

# Frank Merriwell at Fardale

By GILBERT PATTEN

The Original BURT L. STANDISH

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WNU Service

## CHAPTER V—Continued

"But I don't play that game," said Frank quickly. "Baseball's my limit."

"Well, we'll have to go into that also—when the time comes round." Belinda Snodd called Tad away to the porch.

"We're going to get him another dog—the right sort of a dog for him to have," explained Inza, "but we're going to spring it as a surprise. He mustn't get wise to what we're up to. Go over and quiz him, Walt. Find out what kind he likes best. I'll take you into town after I talk to Frank."

"Then make it snappy," he replied. "I've got a date with a barber."

"Look, Frank," said Inza quickly when they were left alone. "I didn't want Walt listening in. He caught me here when he was going by. I want to talk to you about Hodge."

"Oh!" He was a little surprised. "Bart wasn't to blame for that crack in the paper," she went on. "I've let Pete Smith know what I think of that. He's just a hick reporter who thinks he's a big shot, so don't let it get you down."

"That made Merry laugh again. 'Don't worry, Miss Burrage. I'll sleep without taking an opiate.' 'But it's going to cost Bart Hodge some sleep.' 'Do you think so?'"

"I'm sure of it. He's out of luck, for he's just like me. I'm afraid of dogs—some dogs. I wish I wasn't built that way, but they make me jittery. To tell you the truth, they frighten me to death. That's why I thought my ankle was broken when it was only sprained a little."

"Oh, your ankle! How dumb of me not to ask about that!"

"The doctor made me wear a rubber bandage, but I don't believe I need it at all. I'll bet I could do the fandango on it right this minute."

"Now that's a relief. Congratulations."

"And I wanted to see you, too, to tell you what I think about—the way you protected me from that horrid beast. Only I—I can't really say it now. But I do want you to know I'll never, never forget it."

They were both flushed now. She had destroyed his first impression of her. He no longer rated her as beautiful and dumb; he had scratched the second adjective.

"Maybe I was too scared to run away myself," he said.

She smiled at him, shaking her head. "You don't have to be so modest about it, Frank Merriwell. I've got a little sense. Bart did run, but he came back. That was something. Let's give him credit for it."

"I wouldn't rob him of any credit he deserves."

"I know you wouldn't. You don't have to tell me. I was all stewed up about Bart until I thought it over. He's different. He's never learned how to take it. Walter's told me how it is here in the school. If they ever start riding a fellow they ride him ragged. Bart never could stand up to that."

It wasn't so easy for Frank to smile now. He hadn't expected her to retain so much interest in Hodge. It was cooling him off rapidly.

"He needs somebody to keep him on an even keel," Inza declared. "You could do that, Frank. I don't believe anybody else can. You're rooming with him, and—"

"Aren't you slicing it rather tough for me, Miss Burrage?"

"Maybe I am, but he needs a friend."

"He's got Hugh Bascomb."

"That's not so good. I know Hugh. He won't be much help."

"He's helped Hodge on to the football squad already."

"But that's not the kind of help Bart needs most. He'll go up against things at Fardale that Bascomb won't help him a bit about—and he'll crack."

"Nobody can help a fellow who won't accept help."

"Of course not, but you're clever, Frank, and you can make him accept it if you try. I did think of putting it up to Walter, but I realized he wouldn't get me. He wouldn't have the chance you'll have, anyhow. If Bart doesn't find somebody to steady him he'll go off the deep end some day."

Frank was silent.

She put her warm fingers on his wrist, which lay on the edge of the car door. "Think it over," she said, "and maybe you'll do it—for me."

Her voice, her dark eyes, the touch of her warm hand—all were magnetic.

"Come on, Inza," called her brother laughingly. "Stop vamping Merriwell and step on your starter. I've got to get a move on if I'm going to be back in time for my first morning class."

He was coming out with Tad at his heels.

"I'm leaving it up to you, Frank," she half-whispered. And the way she half-whispered his name was disturbing.

riwell carried a face as gay as a plume on a hearse. He had hurried to meet her, and all she had wanted of him was to talk of Hodge. It was a joke, but he didn't laugh.

She had been furious with Hodge after reading the piece in the newspaper. Walter had spared Bart's feelings by declining to repeat what she had said about him. Now, in a few hours, she had changed in a most astonishing way. What the dickens did it mean?

"Just that she's gone bats about him, of course," muttered Frank. "Nothing else checks up. And she wants me to be his buddy! Why, she must still believe in Santa Claus!"

The silvery afterglow had gone out of the sky. There was a sharp chill in the gathering twilight.

## CHAPTER VI

Frank's first day at Fardale academy had been one to remember. Unexpected things had happened, but nothing had surprised him half as much as the sudden and puzzling switch-around by Inza Burrage. It was ridiculous for her to imagine he could be chummy with Bart Hodge. She must think him a silly sap!

There was something back of it, of course. And of course he had guessed the answer: Hodge had made a touchdown with her. He had scored in spite of his bad fumbles. Now wasn't that just like a girl!

Frank was bitterly disappointed in Inza. He had put her right back into the beautiful and dumb line-up. Well, it was okay with him. He had said he wouldn't need an opiate to sleep that night, and he didn't.

The round moon, riding high, seemed to grin at them when they were out under the open sky. There the three freshmen were allowed to sit down on the steps and put on their shoes. The campus clock struck one as they moved on again.

"It's a real lovely night for a murder," observed Merriwell pleasantly.

"Maybe you'll think it is before the night is over," said the one who had poked the shiny thing at him.

Frank gave him a keen glance. The mask was baffling, but the voice had sounded familiar.

They left the school grounds by a well-trodden path that brought them, before long, near the shore on which the surf was murmuring. Farther on, they came to the cove where the academy boathouse was located. Merry thought of his first view of the building from the top of the hill, only three days ago. Plenty had happened since then. Now what?

The leader of the masks walked straight to the door of the boathouse and rapped a signal on it with the shiny thing in his hand.

"Who's there?" came a challenge from the other side of the door.

"The execution committee with doomed victims," was the answer. "Bur-r-r!" shivered Mulloy. "It's a slight chill I have."

The heavy door swung open. "Enter, Chief Executioner, with the execution committee and your victims," said a masked boy who had been waiting there with three companions.

"But who are you?" suspiciously asked the one who had knocked. He leaned forward and peered at the fellow who had opened the door.

"You're one too many here."

"I am Justice," was the solemn reply, "and I'm here to see that my name is not defiled."

"You're just a butt-in," said the chief executioner, as if annoyed. "Somebody must have got careless and slopped over. Oh, well, don't get the notion you're running the show."

The captive freshmen were led straight to the door of the boathouse and rapped a signal on it with the shiny thing in his hand.

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Frank, who had been pulled out of bed and stood on his feet. "Somebody has put the finger on us, but we'll get him."

"Smart boy," sneered one of the masked fellows. "You're wise to be good. Hop into your trousers now, for you're going to take a nice cool walk in the bracing air."

Hodge had been made to get up also, and he was grumbling. Yet he wasn't making as much of a fuss as might have been expected. And he obeyed the order to dress himself with no apparent great objection or reluctance.

They were allowed to put on stockings but not shoes. Some of the masked intruders took charge of their shoes. "Just so nobody will drop them carelessly as we're going out," explained one of them. "It might disturb the sweetly slumbering freshmen."

"You're very thoughtful and considerate," said Merriwell.

"Oh, sure. We never fry more than three freshmen in one night. It's quite enough, they're so very green and gummy."

The door was opened softly and Frank and Barney were marched along the corridor and down stairs with those shiny things poked against their backs and held there. The Irish boy had taken his cue from Merry, and submitted; but he had an idea that something not down on the program was going to pop before the night was over.

Hodge was in the hands of fellows who were giving their undivided attention to him.

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into the building. The door was closed and fastened behind them.

The interior of the boathouse was lighted, but closed window-shutters had prevented the light from being seen from the outside.

"Now just a minute, please," said Mulloy after they had entered. "I'm not making a squawk over being hazed a bit, you understand, but when it comes to using pistols to make us take it, I call that going some. And I'll have ye know I resent it."

"Why, you poor flannel-mouthed pipsqueak!" said the leader of the hazers. "Let me give you a good look at the kind of pistols we work with. Here's one of them."

He held up the shining thing in his hand for Barney to see, and Barney's eyes bulged.

"It was a nickel-plated water faucet!"

"Well, for the love of grandmother's sink!" gasped Barney Mulloy, staring at the thing he had mistaken for a pistol. "Nothing but a water-faucet! Now I lay me down to sleep!"

The hazers were laughing behind their black masks. Even Merriwell, who had been fooled as much as Mulloy, was forced to laugh.

"It's a leg on us, Barney," he admitted. "But there's another shake coming."

"You've said it, smart boy," sneered the Chief Executioner, "and you'll do the shaking."

Once more Frank looked sharply at the speaker. Now he was sure he knew that voice. "I'm shivering already," he said. "I always shiver in a draft, and there's a strong breeze blowing from the Grand Canyon."

The big fellow's body jerked and became as stiff as an icicle. His eyes glared at Merry's laughing face through the holes in his mask. With a snap of his hand, he threw the water-faucet away under the cradle in which the school's eight-angled shell was resting.

"Where are the gloves?" he snarled. "Bring 'em on and let's see if this wise guy can take his medicine."

"I was told," said Frank smoothly, "that hazing had been abolished in this school. There was a report that four sophs had been let out for taking part in the pastime last year."

"But this is no hazing," declared the Chief Executioner. "It's a sacrifice and you're the goat. It won't do you any good to kick, either. Strip that sweater off him, boys."

"Say the word," whispered Mulloy in Frank's ear. "And I'm with ye to make good fish hash of this bunch."

Merry shook his head. "It isn't worth it," he replied, "the odds being what they are. Wait for a better break, Barney."

He didn't let them pull the sweater off him. He removed it himself and stood naked to the waist. The one who had called himself Justice took a look at Merriwell's torso, shoulders and arms, and whistled softly.

"Maybe this isn't the goat, after all," he said, "but we'll find out. It won't be long now."

Then Frank and Barney saw that several of the masked fellows had stripped Hodge to the waist also. Bart had protested against it, but his objections had sounded strangely weak. There was dirt in the air.

One of the hazers had brought forward a set of boxing gloves. At sight of them, Merriwell got it. This was to be the show-down between him and Hodge, and Bart had been wise to it all the time. That was why he had submitted so weakly from the start.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Catch Up on Chic



IF YOU'RE a bit behind in the thrilling game of Sew-Your-Own, Milady, why not take advantage of the holiday season and catch up? Today's trio is especially right for "vacation sewing" because it consists of simple practical pieces that require little time and trouble. Make all three and you'll have gone a long way toward putting the old punch back in the game.

**Streamlined Styling.**  
The slip at the left is all you could wish for from the standpoint of styling. It offers superb lines from the moderately low cut V neck, through the dart-fitted waist right down to the very hem. The clever overlapping back is light proof and provides an action pleat so necessary for complete satisfaction. Important, too, is the

fact that you may choose the material you wish in your own color. Better make it in duplicate for many meticulous months ahead.

**Pretty in Sheer Wool.**  
The two-piece in the center is, like the slip, heavy on style. The defined waist is effectively young as is the flowing skirt and little round collar. It is just the frock to give one lots of git-up-and-git for the second semester, or "to break the ice" whenever one is anxious about one's appearance. It can be the height of chic in sheer wool—very pretty in flat crepe.

**Modern Home Dress.**  
When it's home you're thinking of you naturally turn to a frock like the third member of the trio at the right. This button-all-the-way model is different enough to delight you and simple enough to set you sewing at sight. It is cut for comfort but with an ever watchful eye on that elusive little thing called chic. Contrast may be had in the collar and cuffs and in that trim row of buttons that march down the line—and then back again. Look fresh in your version in pretty percale.

## Home Heating Hints

By John Barclay  
Heating Expert

### Poking Fire Bed From Above Forms Clinkers, Smothers Fire, Wastes Fuel

WHILE a poker frequently is a handy implement to use on a furnace, let me caution you against using it for the purpose of agitating the fire-bed from above! That results in a lot of trouble for you and for your furnace. Stirring the fire through the furnace door opening only mixes ashes with the live coals, creat-



ing clinkers. As you know, clinkers choke a fire and prevent the coal from burning freely and completely. Also, they clog the grates, making it difficult to shake the fire properly. Owing to the odd size and shape of lumps of coal at the point that is poked from above, the fuel-bed becomes packed, and this packing prevents the free passage of air, thus forming clinkers. Clinkers formed this way, however, cause less trouble, for ordinarily they can be broken up and dropped into the ashpit by gently shaking the grates.

## Constipated?



What a difference good bowel habits can make! To keep food wastes soft and moving, many doctors recommend Nujol. INSIST ON GENUINE NUJOL.

## CHEW LONG BILL NAVY TOBACCO

## Are Women Better Shoppers than Men?

GRANTING a woman's reputation for wise buying, let's trace the methods by which she has earned it. Where does she find out about the advantages and details of electrical refrigeration? What tells her how to keep the whole household clean—rugs, floors, bathroom tiling—and have energy left over for golf and parties? How does she learn about new and delicious entrees and desserts that surprise and delight her family? Where does she discover those subtleties of dress and make-up that a man appreciates but never understands? Why, she reads the advertisements. She is a consistent, thoughtful reader of advertisements, because she has found that she can believe them—and profit thereby. Overlooking the advertisements would be depriving herself of data continuously useful in her job of Purchasing Agent to the Family. For that matter, watch a wise man buy a car or a suit or an insurance policy. Not a bad shopper himself! He reads advertisements, too!