangle mystery," added Andy.

"I don't care so much about ending the mystery as I do about getting back my tennis cup and the book," spoke Frank.

"What sort of a book was it?" Andy inquired.

"A reference work on inorganic chemistry," answered Frank. "Cost me ten plunks, too. I can't afford to lose it for I need it in my work."

"Some book!" murmured Andy, as the three hastened on.

They tried door after door as they passed, but most of them were locked. One or two opened to disclose students dressing or shaving, and to the rather indignant inquiries as to what was wanted, Dunk would exclaim hastily:

"Oh, we are looking for a fellow—that's all."

"Hazing?" sometimes would be inquired.

"Sort of," Dunk would answer. "No use telling 'em what it is until we've got something to show," he added to his companions. They agreed with him.

They had now reached the turn of corridor where a short passage, making an L, branched off. So far they had seen no trace of the thief.

"There's a big closet, or storeroom, at the end," explained Andy. "The fellow may be hiding in there."

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An examination of the few rooms remaining on this short turn of the passage did not disclose the youth they sought. All of the doors were locked.

"He may be hiding in one of them," suggested Dunk.

"If he is all we'll have to do will be to wait down at the other end, if we don't find him in the store room," spoke Andy. "He'll have to come out some time, and it's too high up for him to jump."

"It's queer we didn't hear him run past our room," remarked Dunk.

"He had on rubber shoes—that's why," explained Frank. "He went out of my room like a shadow. At first I didn't realize what it was, but when I found my stuff had vanished I woke up."

"Rubber shoes, eh?" said Andy. "He's an up-to-date burglar all right."

"Well, let's try the storeroom," suggested Dunk, as they neared it. They were rather nervous, in spite of the fact that their forces outnumbered the enemy three to one. With shovel, tongs and poker held in readiness, they advanced. The door of the big closet was closed, and, just as Andy was about to put his hand on the knob, the portal swung open, and out stepped—Mortimer Gaffington.

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"Why—er—why—you—you—!" stammered Andy.

"Did you—have you—?" This was what Dunk tried to say.

"Is he in there?" Frank wanted to know.

Mortimer looked coolly at the three.

"I say," he drawled, "what's up? Are you looking for a rat?"

"No, the quadrangle thief!" exclaimed Andy. "He went in Frank's room and took his book and silver cup, and lit out. Came down here and we're after him! Have you seen him?"

"No," replied Mortimer, slowly. "I came up here to get Charley Taylor's mushroom bat. He said he stuck it in here when the season was over, and he told me I could have it if I could fish it out. I had the dickens of a time in there, pawing over a lot of old stuff."

"Did you get the bat?" asked Dunk.

"No. I don't believe it's there. If it is I'd have to haul everything out to get at it. I'm going to give it up."

As he spoke he threw open the closet door. An electric light was burning inside, and there was revealed to the eyes of Andy and his chums a confused mass of material. Most of it was of a sporting character, and belonged to the students on that floor, they using the store room for the accumulation that could not be crowded into their own apartments.

224

"A regular junk heap," commented Frank. "But where the mischief did that fellow go who was in my room?"

"It *is* sort of queer," admitted Andy, as he looked down. Without intending to do so he noticed that Mortimer did not wear rubber-soled shoes, but had on a heavy pair that would have made noise enough down the corridor had he hurried along the passage.

"Maybe you dreamed it," suggested Mortimer. "I didn't see anything of anyone coming down here, and I was in that closet some time, rummaging away."

"Must have been pretty warm in there—with the door closed," suggested Dunk.

"It was hot. The door swung shut when I was away back in a corner trying to fish out that bat, and I didn't want to climb back and open it. Well, I guess I'll go clean up. I'm all dust."

Truth to tell, he was rather disheveled, his clothes being spotted in several places with dust and cobwebs, while his face and hands were also soiled.

"Well, I guess he fooled us," commented Andy. "I can't understand it, though. We came down this hall right after him, and there's no stairway going up or down from this end. How could he give us the slip?"

225

"Easily enough," said Mortimer. "He could have slid into some empty room, locked the door on the inside and waited until you fellows rushed past. Then he could come out and go down the stairs behind you without you seeing him."

"That's what he did then, all right," decided Dunk. "We might as well give it up. Report your loss, Frank."

"Yes, I will. Whew! Another quadrangle robbery to add to the list. I wonder when this thing will stop?"

No one could answer him. Mortimer switched off the light in the store room, remarking that he'd have another look for the bat later. Then he accompanied Andy and the others on their way back down the corridor. Gaffington departed to his own dormitory, while Frank went to report to the Dean, and Andy and Dunk turned into their room.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Andy.

"I don't know," responded his roommate. "Mortimer's explanation seems to cover it."

"All the same we'll leave our door open, on the chance that the thief may still be hiding in some empty room, and will try to sneak out," suggested Andy.

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"Sure, that's good enough."

But, though they watched for some time, no one came down the corridor past their room but the regular students.

And so the theft of the book and silver cup passed into history with the other mysteries. Further search was made, and the private detective agency, that had been engaged by the Dean, sent some active men scouting around, but nothing came of it.

The Christmas vacation was at hand and Andy went home to spend it in Dunmore. Chet, Ben and his other school chums were on hand, and as Andy remarked concerning the occasion, "a jolly time was had by all."

Chet and Ben were with Andy most of the time, and when Andy told of the doings at Yale, Chet

responded with an account of the fun at Harvard, while Ben related the doings of the Jersey Tiger.

Andy's second term at Yale began early in the new year, and he arrived in New Haven during a driving snow storm. He went at once to his room, where he found a note from Dunk, who had come in shortly before.

"Come over to the eating joint," the missive read, and Andy, stowing away his bag, headed for the place.

"Over in here!"

"Shove in, plenty of room!"

"Oh, you, Andy Blair!"

"Happy New Year!"

Thus was he greeted and thus he greeted in turn. Then, amid laughter and talk, and the rattle of knives and forks, acquaintanceship and friendship were renewed. Andy was beginning to feel like a seasoned Yale man now.

The studies of the second term were of increasing difficulty, and Andy and Dunk found they had to buckle down to steady work. But they had counted on this.

Still they found time for fun and jollity and spent many a pleasant evening in company with their other friends. Once or twice Mortimer and his cronies tried to get Dunk to spend the night with them, but he refused; or, if he did go, he took Andy with him, and the two always came home early, and with clear heads.

"They're a pair of quitters!" said Len Scott, in disgust, after one occasion of this kind. "What do you want to bother with 'em for, Mort?"

"That's what I say," added Clarence Boyle.

"Oh, well, I may have my reasons," returned Mortimer, loftily. "Dunk would be a good sort if he wasn't tied fast to Andy. I can't get along with him, though."

"Me either," added Len. "He's too goody-goody." Which was somewhat unjust to Andy.

The winter slowly wore on. Now and then there would be another of the mysterious robberies, and on nearly every occasion the article taken was of considerable value—jewelry, sporting trophies or expensive books. There was suspicion of many persons, but not enough to warrant an arrest.

One day Hal Pulter, who roomed in Wright Hall, near Dunk and Andy, reported that an expensive reference book had been taken from his room. The usual experience followed, with no result.

Then, about a week later, as Andy was walking past the small building at High and Elm streets, where the University Press had its quarters, he came up behind Mortimer Gaffington, who seemed to be studying a book.

Andy wondered somewhat at Mortimer's application, particularly as it was snowing at the time. This enabled Andy to come close up behind Gaffington without the latter being aware of it, and, looking over the shoulder of the youth, Andy saw on the fly-leaf of the volume a peculiar ink blot.

At once a flash of recollection came to Andy. Well did he know that ink blot, for he had made it himself.

"Why, that's Pulter's book!" he exclaimed, speaking aloud involuntarily. "Where did you get it?"

Mortimer turned quickly and faced Andy.

"What's that?" he asked, sharply.

"I say that's Pulter's book," Andy went on.

"How do you know?" asked Mortimer.

"Why, by that big ink blot. I made it. Pulter was in our room with the book just before it was stolen, and my fountain pen leaked on it. That sure is Pulter's book. Where did you get it? That's the one he made such a fuss about!"

CHAPTER XXIX

THE ACCUSATION

"Pulter's book, eh?" murmured Mortimer, slowly, as he turned it about, looking on the front and back blank pages.

"It sure is," went on Andy, eagerly. "I'd know that ink blot anywhere. Pulter let out a howl like an Indian when my pen leaked on his book. The blot looks like a Chinese laundryman turned upside down."

"That's right," agreed Mortimer. "Queer, isn't it?"

"Yes," went on Andy, his curiosity growing. "Where did you get it?"

"Found it," spoke the rich lad, quickly. "I went out to the new Yale Field to see how the stadium was coming on, and I saw this under a clump of bushes. I knew it was a valuable book, so I brought it back with me. It hasn't got Pulter's name in it, though."

"No," went on Andy. "His name was on the other front leaf. That was worse blotted with the ink than this one, and he tore it out. But I'm sure that's Pulter's book."

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"Very likely," admitted Mortimer, coolly. "I'll take it to him. I'm glad I found it. Going my way?"

"Yes," and Andy walked beside the lad from his home town, thinking of many things. Mortimer went into Wright Hall, but Pulter was not in.

"I'll leave the book for him," Mortimer said to Andy, "and you can call his attention to it. If it isn't his let me know, and I'll post a notice saying that I've found it."

"All right," agreed our hero. "But I know it's Pulter's."

He was telling Dunk about the incident, when his roommate came in a little later, and they were discussing the queer coincidence, when Pulter came bursting in.

"Oh, I say!" he cried. "I've got my book back! What do you know about that? It was on my table, and—"

He stopped and looked queerly at Andy and Dunk, who were smiling.

"What's the joke?" demanded Pulter. "Did you fellows—"

"Gaffington found it," said Andy. "Sit down and I'll explain," which he did.

"Well, that is a queer go!" exclaimed Pulter. "How in the world did my book get out to Yale Field? It isn't so queer that Gaffington would find it, for I understand he goes out there a lot, on walks. But how did my book get there?"

232

"Probably whoever took it found they couldn't get much by pawning or selling it, and threw it away," suggested Dunk.

"Looks that way," agreed Andy. "But it sure is a queer game all around."

They discussed it from many standpoints. Pulter was very glad to get his book back, for he was not a wealthy lad, and the cost of a new volume meant more to him than it would to others.

"Well, Andy, how do you size it up?" asked Dunk, when Pulter had gone back to his apartment and Andy and his chum sat in their cozy room before a crackling fire.

"How do you mean?" asked Andy, to gain time.

"Why, about Gaffington having that book. Didn't it look sort of fishy to you?"

"It did in a way, yes. But his explanation was very natural. It all *might* have happened that way."

"Oh, yes, of course. But do *you* believe it?"

"I don't know why I shouldn't. Gaffington's folks have no end of money, you know. He wouldn't be guilty of taking a book. If he did want to crib something he'd go in for something big."

233

"Well, some of these quadrangle robberies have been big enough. There's my watch, for instance."

"What! You don't mean you believe Gaffington is the quadrangle thief!" exclaimed Andy, in surprise.

"I don't believe it, exactly, no. If he's rich, as you say, certainly he wouldn't run the risk for the comparatively few dollars he could get out of the thefts. But I will admit that this book business did make me suspicious."

"Oh, forget it," advised Andy, with a laugh. "I don't like Gaffington, and I never did, but I don't believe that of him."

"Oh, well, I dare say I'm wrong. It was only a theory."

"I would like to know who's doing all this business, though," went on Andy.

"It's probably some of the hired help they have around here," suggested Dunk. "They can't investigate the character of all the men and women employed in the kitchens, the dormitories and around the grounds."

"No, that's right. I only hope my friend Link doesn't fall under suspicion."

For a week or so after this, matters went on quietly at Yale. There were no further thefts and the authorities had begun to hope there would be no more. They had about given up the hope of solving the mystery of those already committed.

234

Then came a sensation. Some very valuable books were taken one night from Chittenden Hall—rare volumes worth considerable money. The next morning there was much excitement when the fact became known.

"Now something will be done!" predicted Andy.

"Well, what can they do that hasn't already been done?" asked Dunk. "They may make a search of every fellow's room. I wish they'd come here. Maybe they'd find that my watch, after all, has hidden itself away somewhere instead of being taken."

"They're welcome if they want to look here," said Andy. "But I don't believe they'll do that. They'll probably get a real detective now."

And that was what the Dean did. He disliked very much to call in the public police, but the loss of the rare books was too serious a theft to pass over with the hiring of a private detective.

Just what was done was not disclosed, but it leaked out that a close watch was being kept on all the employees at Yale, and suspicion, it was said, had narrowed down to one or two.

One day Link called on Andy to pay back the money he had borrowed.

"There's no hurry," said Andy. "I don't need it."

235

"Oh, I want to pay it back," said the young farmer. "I have plenty of cash now," and he exhibited quite a roll of bills.

"Been drawing your salary?" asked Andy, with a laugh.

"No, this is a little windfall that came to me," was the answer.

"A windfall? Did someone die and leave you a fortune?"

"No, not exactly. It came to me in a curious way. I got it through the mail, and there wasn't a word of explanation with it. Just the bill folded in a letter. A hundred-dollar bill, it was, but I had it changed."

"Do you mean someone sent you a hundred dollars, and you don't know who it's from?" asked Andy, in surprise.

"That's right!" exclaimed Link, with a laugh. "I wish I did know, for I'd write and thank whoever it was. It surely came in handy."

"Why, it's very strange," spoke Andy, slowly. "Could you tell by the postmark where the letter came from?"

"It was from New York, but I haven't a friend there that I know of."

"Well, I'm glad you've got it. Take care of it, Link."

"I intend to. I can lend you some now, if you need it, Mr. Blair."

"Thank you, I have enough at present."

236

Andy watched his protege walk across the campus, and near the middle observed him stopped by a stranger. Link appeared surprised, and started back. There was a quick movement, and the young farmer was seized by the other.

"That's queer!" exclaimed Andy. "I wonder what's up? Link may be in trouble. Maybe that fellow's trying to rob him."

The quadrangle was almost deserted at the time. Andy hurried down and ran over to where Link was standing. The student caught the gleam of something on the wrist of his friend. It was a steel handcuff!

"What—what's up, Link?" Andy gasped.

"Why, Mr. Blair—I don't know. This man—he says he's a detective, and——"

"So I am a detective, and I don't want any of your funny work!" was the snappish retort. "There's my badge," and it was flashed from under the armhole of the man's vest, being fastened to his suspenders, where most plain-clothes men carry their official emblem.

"A detective!" gasped Andy. "What's the matter? Why do you want Link Bardon?"

"We want him because he's accused of being the quadrangle thief!" was the unexpected answer. "Stand aside now, I'm going to take him to the station house!"

CHAPTER XXX

THE LETTER

Andy could scarcely understand it. Surely, he thought, there must be some mistake. He was glad there was not a crowd of students about to witness the humiliation of Link—a humiliation none the less acute if the charge was groundless.

"Wait a minute—hold on!" exclaimed Andy, sharply, and there was something in his voice that caused the detective to pause.

"Well, what is it?" the officer growled. "I haven't any time to waste."

"Do you really want him on a robbery charge?" asked Andy.

"I do—if his name is Link Bardon," was the cool answer. "I guess he won't attempt to deny it. I've been on his trail for some time."

"That's my name, sure enough—I have no reason to deny it," said Link, who had turned pale. His eyes had traces of tears in them. After all, he was not much older than Andy and he was a gentle sort of youth, unused to the rough ways of the world.

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"I thought I was right," the detective went on. "I've been watching for you. Now the question is—are you coming along quietly, or shall I have any trouble?"

"I won't give you any trouble—certainly not," protested Link. "But this is all a mistake! I haven't taken a thing! You know I wouldn't steal, don't you, Mr. Blair?"

"I certainly believe it, Link, and I'll do all I can to help you. What are you going to do with him?" he asked the detective.

"Lock him up—what do you suppose?"

"But can't he get out on bail?"

"Oh, it could be arranged. I have nothing to do with that. I'm just supposed to get him—and I've got him!"

"But I—I haven't done anything!" insisted Link.

"That's what they all say," sneered the detective. "Come along!"

"Do—do I have to go with him?" asked Link, turning to Andy in appeal.

"I'm afraid so," was the answer. "But I'll go with you and try to get bail. Don't worry, Link. It's all a mistake. You'll soon be free."

"Don't be too sure of that," warned the officer. "I've been searching your room, young man, and I guess you know what I found there."

"You certainly found in my room only the things that belonged to me!" exclaimed Link, indignantly.

239

"Did I? What do you call this?" and the detective took from his pocket a small book. Andy recognized it at once as one of the valuable ones taken from Chittenden Hall.

"You—you found that in my room?" cried Link, aghast.

"I sure did. In your room on Crown street. Now maybe you won't be so high and mighty."

"If you found that in my room, someone else put it there!" declared Link. "I certainly never did."

"Well, I won't say that couldn't happen," spoke the officer coolly, "but if you think I planted it there to frame up some evidence against you, you've got another guess coming. I took your landlady into the room with me, to have a witness, and she saw me pull this book out from the bottom of a closet."

"I never put it there!" protested Link.

"You can tell that to the judge," went on the officer. "How about all the money you've been sporting around to-day, too?"

Link started. Andy, too, saw how dangerous this evidence might be.

"I've had some money—certainly," admitted Link.

"Where'd you get it?"

240

Link hesitated. He realized that the story would sound peculiar.

"It was sent to me," he answered.

"Who sent it?"

"I don't know. It came in the mail without a word of explanation."

The detective laughed.

"I thought you'd have some such yarn as that," he said. "They all do. I guess you'll have to come with me. I'm sorry," he went on in a more gentle tone. "I'm only doing my duty. I've been working on the quadrangle case for some time, and I think I've landed my man. But it isn't as much fun as you might think. I'll only say that I believe I have the goods on you, and I'll warn you that anything you say now may be used against you. So you'd better keep still. Come along."

"Must I go?" asked Link again of Andy.

"I'm afraid so. But I'll have you out on bail as soon as I can. Don't worry, Link."

Andy learned from the detective before what judge Link would be arraigned and then, as the young farmer lad was led away in disgrace, Andy started back to his room.

"I've got to get Dunk to help me in this," he reasoned. "To go on bail you have to own property, or else put up the cash, and I can't do that. Maybe Dunk can suggest a way."

241

Andy was glad it was so dark that no one could see Link being taken away by the officer.

"How did that book get in Link's room?" mused Andy. "That sure will tell against him. But I know he didn't steal it. Some other janitor or helper who could get into Chittenden may have taken it, and then got afraid and dumped it in Link's closet. A lot of college employees live on Crown street. I must get Link a lawyer and tell him that."

Andy found Dunk in the room, and excitedly broke the news to him.

"Whew! You don't say so!" cried Dunk. "Your friend Link arrested! What do you know about that? And the book in his room!"

"Somebody else put it there," suggested Andy.

"Possibly. But that money-in-a-letter story sounds sort of fishy."

"That *is* a weak point," Andy admitted. "But we'll have to consider all that later. The question is: How can we get Link out on bail? Got any money?"

Dunk pulled out his pocketbook and made a hurried survey.

"About thirty plunks," he said.

"I've got twenty-five," said Andy. "Link has nearly a hundred himself."

"That won't be enough," said Dunk. "This is a grand larceny charge and the bail will be five hundred dollars anyhow. Now I'll tell you the best thing to do."

242

"What?"

"Hire a good lawyer. We've got money enough, with what Link has, to pay a good retaining fee. Let the lawyer worry about the bail. Those fellows always have ways of getting it."

"I believe you're right," agreed Andy. "We can put up fifty dollars for a retainer to the lawyer."

"I'll telegraph for more from home to-night," said Dunk. "Andy, we'll see this thing through."

"It's mighty good of you, Dunk."

"Nonsense! Why shouldn't I help out your friend?"

"Do you think he's guilty?"

"I wouldn't want to say. Certainly I hope he isn't; but I'd like to get my watch back."

"Well, let's go get a lawyer," suggested Andy.

A sporty senior, whom Dunk knew, and who had more than once been in little troubles that required the services of a legal man, gave them the address of a good one. They were fortunate in finding him in his office, though it was rather late, and he agreed to take the case, and said he thought bail could be had.

Andy and Dunk made a hasty supper and then, letting their studies go, hurried to the police court, where, occasionally, night sessions were held.

243

Link was brought out before the judge, having first had a conference with the lawyer Dunk and Andy had engaged. The charge was formally made.

"We plead not guilty," answered the lawyer, "and I ask that my client be admitted to bail."

"Hum!" mused the judge. "The specific charge only mentions one book, of the value of two hundred dollars, but I understand there are other charges to follow. I will fix bail at one thousand dollars, the prisoner to stand committed until a bond is signed."

Andy and Dunk gasped at the mention of a thousand dollars, but the lawyer only smiled quietly.

"I have a bondsman here, your Honor," he said.

A man, looking like an Italian, came forward, but he proved to have the necessary property, and signed the bond. Then Link was allowed to go, being held, however, to answer to a higher court for the charge against him.

"Now if you'll come to my office," suggested the lawyer, "we'll plan out this case."

"Oh, I can't thank you two enough!" gasped Link, when he was free of the police station. "It was awful back there in the cell."

244

"Forget it," advised Dunk, with a laugh. "You'll never go back there again."

The consultation with the lawyer took some time, and when it was over Link started for his room. He was cheered by the prospect that the case against him was very slight.

"Unless they get other evidence," specified the lawyer.

"They can't!" cried Link, proudly.

Andy and Dunk went back to their room, to do some necessary studying. On their way they stopped in the Yale branch postoffice. There was a letter from home for Andy, and when he had read it he uttered such an exclamation that Dunk asked:

"Any bad news?"

"Yes, but not for me," replied Andy. "This is from my mother. She writes that Mr. Gaffington—that's Mortimer's father—has failed in business and lost all his money. This occurred some time ago, but the family has been keeping it quiet. The Gaffingtons aren't rich at all, and Mortimer will probably have to leave Yale."

"Too bad," said Dunk, and then he started off, leaving Andy to read the letter again.

CHAPTER XXXI

ON THE DIAMOND

245

Andy Blair stood in the middle of his room, carefully examining a bat he had taken from a closet containing, among other possessions, his sporting things. The bat was a favorite he had used while at Milton, and he was considering having it sand-papered and oiled. Or, rather, he was considering doing the work himself, for he would not trust his choicest stick to the hands of another.

"Yes, she'll look a little better for a bit of attention, I think," said Andy, half aloud. "Though I don't know as I can bat any better with it."

He gave two or three preliminary swings in the air, when the door suddenly opened, a head was thrust in and Andy gave it a glancing blow.

"Wow! What's that for?" the newcomer gasped. "A nice way to receive company, Andy! Where'd you learn that?"

"I beg your pardon, Bob, old man!" exclaimed Andy, as he recognized Hunter, Dunk's friend. "I was just getting out my bat to see how it felt and——"

246

"I can tell you how it felt," interrupted Bob, with emphasis. "It felt hard! Better put up a sign outside your door—Beware of the bat."

"And have the fellows think this is a zoological museum," laughed Andy. "I will not. But, Bob, I'm very sorry you got in the way of my stick. Does it hurt? Want any witch hazel or anything like that?"

"Oh, no, it isn't so worse. Good thing I wear my hair long or I might have a headache. But say—where's Dunk?"

"He was with me a little while ago. We stopped in the postoffice, and I thought he came on here. But he didn't. Have you seen him?"

"No, but I want to. Gaffington and his crowd are going to have another blow-out to-night, and I wanted to make sure Dunk wouldn't fall by the wayside."

"That's so. Glad you told me. I'll do all I can. But say, he and I have had a strenuous time to-day."

"What's up?" asked Bob. "I've been so blamed busy getting primed for a quiz that I haven't had time to eat."

"It's about the robberies—the quadrangle thefts," explained Andy. "They arrested Link Bardon."

"What! Your farmer friend?"

"Yes. Dunk and I bailed him out."

"Good for you! Now I suppose the thefts will stop."

"Not necessarily," returned Andy, quickly. "Link wasn't the thief."

"He wasn't? Then why did they pinch him? Of course I don't know anything about it, and if he's your friend, why, of course, you have a right to stick up for him."

"Oh, it isn't that so much," explained Andy. "I don't know him very well; but I'm sure he isn't guilty of the thefts. There are some queer circumstances about them, but I'm sure they can all be explained."

"Well, it's your funeral—not mine," said Bob, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I wonder where Dunk is. I think I'll go hunt him up."

"All right, bring him back here when you come," urged Andy.

"Yes, and I suppose you'll stand ready to greet us with a club—you cheerful reception committee!" laughed Bob. "Well, I'll see you later."

Andy sat down, placing his bat across his knees.

"So Gaffington is going to give another spread, eh?" he mused. "That's queer—on top of the news mother sends in her letter. What did I do with it?"

He found it after looking through a mass of papers in his pockets, and read it again. Following its receipt at the college branch postoffice Andy had imparted the news to Dunk. Then the latter, meeting a friend, had walked off with him, while Andy came on to his room.

On reaching his apartment, Dunk not having come in, Andy found a notice from the Freshman Athletic Committee, stating that baseball practice would soon start in the indoor cage.

Andy was an enthusiastic player, and had made a good record at Milton. As a freshman he was not eligible for the Yale varsity nine, but he could play on his class team, and he was glad the chance had come to him.

Andy was thinking of many things as he sat there in the room, now and then swinging his bat. But he was careful not to let it go too close to the door, in case other visitors might chance in.

"A whole lot of things have happened since morning," said Andy to himself. "That sure was a strenuous time over poor Link. I wonder what he'll do? Probably the college will fire him from his job. I guess I'll have to see what I can do to get him another. But that won't be easy when it becomes known that he's out on bail on a theft charge."

"Then there's that news about Mortimer. And to think that he's known all along that he might have to leave Yale, yet he's been going on and living as if his father's millions were in a safe deposit box. I wonder—By Jove!" exclaimed Andy, leaping up. "I never thought of that. Why not? If he needs money—"

His train of thought was interrupted by a knock on his door, which had swung shut as Bob Hunter went out.

"Come in!" invited Andy, and he started as Mortimer Gaffington slid in. Andy gave him a quick glance, but either Mortimer was a good actor, or he did not feel his father's loss of money, providing the news Mrs. Blair had sent her son was correct.

"Hello, Andy," greeted Gaffington, as he slumped into an easy chair. "Where's Dunk?"

"I don't know. Bob Hunter was just in looking for him. Make yourself at home—he may be in soon." In spite of his dislike of Gaffington, and his fear lest he influence Dunk for evil, Andy could do no less than play the part of host.

"Thanks, I will stay for a while," answered Mortimer. "Been looking for thieves again?" he asked, noting the bat in Andy's hand. He referred to the time when Andy and his two friends had sought an intruder down the corridor, and had only found Mortimer delving in a storeroom.

"No, not this time," laughed Andy. "But the freshman team is going to get together, so I thought I'd get out my fishing tackle, so to speak."

"I see. I guess the varsity indoor practice will start soon. Say, what's this I hear about someone being arrested for the quadrangle thefts?"

"It's true enough," replied Andy, looking sharply at his visitor. "Link Bardon was arrested, and Dunk and I got him bailed out."

"You did!" cried Mortimer, almost jumping from the chair.

"Why, was there anything strange in that?" asked Andy, in surprise.

"I should think so!" exclaimed Mortimer, sharply. "Here the whole college has been upset by a lot

of robberies, and your own roommate loses a valuable watch. Then, as soon as the thief is arrested, you fellows go on his bail! Strange? Well, I should say so!"

"I didn't say we went on his bond," spoke Andy, quietly. "Dunk and I only got him a lawyer who arranged for it. But I don't believe Link is guilty."

"Well, that's a matter of opinion," said Mortimer, and there was anger in his voice. "Of course, though, if he's your friend you do right to stick up for him."

"Yes," agreed Andy, "he is my friend. And it's at a time like this that he needs friends."

"Oh, well," said Mortimer, with a shrug of his shoulders, "let's forget it. I wonder what's keeping Dunk?"

"Anything I can do?" asked Andy, wishing Mortimer would leave before Dunk came in. He did not want his chum taken to Burke's for a "won't be home until morning" affair if he could help it.

"No, I want to see Dunk on a personal matter," said the caller. "Guess I won't wait any longer, though," and he arose to go out. Just as he reached the door Dunk came in whistling.

"Anything on?" Andy heard Mortimer ask quickly.

"No. Why?"

"Can I see you a moment outside?"

"Sure. I'll be back in a minute, Andy," said Dunk. "I met Bill Hagan just as I left the postoffice and he wanted me to look at a bull pup he wants to sell."

Dunk and Mortimer walked down the hall. Andy was a little anxious as to what might develop, but he need have had no fears. Dunk returned presently, looking rather grave.

"Did he want you to go to his blow-out?" asked Andy, with the privilege of a roommate.

"Yes, but I'm not going. He wanted some money. Said he was dead broke."

"And yet he's going to blow in a lot. Did you give it to him?"

"What else could I do? When a fellow's down and out that's just the time he needs help."

"That's right," agreed Andy, thinking of Link. "But did Mortimer say anything about his father's losses?"

"Not a thing. Just said he was temporarily broke, and asked for a loan. I couldn't refuse."

"No, I suppose not. But you must be strapped after putting up for Link. I know I am. I'm going to telegraph home."

"You needn't. I got a check in the mail to-night and I cashed it. I can lend you some if you want it."

"Well, I may call on you. But say, it's queer about Mortimer, isn't it?"

"Yes, but we don't know all the ins and outs of it yet. Maybe that rumor about his folks losing all they had isn't true."

"Maybe. I'll write home and find out. Say, but I'm tired!"

"So am I! I'm going to stay in to-night."

So it came about that neither Dunk nor Andy went to the little affair Mortimer gave on borrowed money. It was "quite some affair," too, as Bob Hunter reported later, having heard stories about it, and one or two participants were suspended as a result of their performances after the spread.

After the rather exciting time concerning Link's arrest matters at Yale, as regards the happenings with which this chronicle concerns itself, quieted down. Link's case would not come up for trial for some time. Meanwhile he was allowed his liberty on bail. He was, of course, discharged from his position.

"But I've got another job," he said to Andy, a day or so later. "That lawyer is a good sort. He helped me. I'm just going to stick here until I prove that I didn't have a hand in those robberies."

"That's the way to talk!" cried Andy. "You didn't hear where the hundred dollars came from, did you?"

"No, and I can see that my explanation of how I got it isn't going to be believed in court. But it's true, just the same."

"Then the truth will come out—some time," said Andy, firmly. "In the meanwhile, if I can do anything, let me know."

"Thank you."

The months passed. Spring was faintly heralded in milder weather, by the return of the birds, and the presence of little buds on the leafless trees.

Somewhat to the disappointment of Andy there were no more quadrangle robberies. That is, Andy was disappointed to a certain extent. For if the thefts had still kept up after the discharge of Link, it would at least show that someone besides the young farmer was guilty. As it was, it made his case appear all the worse.

"But I'm not going to believe it!" exclaimed Andy. "Link is not guilty!"

"Go to it, old man!" cried Dunk. "I'm with you to the end."

Indoor baseball practice was held in the cage on Elm street, back of the gymnasium, and Andy was picked to catch for the freshman nine. Dunk, to his delight, was first choice for pitcher. Then came intense longings to get out on the real diamond.

The chance came sooner than was expected, for there was an early Spring. The ground was still a little soft and damp, but it could be played on, and soon crowds of students began pouring out to Yale Field to watch the practice and the games between the class nines, or the varsity and the scrubs.

"Come on now, Dunk, sting 'em in!"

"Fool him, boy, fool him!"

"Make him give you a nice one!"

"Watch his glass arm break!"

These cries greeted Dunk, who was pitching for the freshmen against a scrub nine one afternoon. It was a few days before the game with the Princeton freshmen—the first game of the season, and the Yale freshman coaches were anxious to get their nine into good shape.

"Ah! There he goes!" came a yell, as the scrub batter hit the ball Dunk pitched in to Andy. But the ball went straight back into the hands of Dunk, who stopped it, hot liner though it was, and the batter was out—retiring the side.

CHAPTER XXXII

VICTORY

Mortimer Gaffington stayed on at Yale. How he did it Andy and Dunk, who alone seemed to know of his father's failure, could not tell. Andy's mother confirmed her first news about Mr. Gaffington's losses. Yet Mortimer stayed at college.

Afterward it developed that he was in dire straits, and only by much ingenuity did he manage to raise enough to keep up appearances. He borrowed right and left, taking from one to satisfy the demands of another—an endless chain sort of arrangement that was bound to break sooner or later.

But Mortimer had managed to make a number of new friends in the "fast" set and these were not careful to remind him of the loans he solicited. Then, also, these youths had plenty of money. On them Mortimer preyed.

He gave a number of suppers which were the talk of the college, but he was wise enough to keep them within certain bounds so that he was not called to account. But he was walking over thin ice, and none knew it better than himself. But there was a fatal fascination in it.

Several times he came to Dunk to invite him to attend some of the midnight affairs, but Dunk declined, and Andy was very glad. Dunk said Mortimer had several times asked for loans, but had met with refusals.

"I'm not going to give him any more," said Dunk. "He's had enough of my cash now."

"Hasn't he paid any back?" asked Andy.

"Some, yes, and the next time he wants more than at first. I'm done."

"I should think so," remarked Andy. "He's played you long enough."

"Oh, Mortimer isn't such a bad sort when you get to know him," went on Dunk, easily. "I rather like him, but I can see that it isn't doing anyone any good to be in his crowd. That's why I cut it out. I came here to make something of myself—I owe it to dad, who's putting up the cash, and I'm not going to disappoint him. Then, too, you old scout, I suppose you wouldn't let me go sporting around the way I used to."

"Not much!" laughed Andy, but there was an undertone of seriousness in his words.

There was nothing new in Link's case. It was still hanging fire in the courts. And there were no

more robberies. It was somewhat of a puzzle to Andy that they should cease with the arrest of Link, whom he could not believe guilty.

Dunk's watch had not been recovered, nor had any more of the valuable books, one of which was found by the detective in Link's room, been discovered. How it got in the closet of the young farmer, unless he put it there, the lawyer whom Andy and Dunk had hired said he could not understand.

"I've had my man interview the boarding mistress at the house in Crown street," the lawyer told the boys, "and she says no one went to Link's room, but himself, the day the book was found. But I haven't given up yet."

It was the night before the Yale-Princeton freshman baseball game, which was to take place at Yale Field. Andy and Dunk were in their room, talking over the possibilities, and perfecting their code of signals.

"It looks as though it would be good weather," observed Andy, getting up and going to the window. "Nice and clear outside."

"If it only keeps so," returned Dunk. "Hope we have a good crowd."

Someone knocked on the door.

"Come!" called Andy and Dunk together. The two chums looked at each other curiously.

Ikey Stein entered, his face all smiles.

"Such bargains!" he began.

"Socks or neckties?" asked Andy, looking for a book to throw at the intruder.

"Socks—silk ones, and such colors! Look!" and from various pockets he pulled pairs of half hose. They fell about the room, giving it a decidedly rainbow effect.

"Oh, for the love of tomatoes!" cried Dunk. "Have you been raiding a paint store?"

"These are all the latest shades—the fashion just over from Paris!" exclaimed Ikey, indignantly. "I bought a fellow's stock out and I can let you have these for a quarter a pair. They're worth fifty in any store."

"Take 'em away!" begged Andy. "They hurt my eyes. I won't be able to play ball to-morrow."

"You ought to buy some—look, I have some dark blue ones," urged Ikey, holding them up. "These are very—chaste!"

"Those aren't so bad," conceded Dunk, tolerantly.

"Take 'em for twenty cents," said the student salesman, suddenly. "I need the money!"

"Tell you what I'll do," spoke Andy. "If we win the game to-morrow I'll buy a dollar's worth, provided you let us alone now."

"It's a bargain!" cried Ikey, gathering up the scattered socks.

"And I'll do the same," promised Dunk, whereupon the salesman departed for other rooms.

"Queer chap, isn't he?" remarked Dunk, after a pause that followed Ikey's departure.

"Yes, but do you know, I rather like him," said Andy, with a quick look at his chum. "There's one thing that a fellow gets into the habit of when he comes to Yale—or, for that matter, to any good college, I suppose."

"What's that?" asked Dunk, his mind quickly snapping to some of the not very good habits he had fallen into.

"It's learning how to take the measure of a fellow," went on Andy, "I mean his measure in the right way—not according to the standards we are used to."

"Quite philosophical; aren't you?" laughed Dunk, as he picked up a book, and leafed it.

"Well, that's another habit you get into here," said Andy, with a smile. "But you know what I mean, don't you Dunk?"

"Well, I suppose you mean that you get tolerant of persons—fellows and so on—that you have a natural dislike for otherwise; is that it?"

"Partly. You learn to appreciate a fellow for what he is really worth—not because his dad can write a check in any number of figures, and not turn a hair. It's *worth* that counts at Yale, and not cash."

"You're right there, Andy. I think I've learned that, too. Take some of the fellows here—we needn't mention any names—their popularity, such as it is, depends on how much they can spend, or how many spreads they can give in the course of the year. And the worst of it is, that their popularity would go out like a candle in a tornado, once they lost their money."

"Exactly," agreed Dunk. "They get so to depending on the power of their cash they think its all

that counts."

"And another bad thing about that," continued Andy, "is that those fellows, if they wanted to, could make a reputation on something else besides their cash. Now there's one chap here—no names, of course—but he's a fine musician, and he could make the glee club, and the dramatic association too, if he liked. But he's just too confounded lazy. He'd rather draw a check, give an order for a spread, and let it go at that.

"Of course the fellows like to go to the blow-outs, and—come home with a headache. This fellow thinks he gets a lot of fun out of it, but it's dollars to some of these socks Ikey sells, that he'd have a heap more fun, and make a lot more permanent friends, if he'd get out and take part in something that was worth while.

"Now you take our friend Ikey. I don't imagine it's any great fun for him to be going around selling things the way he does—he has to, I understand it. And yet at that, he has a better time of it than maybe you or I do—and we don't exactly have to worry where our next allowance check is coming from."

"Right, Andy old man. Jove! You'd better have taken up the divinity school. I'm thinking. You're a regular preacher."

"I don't feel a bit like preaching though, Dunk old boy. In fact I'd a heap sight rather turn in and snooze. But, do you know I'm so nervous over this game that I'm afraid I'll lie awake and toss until morning, and then I won't be much more use than a wet dishrag, as far as my nerve is concerned."

"I feel pretty nearly the same as you do, Andy. Let's sit up a while and talk. I s'pose, though, if we ever make the varsity we'll laugh at the way we're acting now."

"Oh, I don't know," spoke Andy musingly. "Some of these varsity fellows have as bad a case of nerves before a big game as we have now, before our little Freshman one."

"It isn't such a little one!" and Dunk bridled up. "The winning of this game from Princeton means as much to our class, and to Yale, in a way, as though the varsity took a contest. It all counts—for the honor of the old college. How are you feeling, anyhow?"

"Pretty fit. I'm only afraid, though, that I'll make some horrible break in front of the crowd—muff a foul, or let one of your fast ones get by me with the bases full," concluded Andy.

"If you do," exclaimed Dunk, with a falsetto tone calculated to impress the hearer that a petulant girl was speaking—"if you do I'll never speak to you again—so there!" and he pretended to toss back a refractory lock of hair.

Andy laughed, and pitched a book at his chum, which volume Dunk successfully dodged.

"Well, I wouldn't want that to happen," said the catcher. "And that reminds me. There's a rip in my glove, and I've got to sew it."

"Can you sew?"

"Oh, a bit," answered Andy. "I'm strictly an amateur though, mind you. I don't do it for pay, so if you've got any buttons that need welding to your trousers don't ask me to do it."

"Never!" exclaimed Dunk. "I've found a better way than that."

"What is it—the bachelor's friend—or every man his own tailor? Fasten a button on with a pair of gas-pliers so that you have to take the trousers apart when you want to get it off?"

"Something like that, yes," laughed Dunk, "only simpler. Look here!"

He pulled up the back of his vest and showed Andy where a suspender button was missing. In its place Dunk had taken a horseshoe nail, pushed it through a fold of the trousers, and had caught the loop of the braces over the nail.

"Isn't that some classy little contrivance?" he asked, proudly. "Not that I take any credit to myself, though. Far be it! I got the idea out of the comic supplement. But it works all right, and the beauty of it is that you can use the nail over and over again. It is practically indestructible.

"So you see if you are wearing the nail all day, to lectures and so on, and if you have to put on your glad rags at night to go see a girl, or anything like that, and find a button missing, you simply remove the nail from your day-pants and attach it to your night ones. Same suspenders—same nail. It beats the bachelor's friend all to pieces."

"I should imagine so," laughed Andy. "I'll have to lay in a stock of those nails myself. The way tailors sew buttons on trousers nowadays is a scandal. They don't last a week."

"There's one trouble, though," went on Dunk, and he carefully examined his simple suspender attachment as if in fear of losing it. "With the increasing number of autos, and the decrease in horses, there is bound to be a corresponding decrease in horseshoe nails. That's a principle of economics which I am going to bring to the attention of Professor Shandy. He likes to lecture on such cute little topics as that. He might call it the Bachelor's future depends on the ratio of increase of automobiles."

"I see!" exclaimed Andy with a chuckle. "Just as Darwin, or one of those evolutionists proved that the clover crop depended on old maids."

"How do you make that out?" asked Dunk.

"I guess you've forgotten your evolution. Don't you remember? Darwin found that certain kinds of clover depended for growth and fertilization on humble bees, which alone can spread the pollen. Humble bees can't exist in a region where there are many field mice, for the mice eat the honey, nests and even the humble bees themselves.

"Now, of course you know that the more cats there are in a neighborhood the less field mice there are, so if you find a place where cats are plentiful you'll find plenty of humble bees which aren't killed off by the mice, since the mice are killed off by the cats. So Darwin proved that the clover crop, in a certain section, was in direct proportion to the number of cats."

"But what about old maids?"

"Oh, I believe it was Huxley who went Darwin one better, come to think of it. Huxley said it was well known that the more old maids there were the more cats there were. So in a district well supplied with old maids there'd be plenty of cats, and in consequence plenty of clover."

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"Say, are you crazy, or am I?" asked Dunk, with a wondering look at his friend. "This thing is getting me woozy! What did we start to talk about, anyhow?"

"Horseshoe nails."

"And now we're at old maids. Good-night! Come on out and walk about a bit. The fresh air will do us good, and maybe we'll sleep."

"I'll go you!" exclaimed Andy. "Let's go get some chocolate. I'm hungry and there isn't a bit of grub left," and he looked in the box where he usually kept some biscuits.

They went out together, passing across the quadrangle, in which scores of students were flitting to and fro, under the elms, and in and out of the shadows of the electric lights.

Dunk was saying something over to himself in a low voice.

"What is that—a baseball litany?" asked Andy, with a laugh.

"No, I was trying to get that straight what you said about the supply of old maids in a community depending on the number of clover blossoms."

"It's the other way around—but cut it out. You'll be droning away at that all night—like a tune that gets in your head and can't get out. Where'll we go?"

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"Oh, cut down Chapel street. Let's take in the gay white way for a change. We may meet some of the fellows."

"But no staying out late!" Andy warned his chum.

"I guess not! I want to be as fit as a fiddle in the morning."

"For we're going to chew up Princeton in the morning!" chanted Andy to the tune of a well-known ballad.

"I hope so," murmured Dunk. "Look, there goes Ikey," and as he spoke he pointed to a scurrying figure that shot across the street and into a shop devoted to the auctioning of furnishing goods.

"What's he up to, I wonder?" spoke Andy.

"Oh, this is how he lays in his stock of goods that he sticks us with. He watches his chance, and buys up a lot, and then works them off on us."

"Well, I give him credit for it," spoke Andy, musingly. "He works hard, and he's making good. I understand he's in line for one of the best scholarships."

"Then he'll get it!" affirmed Dunk. "I never knew a fellow yet, like Ikey, who didn't get what he set out after. I declare! it makes me ashamed, sometimes, to think of all the advantages we have, and that we don't do any better. And you take a fellow like him, who has to work for every dollar he gets—doesn't belong to any of the clubs—doesn't have any of the sports—has to study at all hours to get time to sell his stuff—and he'll pull down a prize, and we chaps—"

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"Oh, can that stuff!" interrupted Andy. "We're worse than a couple of old women to-night. Let's be foolish for once, and we'll feel better for it. This game is sure getting our goats."

"I believe you. Well, if you want a chance to be foolish, here comes the crowd to stand in with."

Down the street marched a body of Yale students, arm in arm, singing and chanting some of the latest songs, and now and then breaking into whistling.

"Gaffington's bunch," murmured Andy.

"Yes, but he isn't with 'em," added Dunk. "Slip in here until they get past," and Dunk pulled his chum by the arm as they came opposite a dark hallway.

But it was too late. Some of the sporty students had seen the two, and made a rush for them.

"Come on, Andy!"

"Oh, you, Dunk! Grab him, fellows!"

Immediately the two were surrounded by a gay and laughing throng.

"Bring 'em along!"

"Down to the rathskeller!"

"We'll make a night of it!"

"And we won't go home until morning!"

Thus the gay and festive lads chanted, meanwhile circling about Andy and Dunk, who sought in vain to break through. Passersby went on their way, smiling indulgently at the antics of the students.

"Fetch 'em along!" commanded the leader of the "sports."

"Come on!" came the orders, and Andy and Dunk were dragged off toward a certain resort.

"No, we can't go—really!" protested Dunk, holding back.

"We just came out for a glass of soda," insisted Andy, "and we've got to get right back!"

"Oh, yes! That's all right."

"Soda!"

"Listen to him!"

"Regular little goody-goody boys!"

"They were trying to sneak off by themselves and have a good time by their lonesomes!"

And thus the various laughing and disbelieving comments came, one after another.

"Bring 'em along with us, and we'll show 'em how to enjoy life!" someone called. "Gaffington will meet us at Paddy's!"

Dunk flashed Andy a signal. It would not do, he knew, to spend this night—of all nights—the one before an important game—with this crowd of fun-loving lads. They must get away.

"Look here, fellows!" expostulated Andy, "we really can't come, you know!"

"That's right," chimed in Dunk. "Let us off this time and maybe to-morrow night——"

"There may never be a to-morrow night!" chanted one of the tormentors. "Live while you can, and enjoy yourself. You're a long time dead. To-morrow is no man's time. The present alone is ours. Who said that, fellows? Did I make that up or not? It's blamed good, anyhow. Let's see, what was it? The present——"

"Oh, dry up! You talk too much!" protested one of his companions, with a laugh.

"What's the matter with you fellows, anyhow?" demanded another of Andy and Dunk, who were making more strenuous efforts to get away. "Don't you love us any more?"

"Sure, better than ever," laughed Andy. "But you know Dunk and I have to pitch and catch in the Princeton freshman game to-morrow, and we——"

"Say no more! I forgot about that," exclaimed the leader. "They can't be burning the midnight incandescents. Let 'em go, fellows. And may we have the honor and pleasure of your company to-morrow night?" he asked, with an elaborate bow.

"If we win—yes," said Dunk.

"It's a bargain, then. Come on, boys, we're late now," and they started off.

Andy and Dunk, glad of their escape, flitted around a corner, to be out of sight. A moment later, however, they heard renewed cries and laughter from the throng they had just left.

"Now what's up?" asked Dunk. "Are they after us again?"

"Listen!" murmured Andy, looking for a place in which to hide.

Then they heard shouts like these:

"That's the idea!"

"Come on down to the Taft!"

"We'll give the Princeton bunch a cheer that will put the kibosh on them for to-morrow."

"No, don't go down there," cautioned cooler heads. "We'll only get into a row. Come on to the rathskeller!"

"No, the Taft!"

"The rathskeller!"

Thus the dispute went on, until those who were opposed to disturbing the Princeton players had their way, and the crowd moved out of hearing.

"Thank our lucky stars!" murmured Dunk. "Let's get our chocolate and get back to our room."

"I'm with you," said Andy.

"Oh, by the way, isn't there one of your friends on the Princeton team?" asked Dunk, as he and Andy were sipping their chocolate in a drugstore, on a quiet street.

"Yes, Ben Snow. He's with the crowd at the Taft."

"Did you see him?"

"For a little while this evening."

"I reckon he thinks his nine is going to win."

"Naturally," laughed Andy. "The same as we do. But don't let's talk about it until to-morrow. I've gotten over some of my fit of nerves, and I want to lose it for good."

"Same here. That little run-in did us good."

The two chums were back again in their room, and Andy brought out his catching glove, which he proceeded to mend.

Quiet was settling down over the quadrangle and in the dormitories about the big, elm-shaded square. Light after light in the rooms of the students went out. In the distant city streets the hum of traffic grew less and less.

It was quiet in the room where Dunk and Andy sat. Now and then, from some room would come the tinkle of a piano, or the hum of some soft-voiced chorus.

"What was that you said about horseshoe nails and bees?" asked Dunk, drowsily, from his corner of the much be-cushioned sofa.

"Forget it," advised Andy, sleepily. "I'm going to turn in. I'm in just the mood to drowse off now, and I don't want to get roused up."

"Same here, Andy. Say, but I wish it were to-morrow!"

"So do I, old man!"

The room grew more quiet. Only the night wind sighed through the opened window, fluttering the blue curtains.

Andy and Dunk were asleep.

The day of the ball game came, as all days do—if you wait long enough. There was a good crowd on the benches and in the grandstand when Andy and his mates came out for practice. Of course it was not like a varsity championship contest, but the Princeton nine had brought along some "rooters" and there were songs and cheers from the rival colleges.

"Play ball!" called the umpire, and Andy took his place behind the rubber, while Dunk went to the mound. The two chums felt not a little nervous, for this was their first real college contest, and the result meant much for them.

"Here's where the Tiger eats the Bulldog!" cried a voice Andy recognized as that of Ben Snow. Ben had come on with the Princeton delegation the night before, and had renewed acquaintance with Andy. They had spent some time together, Ben and the players stopping at the Hotel Taft.

There was a laugh at Ben's remark, and the Princeton cheer broke forth as Dunk delivered his first ball. Then the game was on.

"Wow! That was a hot one!"

"And he fanned the air!"

"Feed 'em another one like that, Dunk, and you'll have 'em eating out of your hand and begging for more!"

Joyous shouts and cheers greeted Dunk's first ball, for the Princeton batter had missed it cleanly, though he swung at it with all his force.

"Good work!" Andy signaled to his chum, as he sent the ball back. Then, stooping and pawing in the dirt, Andy gave the sign for a high out. He thought he had detected indications that the batter would be more easily deceived by such a delivery.

Dunk, glancing about to see that all his supporting players were in position, shook his head in opposition to Andy's signal. Then he signed that he would shoot an in-curve.

Andy had his doubts as to the wisdom of this, but it was too late to change for Dunk was winding

up for his delivery. A moment later he sent in the ball with vicious force. Andy had put out his hands to gather it into his big mitt, but it was not to be.

With a resounding thud the bat met the ball squarely and sent it over center field in a graceful ascending curve that bid fair to carry it far.

"Oh, what a pretty one!"

"Right on the nose!"

"Didn't he swat it! Go on, you beggar! Run! Run!"

"Make it a home run!"

The crowd of Princeton adherents had leaped to their feet, and were cheering like mad.

"Go on, old man!"

"Take another base. He can't get it!"

"Go to third!"

"Come on home!"

The centerfielder had been obliged to run back after the far-knocked ball. It was seen that he could not possibly get under it, but he might field it home in time to save a score.

The runner, going wildly, looked to get a signal from the coach. He received it, in a hasty gesture, telling him to stay at third. He stayed, panting from his speed, while the Princeton lads kept up their cheering.

"Now will you feed us some more of those hot cross buns?" cried a wag to Dunk.

"Make him eat out of the bean trough!"

"He's got a glass arm!"

"Swat it, Kelly! A home run and we'll score two!"

This was cried to the next man up. Dunk looked at Andy and shrugged his shoulders. His guessing had not been productive of much good to Yale, for the first man had gotten just the kind of a ball he wanted. Dunk made up his mind to be more wary.

"Play for the runner," Andy signaled to his chum, meaning to make an effort to kill off the run, and not try to get the batsman out in case of a hit.

"All right," Dunk signaled back.

"Ball one!" howled the umpire, after the first delivery.

"That's the way! Make him give you a nice one."

"Take your time! Wait for what you want!" This was the advice given the batter.

And evidently the man at the plate got the sort of ball he wanted, for he struck at and hit the next one—hit it cleanly and fairly, and it sailed out toward left field.

"Get it!" cried the Yale captain.

The fielder was right under it—certainly it looked as though he could not miss. The batsman was speeding for first, while the man on third was coming home, and the crowd was yelling wildly.

Andy had thrown off his mask, and was waiting at home for the ball, to kill off the player speeding in from third.

"Here's where we make a double play!" he exulted, for the man going to first had stumbled slightly, and was out of his stride. It looked as though it could be done. But alas for the hopes of Yale! The fielder got the ball fairly in his hands, but whether he was nervous, or whether the ball had such speed that it tore through, was not apparent. At any rate, he muffed the fly.

"Good-night!"

"That settles it!"

"Go on, Ranter! Go on, Cooney!"

Coaches, the captain, Princeton players and the crowd of Tiger sympathizers were wildly calling to the two runners. And indeed they were coming on.

Andy groaned. He could not help it. Dunk threw up his hands in a gesture of despair. The fielder, with a gulp and a gone feeling at the pit of his stomach, picked up the muffed ball, and threw it to second. It was the only play left. And the batsman, who had started to make his two-bagger, went back to first. But the run had come in.

"That's the way we do it!"

"Come on, fellows, the qlOrange and Black' song!"

"No, the new one! qlWatch the Tiger Claw the Bulldog!q"

The cheer leaders were trying to decide on something with which to celebrate the drawing of "first blood."

The grandstands were a riot of waving yellow and black, while, on the other side, the blue banners dropped most disconsolately. But it was not for long.

"Come on, boys!" cried the plucky Yale captain. "That's only one run. We only need three out and we'll show 'em what we can do! Every man on the job! Lively! Play ball!"

Dunk received the horsehide from the second baseman, and began to wind up for his next delivery. He narrowly watched the man on first, and once nearly caught him napping. Several times Dunk threw to the initial sack, in order to get the nerve of the runner. Then he suddenly stung in one to the man at the plate.

"Strike—one!" yelled the umpire. The batter gave a sign of protest, but he thought better of any verbal comment.

"That's the way!" cried the Yale captain. "Two more like that, and he's down!"

Dunk did it, though the man struck one foul which Andy muffed, much to his chagrin.

"Give 'em the Boola song!" called a Yale cheer leader, and it was rousingly sung. This seemed to make the Yale players have more confidence, and they were on their mettle. But, though they did their best, Princeton scored two more runs, and, with this lead against her, Yale came to the bat.

"Steady all!" counseled the captain. "We're going to win, boys."

But it did not seem so, when the first inning ended with no score for Yale. Princeton's pitcher was proving his power, and he was well supported. Man after man—some of them Yale's best hitters—went down before his arm.

The situation looked desperate. In spite of the frantic cheering of the Yale freshmen, it seemed as if her players could not take the necessary brace.

"Fellows, come here!" yelled the captain, when it came time for Andy and his chums to take the field after a vain attempt to score. "We've got to do something. Dunk, I want you to strike out a couple of men for a change!"

"I—I'll do it!" cried the pitcher.

Then Dunk pulled himself together, and the Tiger's lead was cut down. Once the game was a tie Yale's chances seemed to brighten, and when she got a lead of one run in the eighth her cohorts went wild, the stand blossoming forth into a waving mass of blue.

This good feeling was further added to when Princeton was shut out without a run in the beginning of the ninth, and as Andy, Dunk and the other Yale players came in, having won the game, they received an ovation for their victory.

Ikey Stein, sitting in the grandstand near an elderly gentleman, yelled, shouted and stamped his feet at the Yale victory.

"You seem wonderfully exercised about it, my young friend," remarked the elderly gentleman. "Did you have a large wager up on this game?"

"No, sir, but now I can sell two dollars worth of socks," replied Ikey, hurrying off to get Dunk and Andy to redeem their promises.

"Hum, very strange college customs these days—very strange," murmured the elderly gentleman, shaking his head.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE TRAP

Joyous was the crowd of Yale players as they trooped off the field. The freshmen had opened their season well by defeating Princeton, and the wearers of the orange and black gave their victors a hearty cheer, which was repaid in kind.

"It's good to be on the winning side," exulted Andy, as he walked along with Dunk.

"It sure is, old man."

Someone touched Andy on the shoulder. He looked around to see Ikey holding out a package. One in the other hand was offered to Dunk.

"The socks," spoke the student salesman, simply.

"Say, give us time to get into our clothes!" demanded Andy. "Do you think we carry cash in our uniforms?"

"I didn't want you to forget," said Ikey, with a grin. "There is another fellow taking up my business now, and I've got to hustle if I want the trade. Going to your room?"

"Sure."

"I'll go on ahead and wait for you," said Ikey. "I need the money."

"Say, you're the limit! You're as bad as a sheriff with an attachment," complained Dunk. But he could not help laughing at the other's persistence.

Andy and Dunk were a little late getting back to Wright Hill, and when they entered their room they found a note on the table. It was from Ikey, and read:

"I found your door open, and waited a while, but I just heard of a bargain lot of suspenders I can buy, so I went off to see about them. I will be back with the socks in a little while."

"He found our door open!" exclaimed Dunk. "Didn't we lock it?"

"We sure did!" declared Andy. "I wonder——" He paused, and looked at his chum wonderingly. Then they both began a hasty search among their possessions. The same thought had come to each.

"Did you have my amethyst cuff buttons?" asked Andy of Dunk, who was rummaging among his effects.

"I did not. Why?"

"They're gone!"

"Another robbery! Say, we've got to report this right away, and let Link's lawyer know!" Dunk cried. "This may clear him!"

They paused, trying to map out a line of procedure, when a messenger came in to say that either Dunk or Andy was wanted on the telephone in a hurry.

"You go," suggested Andy. "As long as either of us will answer I'll stay here and take another look for my buttons. But I'm sure I left them in my collar box, and they aren't there now."

Dunk hurried off, while Andy conducted a careful but ineffectual search.

"It was Link's lawyer," Dunk reported when he came back. "His case comes up to-morrow, and he wants to know if we have any evidence that will help to prove Link innocent."

"Not an awful lot," said Andy, ruefully, "unless this latest robbery is. We'd better go see that lawyer. Did he say anything about the mysterious hundred dollars Link got by mail?"

"He mentioned it. There's no explanation of it yet, and he says it will look queer if it comes out, and if that's the only explanation Link can give."

"Why need it come out?"

"Oh, it seems that Link showed the bills to several helpers around college, and some of them have been subpoenaed to testify. The detective will be sure to bring it out. Then there's that story about the book found in Link's room."

"Hello!—" exclaimed Andy, looking around the apartment in order to collect his thoughts. "There's another note someone left for us. It must have been knocked off the table." He picked it up off the floor. It was addressed to him, and proved to be from Charley Taylor. It read:

"DEAR ANDY. I watched you play to-day. You did well. I've got a peach of a mushroom bat that I don't want, for I'm going in for rowing instead of baseball this season. I left the bat in the storeroom on your corridor when I moved out of Wright Hall. You can have it if you like. I gave it to Mortimer Gaffington once, but he said he never could find it. I don't believe he cared much about it, anyhow. Take it and good luck."

"By jinks!" cried Andy, as he read the missive and passed it to Dunk. "Do you remember that time Mortimer was hunting for Charley's bat in the closet?"

"I should say I did! That was the time we were looking for the thief who took Frank Carr's silver cup and his book."

"Sure. Well, I'm just going to have a look for that bat now. Maybe I'll have better luck than Mortimer did."

"Go ahead. I'll stay here in case Ikey comes in with the socks. No use having him bother us. Might as well pay him so he'll quit running in."

"Sure. Well, I'm going to rummage for the bat," and Andy, thinking of many things, went down the corridor to the large closet that was used as a store room by the students.

It was more filled than before with many things, and Andy had some difficulty in locating the bat. Finally he found it away down in a corner, under an old football suit, and drew it out. As he did so something fell to the closet floor with a clang of metal.

"I wonder what that was?" mused Andy. "It sounded like——" He did not finish the thought, but made his way to the far end of the closet. It was dark there, but, groping around, his fingers touched something hard, round, smooth and cold. With trembling hand Andy drew it out, and when the single electric light in the center of the storeroom fell upon it Andy uttered a cry of surprise.

"Frank's silver cup!" he cried. "The thief hid it in there! I wonder if the book's here, too?"

He made a hasty but unsuccessful search and then, with the bat and cup, he hurried to the room where Dunk awaited him.

"What's up?" demanded Dunk, as Andy fairly burst into the room.

"Lots! Look here!"

"Frank Carr's silver cup! Where'd you get it?"

"In the closet where Mortimer Gaffington hid it!"

"Mortimer Gaffington?" gasped Dunk. "You mean——"

"I mean that I'm sure now of what I've suspected for some time—that Mortimer is the quadrangle thief!"

"You don't say so! How do you figure it out?"

"Just think and you'll see it for yourself," went on Andy. "When we had the chase after the thief down this corridor that time, the trail seemed to lead right to this closet, didn't it?"

"Sure," agreed Dunk.

"And who did we find in there?"

"Why, Mort, of course. But he said he was looking for Charley Taylor's bat."

"Well, he may have been, but that was only an excuse. Mortimer didn't want that bat, but he was almost caught and he did want a place to hide the stuff. The book he could slip in his pocket, but he couldn't do that with the cup. So he threw it back in a corner, and it's been there ever since. Probably he was afraid to come for it."

"Andy, I believe you're right!" cried Dunk. "But one thing more—did you find a pair of rubber shoes? You know Frank said the fellow that went out of his room in such a hurry wore rubber shoes."

"I forgot about that. I'll have another look."

"I'll go with you. Ikey was here and I paid him for your socks and mine. So we can lock up."

"And be sure you do lock," warned Andy. "I don't want to lose any more stuff. Say, Mortimer must have my sleeve links, all right."

"All wrong, you mean. And my watch, too! I wonder if we're on the verge of a discovery?"

"It looks so," said Andy, grimly.

Quickly and silently they went to the storeroom. They were not disturbed, for there were several class dinners on that night, and most of the occupants of Wright Hall were out. Andy and Dunk intended going later.

They rummaged in the closet and, when about to give up, not having found what they sought, Andy unearthed a pair of rubbers.

"These might be what the fellow wore," said Dunk, as he looked at them. "He could easily have slipped them off. See if there are any marks inside."

Andy looked and uttered a startled cry. For there, on the inner canvas of the rubber, printed in ink, were the initials "M. G."

"They're his, all right!" spoke Andy, in a low tone.

"Then he's the quadrangle thief," went on Dunk. "Come on back to our room, and we'll talk this over. Something's has got to be done."

"That's right," agreed Andy. "But what?"

"We must set a trap," suggested Dunk.

"A trap?"

"Yes, do something to catch this mean thief—Mortimer or whoever he is—in the act."

"Hadn't we better tell the Dean—or someone."

"No," said Dunk, after thinking over the matter. "Let's see if we can't do this on our own hook. Then if we make a mistake we won't be laughed at."

"But when can we do it?" Andy asked.

"This very night. It couldn't happen better. Nearly all the fellows will be out of Wright Hall in a little while. We're booked to go, and Mortimer knows it, for I was making arrangements with Bert Foley about our seats, and Mortimer was standing near me. He came to borrow ten dollars, but I didn't let him have it. So he will be sure to figure that we'll be out to-night."

"But how do you know he'll come to our room?"

"I don't know it. I've got to take a chance there. But we can hide down in the lower corridor, and watch to see if he comes in this dormitory. If he does, knowing that 'most all the fellows are out, it will look suspicious. We can watch for him to go out and then tackle him. If he has the goods on him the jig is up."

"Well, I guess that is a good plan," agreed Andy. "I hate to have to do it, but we owe it to ourselves, to the college and to poor Link to discover this thief. I only hope it doesn't prove to be Mortimer, but it looks very bad for him."

"We can go farther than that," went on Dunk. "We can leave some marked money on our table, leave our door open and see what happens."

"It sounds sort of mean," spoke Andy, doubtfully; "but I suppose if we have to have a trap that would be the best way to do it."

"Then let's get busy," suggested Dunk. "He may not come to-night after all. We may have to watch for several nights. Meanwhile we'd better telephone the lawyer that we're on a new lead."

This was done, and the man in charge of Link's case agreed to see Andy and Dunk early the next day to learn what success they had.

Then the trap was laid. The two who were doing this, not so much to prove Mortimer guilty as to free Link and others upon whom suspicion had fallen, went about their work.

As Dunk had surmised, Wright Hall was almost deserted. They found a hiding place in the lower corridor where they could see whoever came in. Their own door they left ajar, with a light burning. On the table where they had been put, as if dropped by accident, were a couple of marked bills.

"If he takes those, we'll have him with the goods," said Dunk, grimly.

Then he and Andy began their vigil.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CAUGHT

The silence got on the nerves of Andy and Dunk. It was very quiet in Wright Hall, but outside they could hear the calls of students, one to the other. Occasionally someone would come up on the raised courtyard of the dormitory and shout loudly for some chum. But there were no answers. Nearly all the freshmen were at an annual affair. The hall was all but deserted.

"Who do you think it will be?" asked Dunk in a whisper, after a long quiet period.

"Why, Mortimer, of course," answered Andy. "Do you have suspicions of anybody else?"

"Well, I don't know," was the hesitating answer.

"Everything points to him," went on Andy. "He's in need of money, and has been for some time, though we didn't know it. As soon as I heard that news about his father losing all his fortune, and the possibility that Mortimer might have to leave Yale, I said to myself that he was the most likely one to have been doing this quadrangle thieving."

"But I really hated to think it, for it seems an awful thing to have a Yale man guilty of anything like that."

"It sure is," agreed Dunk. "What are we going to do if we catch him?"

"Time enough to think of that after we get him," said Andy, grimly.

"No, there isn't," insisted Dunk. "Look here, old man, this is a serious matter. It means a whole lot, not only to Mortimer, but to us. We don't want to make a mistake."

"We won't," said Andy. "We'll get him right, whether it's Mortimer, or someone else. But I can't

see how it could be anybody else. Everything points to him. It's very plain to me."

"You don't quite get me," went on Dunk, trying to get into a more comfortable position in their small hiding place. "I'll admit that we may get the thief, and I'm willing to admit, for the sake of argument, that it may be Mortimer—in fact, I'm pretty sure, now, that it is he. But look what it's going to mean to Yale. This thing will have to come out—it will probably get into the papers, and how will it look to have a Yale man held up as a thief. It doesn't make any difference to say that he isn't a representative Yale man—it's the name of the university that's going to suffer as much as is Mortimer."

"That's so—I didn't think of that," admitted Andy, rather ruefully. "Shall we call it off?"

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"No, it's too late to do that now. But we must consider what we ought to do once we capture the thief."

"What do you suggest?" asked Andy, after a pause.

"I hardly know. Let's puzzle over it a bit." Again there fell a silence between them—a silence fraught with much meaning. They could hear revelry in other college rooms, and the call of lads on the campus. From farther off came the roar and hum of the city. It reminded Andy of the night he had first come to New Haven. How many things had happened in that time. He would soon be a sophomore now—no more a callow freshman.

"Do you know," spoke Dunk, in a low voice, as he again changed his position, seeking ease. "I had an idea that Ikey might turn out to be the guilty one."

"So did I," admitted Andy. "That was after your watch was missing, and I found he had been in the room while I was out. But, for that matter, Link was in there, too. It was a sort of toss-up between the two. Poor Link, it's been mighty unpleasant for him, to be accused wrongly. I wonder how that valuable book got in his room?"

"The quadrangle thief put it there, of course."

"And there's that case of Pulter's book—found out near Yale Field," went on Andy. "I suppose Mortimer had that, too."

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"Very likely, though it seems queer that he'd stoop so low as to take books."

"He could pawn 'em, I suppose, same as he did the other things he took," Andy continued.

"The way he used to borrow money from me and some of the other fellows was a caution!" exclaimed Dunk. "Seems as though he'd have enough to worry along on without stealing."

"He spent a lot, though," said Andy. "He was used to high living and I suppose when he found the money wasn't coming from his father any more he had to get it the best way he could."

"Or the worst," commented Dunk, grimly. "I know he never paid me back all he got, and the same way with a lot of the fellows. But if he's coming I wish he'd show up. I don't wish him any bad luck, and I'd give a whole lot, even now, if it would prove to be someone else besides Mortimer. But I'm getting tired of waiting here."

"So am I," said Andy, with a yawn.

Again there was a silence, while they kept their strange vigil. Then, far down the lower corridor, there sounded footsteps.

"He—he's coming!" whispered Andy in a tense voice.

"Yes," assented Dunk.

But it was a false alarm. As the footsteps came nearer the waiting lads saw one of the janitors on his rounds. He did not see them, and passed on.

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Andy was doing some hard thinking. The suggestion made by Dunk that the capture of the thief would be more of a black spot for Yale than the fact of the robberies taking place was bearing fruit.

"But what can we do?" Andy asked himself. "We've got to stop these thefts if we can, and the only way is to catch the fellow who's doing it."

They had been in their hiding place nearly an hour, and were getting exceedingly weary. Dunk shifted about, as did Andy, and it was on the tip of the latter's tongue to suggest that they give up their plan for the night when they heard a distant door opened cautiously.

"Listen!" whispered Andy.

"All right," assented his chum. "I hope it amounts to something."

With strained ears they listened. Now they heard steps coming along the corridor. Curious, shuffling steps they were, not hard, honest heel-and-toe steps—rather those of someone treading softly, as on soles of rubber.

"It's him all right this time!" whispered Andy in Dunk's ear.

"I guess so—yes. Shall we follow him?"

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"Yes. Take off your shoes."

Silently they removed them, and waited. The steps were nearer now, and a long shadow was thrown athwart the place where Andy and Dunk were hiding. They could not recognize it, however.

The shadow came nearer, flickering curiously as the swaying of an electric lamp threw it in black relief on the corridor floor.

Then a figure came past the recess where the two lads were concealed. They hardly breathed, and, peering out they beheld Mortimer Gaffington stealing into Wright Hall.

It was only what they had expected to see, but, nevertheless, it gave them both a shock.

Mortimer moved on. They could see now why he could walk so silently. He had on rubbers over his shoes. The same trick used by the thief who had entered Frank's room.

Mortimer looked all around. He stood in a listening attitude for a moment, and then, as if satisfied that the coast was clear, started up the stairs toward the corridor from which opened the room of Andy and Dunk.

The two waited until he was out of sight, and then followed, making no more noise than the thief himself. They timed their movements by his. When he advanced they went forward, and when he stopped to listen, they stopped also. It was like some game—a very grim sort of game, though.

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There was only a dim light in the upper corridor, and, coming to a halt where the shadows were deepest, Andy and Dunk watched. They saw Mortimer stop before a student's door, try it and then came the faint tinkle of a bunch of keys.

"Skeletons," whispered Dunk.

Andy nodded in assent.

The manipulation of the lock by means of a false key seemed to come easy to Mortimer. In a moment he was inside the room. What he did there Andy and Dunk could not see, but he remained but a few minutes, and came out, softly closing the door after him.

"I wonder what he got?" whispered Dunk.

"We'll soon know," was Andy's answer.

Mortimer went softly down the corridor. He did not try every door, but only went in certain rooms, and these, the two watchers noticed, were those where well-to-do students lived.

Mortimer made four or five visits, and then moved towards the apartment of Andy and Dunk.

"It's our turn now," whispered the latter.

Silently they turned a corner, just in time to see Mortimer enter their room.

"Now we've got him!" exulted Andy.

"Not yet; we've got to nab him," whispered Dunk. "Oh, Andy, this is fierce! To think that we're spying on a Yale man! To think that a Yale man should turn out to be a common thief! It makes me sick!"

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"Same here," sighed Andy. "But the only way to stop suspicion from falling on others is to get Mortimer with the goods. We've got to save Link, too."

"That's right," assented Dunk. "He isn't a Yale man, but he's a heap better than the kind in there." He nodded his head in the direction of their room, where Mortimer now was.

They had left a light burning, and could see, as its beams were cut off now and then, that the intruder was moving about in their apartment.

"Come on, let's get him—and have it over with," suggested Dunk.

"No, we've got to get the goods on him," said Andy.

"Well, hasn't he got plenty of stolen goods—those from the other fellows' rooms?"

"I know. But if we went in on him now he'd bluff it off—say he came in to borrow a book—or money maybe."

"But we could search him."

"You can't search a fellow for coming to borrow something," declared Andy. "Come on, let's go where we can look in."

Silently they stole forward until they were opposite their door. From it they had a good view of Mortimer.

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Just at that moment they saw him reach for the bills on the table and, with a quick motion, pocket them. Then the thief started toward a bureau.

"Come on!" whispered Andy, hoarsely. "We've got to get him now, Dunk!"

With beating hearts the two sped silently but swiftly into the room. They fairly leaped for Mortimer, who turned like a flash, glaring at them. Fear was in his startled eyes—fear and shame. Then in an instant he determined to face it out.

"We—we've got you!" cried Dunk, exultantly.

"Got me? I don't know what you mean?" said Mortimer, trying to speak easily. But his voice broke—his tones were hoarse, and Andy noticed that his hands were trembling. Mortimer edged over toward the door.

"I came in to get a book," he faltered, "but I——"

"Grab him, Dunk!" commanded Andy, and the two threw themselves upon the intruder.

CHAPTER XXXV

FOR THE HONOR OF YALE

"What does this mean? You fellows sure have your nerve with you! Let me go, or I'll——"

Mortimer stormed and raved, struggling to get loose from the grip of Andy and Dunk.

"I'll make you fellows sweat for this!" he cried "I'll fix you! I—I'll——"

"You'd better keep quiet, if you know what's best for you," panted Andy. "We hate this business as much as you ever can, Gaffington! Don't let the whole college know about it. Keep quiet, for the honor of Yale whose name you've disgraced. Keep quiet, for we've got the goods on you and the jig is up!"

It was a tense moment, and Andy might well be pardoned for speaking a bit theatrically. Truth to tell he hardly knew what he was saying.

"Yes, take it easy, Gaffington," advised Dunk. "We don't want to make a holiday of this affair; but you're at the end of your rope and the sooner you know it the better. We've caught you. Take it easy and we'll be as easy as we can."

"Caught me! What do you mean?" asked the unfortunate lad excitedly. "Can't I come to your room to borrow a book without being jumped on as if I——"

"Exactly! As though you were the thief that you are!" said Andy, bitterly. "What does this mean?"

With a quick motion, letting go of one of Mortimer's wrists, Andy reached into the other's pocket and pulled out the bills. "They're marked with our initials," he said, and his voice was sad, rather than triumphant. "We left them there to see if you'd take them."

The production of the bills took all the fight out of Mortimer Gaffington. He ceased his struggling and sank limply into a chair which Dunk pushed forward for him.

There followed a moment of silence—a silence that neither Andy or Dunk ever forgot. The quadrangle thief moistened his dry lips once or twice and then said hoarsely:

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"That's the question," spoke Andy, wearily. "What *are* we going to do about it?"

"Are you going to deny it?" asked Dunk. "Before you answer, think what it means. An innocent man is under charges for these thefts."

Mortimer did not answer for a moment. When he did speak it was to say:

"No, I'm going to deny nothing. You have caught me. I own up. What are you going to do about it?"

"That's just it," said Dunk. "We don't know what to do about it."

Silently Mortimer began taking from his pockets several pieces of jewelry, evidently the things he had stolen from the rooms of other students.

"That's all I have," he said, bitterly.

Andy and Dunk looked at him a moment without speaking and then Andy asked:

"Why did you do it, Mortimer?"

"Why? I guess you know as well as I do. Everything is gone—dad's whole fortune wiped out. We haven't a dollar, and I had to leave Yale. We kept it quiet as long as we could. I didn't want to

leave. I couldn't bear to!

"Oh, call it what you like—foolish pride perhaps, but I wanted to stay here and finish as I'd begun—with the best of the spenders. That's what I've been—a spender. I couldn't be otherwise—I was brought up that way. So, when I found I couldn't get any money any other way I began stealing. I'm not looking for sympathy—I'm telling the plain truth. I took your watch, Dunk. I took those books. I smuggled one into Link Bardon's room, hoping he'd be suspected. There's no use in saying I'm sorry. You wouldn't believe me. It's all up. You've got me right!"

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He leaned forward and buried his face in his hands.

Andy and Dunk felt the lumps rising in their throats. They had to fight back the tears from their eyes. Never before had they taken part in such a grim tragedy—never again did they want to.

"You—you admit all the quadrangle thefts?" faltered Andy.

"Every one," was the low answer. "I took Carr's book and silver cup—I hid them in the closet that day you fellows caught me. I took Pulter's book, too. I was desperate—I'd take anything. I just had to have the money. I took the money Len thought he lost that night in the campus. Well, this is the end."

"Yes, it's the end," said Dunk, softly, "but not for us. We've got to think of Yale."

There was a footstep outside the door. The three started up in some alarm. They were not ready yet for disclosures.

"Beg pardon," said a calm voice, "but I could not help hearing what was said. Perhaps I can help you."

Andy swung open the door wider, and saw, standing in the hall, a man he recognized as one taking a post-graduate course in the Medical School. He was Nathan Conklin, and had taken a room in the freshman dormitory because no other was available just at that time.

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"Do you want some advice?" asked Conklin. He was a pleasant chap, considerably older than Andy or Dunk. And he seemed to know life.

"I guess that's just what we do want," said Andy. "We are up against it. We have caught—er——"

"You needn't explain," said Conklin. "The less said on such occasions the better. I happened to be passing and I could not help hearing. What I didn't hear I guessed. Now I'm going to say a few words."

"Boys, Yale is bigger than any of us—better than any of us. We've got to consider the honor of Yale above everything else."

Andy and Dunk nodded. Mortimer sat with his face buried in his hands.

"Now then," went on Conklin, "for the honor of Yale, and not to save the reputation of anybody, we must hush up this scandal. It must go no farther than this room. Gaffington, are you willing to leave Yale?"

"I suppose I'll have to," Mortimer answered, without looking up.

"Yes, you would have to go if this came out, and it's better that you should go without it becoming known. Now then, are you willing to make restitution?"

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"I can't. I haven't a dollar in the world."

"Let that go," said Dunk, quickly. "We fellows will see to that. I guess those that have missed things won't insist on getting them back; they'll do that much for the honor of Yale."

"About this other man who is under charges, are you willing to give testimony—in private to the judge—that will result in freeing him?" asked Conklin.

"Yes," whispered Mortimer.

"Then that's all that's necessary," went on the medical student. "I'll go see the Dean. You'd better come with me, Gaffington. I'll take charge of this case."

"Thank heaven!" said Andy, with a sigh of relief. "It was getting too much for me."

With bowed head Mortimer Gaffington followed the medical student from the room. What transpired at the interview with the Dean neither Dunk nor Andy ever learned. Nor did they ask. It was better not to know too much.

But Mortimer left Yale, and the honor of the college was untarnished, at least by anything that became known of his actions. He slipped away quietly, it being given out that his family was going abroad. And the Gaffingtons did leave Dunmore, going no one knew whither.

A certain secret meeting was held, when without a name being mentioned, it was explained by Andy, Dunk and Conklin that the quadrangle thief had been discovered. It was stated that those who had suffered losses would be reimbursed by private subscription, but the idea was rejected unanimously.

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How Mortimer worked, and how he accomplished the various robberies, without being detected,

remained a mystery. No one cared to go into it, for it was too delicate a subject.

The charge against Link was dismissed after a certain interview the Dean had with the county prosecutor, and Link was given his old place back.

"But if it had come to a trial," he said to Andy, when he was told that the thief (no name being mentioned) had confessed, "if I had been tried I could have told where that mysterious hundred dollars came from."

"Where?" asked Andy interestedly.

"From that farmer you saved me from. He got religion lately, and felt remorse for my injured arm. So he sent me the hundred dollars for my doctor's bill and other expenses."

"And never said a word about it?" asked Dunk.

"Not a word. But he died the other day, and the truth came out. A fellow I know in the town wrote me about it. So I could have proved that I didn't get the money by stealing."

"It wasn't necessary," said Andy. "So everything is explained now."

Andy's first year at Yale was nearing its close. The season was to wind up with a series of affairs and with several ball games, including one for the freshman team. Of course Dunk and Andy played. I wish I could say that Yale won, but truth compels me to state that Princeton "trimmed" her.

"And we'll do it again!" exulted Ben Snow, as he greeted Andy after the contest.

"I don't know about that!" was the answer. Then Andy hurried off to where a certain pretty girl waited for him. No, I'm not going to mention her name. You wouldn't know her, anyhow.

"Well," remarked Andy, as he and Dunk were packing up to go home for the summer holidays, "college is a great place."

"Especially Yale."

"Oh, I don't know. Of course I think there's no place like Yale, but there are others."

And so Andy and Dunk packed up and prepared to start for home, agreeing to room together again during their sophomore year, and until they had completed their college course.

They had locked their trunks, and their valises were ready. When came a knock on their door, and a voice said:

"Such bargains! Never before have I had such neckties and silk socks! Fellows, let me show you ___"

"Get out, you Shylock!" laughed Andy, locking the portal. "We've only got money enough for our railroad fare!"

And Ikey Stein departed, looking for other bargain victims.

"Come on," suggested Dunk, "let's take a walk over the campus and say good-bye to the fellows."

"I'm with you," agreed Andy.

And arm in arm they departed.

THE END

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ANDY AT YALE ***

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