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Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
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Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
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Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
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Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
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Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
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Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
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Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntatz
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Tom Fairfield's Pluck and Luck

Allen Chapman

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Allen Chapman

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-8770-5

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TOM FAIRFIELD'S PLUCK AND LUCK

CHAPTER I

AN INDIGNATION MEETING

"Well, well, by all that's good! If it isn't Tom Fairfield back again! How are you, old man?"

"Oh, fine and dandy! My! but it's good to see the old place again, Morse," and the tall, good-looking lad whom the other had greeted so effusively held out his hand—a firm, brown hand that told of a summer spent in the open.

"Any of our boys back, Morse?" went on Tom Fairfield, as he looked around the campus of Elmwood Hall. "I thought I'd meet Bert Wilson or Jack Fitch on my way up, but I missed 'em. How are you, anyhow?"

"Fit as a fiddle. Say, you're looking as if you had enjoyed your vacation."

"I sure did! You're not looking bad yourself. Able to sit up and take nourishment, I guess."

"You've struck it, Tom. But what did you do with yourself all summer?"

"Jack, Bert and another chum of mine went camping, and, believe me, we had some times!"

"So I heard. I had a letter from Jack the other day. He mentioned something about a secret of the mill, the crazy hermit and all that sort. Say, but you did go some."

"That's right. It was great while it lasted. How about you?" and Tom looked at his friend, Morse Denton, anxious to hear about his good times.

"Oh, I went with my folks to the shore. Had a pretty good summer—motorboating, canoeing with the girls, and all that. But I got a bit tired of it. I came back early to get some of the football material into shape for this fall," and Morse Denton, who had been captain of the Freshman eleven, and who was later elected as regular captain, looked at Tom, as if sizing him up as available pigskin material.

"Well, I guess none of our crowd has shown up yet," went on Tom. "I fancied I'd be a day or so early, as I wanted to have a good pick of rooms. Got yours, yet?"

"Sure thing. I attended to that first. But there are some fine ones left. Come on over to Hollywood Hall, and we'll see what'll suit you. Try and get one next to mine if you can. Are Bert and Jack going to room with you?"

"They are if we can get a place that will hold us."

"That isn't as easy as it sounds with the way you fellows do things. But there's one nice big study near mine."

"Then I'll just annex it. Say! But it's good to be back. The old place hasn't changed any," and Tom looked around admiringly at the groups of buildings that made up Elmwood Hall. His gaze strolled over the green campus, which would soon be alive with students, and then to the baseball diamond and the football gridiron, on which latter field the battle of the pigskin over the chalk marks would soon be waged.

"Well, they've done some painting and fixing up during vacation," said Morse, as he linked his arm in that of Tom and the two walked on together toward Hollywood Hall, the official dormitory of the Sophomore class. "The gridiron has been leveled off a bit and some new seats put up. Land knows we needed 'em! We'll have some great games this year. You'll play, of course, Tom?"

"Maybe—if I'm asked."

"Oh, you'll be asked all right," laughed Morse. "Did you expect Bert and Jack would be here?"

"I didn't know but what they might. I haven't seen 'em for the last two weeks. After we closed our camp Bert went up in the country,

where his folks were stopping, and Jack took a little coasting trip on a fishing boat. We were to meet here, but they must be delayed. However, school doesn't open for a day or so. But I want to get my place in shape."

"Good idea. That's what I did. Well, here we are," Morse added as the two came opposite a large building. "Let's go in and see what Old Balmy has in stock."

They advanced into the dormitory, being met in the lower hall by a pleasant-faced German who greeted them with:

"Ach! Goot afternoons, gentlemen. Und it iss rooms vat you are seeking?"

"Rooms it is, Herr Balmgester," replied Morse. "My friend, Tom Fairfield, here, wants that big one next to mine."

"Vat! Dot large room for one lad?"

"Oh, I've got two friends coming," explained Tom. "I had a double room over in the Ball and Bat," he added, referring to the Freshman dormitory, "but there'll be three of us here."

"Ach! Dot iss goot! Two boys makes troubles," and the German monitor of the Sophomore dormitory held up two fingers. "Three is besser—vat one does not vant to do ven der oder two does makes like a safety-valve; ain't it yes?" and he laughed ponderously.

"Oh, we'll be good," promised Tom, with a wink at Morse. "Let's see the room."

It proved all that could be desired in the way of a study and sleeping apartment for three healthy, fun-loving lads, and Tom at once signed for it, feeling sure that his two chums, when they did arrive, would approve of his choice.

"Well, now that's done, come on into town, and I'll treat you to ice cream," invited Morse, for though it was late in September the day was warm. "I'm in funds now," went on the football captain, "and I may not be—later," he added with a grim smile.

"Oh, I don't know," said Tom, hesitatingly. "I rather thought I'd hang around. Maybe Jack or Bert will come, and—"

"They can't get here until the five o'clock train, now," declared Morse. "You've got time enough to go to town and be back again. Come ahead."

"All right," assented Tom. "Wait until I get the porter to fetch my trunk from the station."

The check having been given to the porter, Tom and his chum strolled toward the trolley line that would take them into the small city of Elmwood.

"Here comes the human interrogation point!" exclaimed Morse, when they were almost at the trolley line.

"I thought he wasn't coming back to school," remarked Tom, looking around.

"He did say he wasn't, but I guess his folks made him. He wanted to branch out for himself and be a lawyer, I believe. He sure would be great on cross-examining witnesses with the way he asks questions," finished Morse with a laugh.

A small lad was approaching the two friends on the run, and, as he neared them, he called out:

"Hello, Morse! Say, Tom Fairfield, when did you get in? Did you have a good time? I hear you went camping and discovered a hidden treasure. Did it amount to much? How much did you get? Where's Jack and Bert? Are you going in for football? Where are you rooming?"

Tom and Morse came to a stop. They eyed each other solemnly. Then Tom said gravely:

"Isn't it a shame; and he's so young, too!"

"Yes," assented Morse with a mournful shake of his head. "I understand that his case is hopeless. They are going to provide a keeper for him."

"Say, look here, you fellows!" exclaimed the small lad. "What's eating you, anyhow? What do you mean by that line of talk?"

"Oh, he heard us!" gasped Tom, in pretended confusion. "I didn't think he had any rational moments. But he has. There, Georgie," he went on soothingly. "Go lie down in the shade, and you'll be all right in a little while. Do you suffer much?"

"Say, what's the joke?" demanded George Abbot, the small lad referred to. "Can't I ask you a question, without being insulted and called crazy?"

"Sure you can, Why," replied Tom, giving the lad the nick-name bestowed on him because of his many interrogations. "Of course you can ask one question, or even two, but you can't fire broadsides at us in that fashion. Remember that we have weak hearts."

"And our constitutions are not strong," added Morse.

"Oh, you be hanged!" murmured George. "If you can't—"

"Oh, come along!" invited Tom, catching him by the arm. "We're going to town. It's Morse's treat. Yes, George, I did have a bang-up time on my vacation. I'll tell you all about it later."

The three were soon on a trolley car and, a little later, they had reached the town, heading for a drug store where ice cream sodas were a specialty.

"It goes to the right spot!" exclaimed Tom gratefully, as he finished what was set before him. "What do you say to a moving picture show? It will pass the time until the last train gets in. Then for some fun to-night, if Jack and Bert show up."

The others were willing, and soon, in company with some other Elmwood Hall students whom they met, the boys went to the place of the moving pictures.

"Well, it's almost time for the choo-choo cars to sand-paper in," remarked Tom a little later, looking at his watch as he and Morse paced the depot platform.

"Yes, there she blows," remarked his companion, as a distant whistle sounded.

"There they are!"

"There's Tom!"

"Hello, you old skate!"

"You got here ahead of us!"

"And there's Morse Denton!"

"Rah for Elmwood Hall!"

"I see Joe Rooney."

"Yes, and there's Lew Bentfield."

"Hello, Bruce! Bruce Bennington," yelled Tom.

"Hello Tom! Didn't expect to see me back; did you?" and a tall, well-browned lad, somewhat older than the others, leaped from the still-moving train, and grasped our hero's hand.

The other remarks, preceding Thorn's, had come so fast and in such confusion that it is impossible to declare who said which or what. Then, when Tom had greeted Bruce, the Senior who owed so much to him—a Senior who had returned for a post-graduate course—our hero spied some others of his chums on the train.

"Jack! Jack Fitch!" he yelled. "Hello, Bert—Bert Wilson! I've been waiting for you!"

"There he is! There's Tom!" yelled Jack, hauling in the head of his chum Bert from one window, only to poke his own cranium out of another. "Hurray!"

There was a rush of many feet, a tossing about of valises and suit cases, the hoarse cries of hack drivers and expressmen, and, above all, the greetings of the students, the smack of meeting palms and the pistol-like reports of clappings on backs and shoulders.

"Three cheers for Elmwood Hall!" cried someone. They were given, and a

"Tiger" was called for, followed by the school yell.

"Say, Tom," began Jack Fitch, when he could get his breath. "What about a room? Let's slip off and get one before this mob takes 'em all."

"Go easy, son; go easy," advised Tom calmly. "All is provided for. Just tell the man to send your luggage to Hollywood Hall, and all

will be well. Same to you, Bert. I've got a swell apartment for us three, near where Morse hangs out."

"Good for you!" cried Bert.

"Trust Tom to look out for the sleeps and eats," laughed Jack. "Oh, but it's good to be back!"

"Just what I said," declared Tom. "There's lots of good times in prospect."

Together the four chums, followed by others of their acquaintance, moved toward the Sophomore dormitory. The five o'clock train had brought in many students, all of whom were in a hurry to pick out their rooms.

"Say, this is a swell place all right," declared Bert, a little later, when Tom had ushered his two chums into the cozy apartment he had reserved.

"All to the plush furniture," added Jack. "You're all right, Tom. How is it for getting in after hours?"

"Fine. It's right near a rear stairway. Oh, I saw to that all right. And the monitor is Old Balmy – we can work him easy."

"Fine!" cried Bert. "Now let's get things straightened out, and unpack some of our duds," for their baggage had arrived ere they had done admiring their new quarters.

"We're Sophs now – don't forget that," advised Tom. "No more Freshmen!"

"And we can do some hazing on our own account," added Jack. "Oh, glorious!"

There came a knock on the door.

"Come!" invited Tom.

The portal swung open to admit the form and features of little George Abbot.

"Are you all here? When did you and Bert come? Is there any — —
"

"Stop!" thundered Tom, catching up a heavy baseball glove. "Halt in your tracks, or it will be the worse for you! One more question, and —"

"You wait until you hear this one," said George calmly. "Maybe you don't want to, though," he added mysteriously.

"What is it?" asked Jack, struck by something in the manner of the human question box, and Tom lowered the glove.

"I was going to ask if you'd heard the news," went on George. "But if you don't want to — —"

"Go ahead, Why," invited Bert. "I'll listen, anyhow. What's the news?"

"Sam Heller and Nick Johnson just arrived in a big touring car. Sam says it's his."

"Sam Heller here?"

"And Nick Johnson?"

"In a touring car?"

Tom, Jack and Bert asked the questions in turn. They fairly glared at George. The latter, satisfied with the impression he had produced, sank into an easy chair.

"They're here," he went on. "I just saw 'em come, and they're headed this way."

"Sam and Nick going to room in the same dormitory with us!" gasped Bert.

"After what they did?" asked Jack.

"Helping to capture and hold us fellows prisoners," said Tom bitterly.

"We won't stand for it!" declared Bert vigorously.

"I should say not!" came from Jack indignantly. "We will have to do something — protest — make a class matter of it. After what hap-

pened at the old mill, for those snobs to have the nerve to come back to Elmwood Hall. Why — "

"It is rather raw," interrupted Tom. "What shall we do?"

"Let's go out and confront 'em," suggested Bert. "If they have the nerve to meet us face to face— well, I don't believe they will have— that's all."

"Come on!" urged Jack, and he caught hold of Tom's arm and led him forth to face their common enemies. The meeting of the chums, that had started off so jollily, was now a session of indignation.

CHAPTER II

BRAZEN DEFIANCE

Talking over the unexpected news George Abbot had brought to them, and planning what they would say to the two lads who had done so much to injure them, our hero and his chums hurried out of the dormitory and across the school campus.

"Where did you see 'em, George?" asked Jack, looking at the small youth who had such fondness for asking questions.

"They just got in— fine big auto— they're over at 'Pop' Swab's soda emporium, filling up on ginger ale, and poking fun at some of the new fellows."

"Just like 'em," murmured Tom. "We'll do something more than poke fun at 'em when we see 'em."

"That's what," added Jack.

"Maybe they aren't going to stay— they may have just come here for a bluff, and are going away again," suggested Bert.

"How about that, George?" asked Tom, and the small lad, who was too much engrossed with the possibility of some excitement presently to ask his usual number of questions, replied:

"I guess they're going to stay all right. I heard Sam tell Nick to hurry up and pick out a room in Hollywood Hall, or all the best ones would be gone."

"By Jove!" ejaculated Jack. "They mean to stay all right!"

"If we let 'em," added Bert significantly.

"Come on," urged Tom. "If we're going to have a run-in with 'em, let's have it in the open, before they get in the dormitory."

And while our hero and his chums are thus hastening to meet the lads who had played such a mean trick on them that summer may I be permitted a few pages in which to make my new readers a little better acquainted with Tom Fairfield?

Tom, aged about sixteen, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Brokaw Fairfield. He lived in the village of Briartown, on the Pine river, and had much sport running his motorboat on that stream.

In the first volume of this series, entitled, "Tom Fairfield's Schooldays," I related how Tom's father and mother had to go to Australia to claim some property left by a relative. As it was not convenient to take Tom along he was sent to school—Elmwood Hall—where he boarded and studied.

Tom at once made friends and enemies, as any lad would. But his enemies were few, the two principal ones being Sam Heller and Nick Johnson, and they cordially hated our hero. Tom's chief friend was Jack Fitch, with whom he roomed, though Bert Wilson, George Abbot, Joe Rooney, Lew Bentfield, Ed. Ward, Henry Miller and a host of others were on intimate terms with him. I might also mention Bruce Bennington, a Senior when Tom reached Elmwood Hall, and with whom Tom soon became friendly.

Dr. Pliny Meredith was headmaster at Elmwood. He was sometimes called "Merry" because, as Jack Fitch used to say, he was so glum. But he was a gentleman. Not so Professor Skeel, who was a taskmaster. It was against Mr. Skeel that Tom led a revolt because of the professor's meanness in Latin class.

How the boys went on a strike, how they were made prisoners, how they escaped in a great storm, burned the effigy of Mr. Skeel at the flag pole, and how Tom won the strike—all this is set down in

the first volume. There is also told how Tom saved Bruce Bennington from disgrace, and was the means of Mr. Skeel fleeing in fear of discovery.

In the second book, entitled, "Tom Fairfield at Sea," I told how our hero learned that the vessel on which his parents were sailing from Australia had been wrecked. He at once set out to make the long voyage to try to find some news of them or, if possible, to rescue them.

The steamer on which Tom sailed was wrecked, and he and some sailors, together with a little boy, floated for some time on a derelict with which the *Silver Star* had collided. On the derelict, most unexpectedly, came Professor Skeel, who was on his way to Honolulu when the accident happened.

The dreary days of suffering on the derelict, and in an open boat, the meanness of Mr. Skeel and how Tom and his companions were finally rescued, is all set down in the second book of this series. Tom finally reached Australia and, setting out again, was just in time to rescue his parents from the savages of one of the South Pacific islands.

Tom reached home in time to go back to school and take his second-year examinations, which he passed, thus becoming a Sophomore.

Then came the long summer vacation, and as Tom had had enough of travel he decided to go to the woods. In the third volume, called "Tom Fairfield in Camp," I told of his experiences in the forest. With him went Jack Fitch, Bert Wilson and a Briartown lad named Dick Jones.

Almost at the first Tom and his chums ran into a mystery. Near where they pitched their tents there was an old mill where there was said to be a treasure hidden. But an old hermit who owned the mill was seeking for the treasure, and he was not the most pleasant character in the world. At the very start he threatened the boys and tried to drive them from the woods.

But they decided to have a hunt for the treasure. It did not add to their pleasure to learn that Mr. Skeel, who had returned from Honolulu, was also camping near the mysterious mill, and, most unex-

pectedly our friends also learned that Sam Heller and Nick Johnson were also in the same woods.

Tom and his friends had many experiences in camp, and with the old hermit. Finally their motorboat was taken, and they were in sore straits. But still they kept after the treasure.

Then Bert, Jack and Dick mysteriously disappeared from camp. Tom suspected Mr. Skeel, and the two school bullies, Sam and Nick, of having had some sort of a hand in the kidnapping of his chums.

How he traced them, recovered his boat, and found the secret passage into the old mill, you will find told in my third book. Also how Tom accidentally discovered the hidden room and the place where the treasure was concealed. Mr. Skeel and the two Elmwood lads, who had held Jack, Dick and Bert prisoners, fled in alarm, and the old hermit, restored to his right mind through the finding of his wealth, lived a peaceful life thereafter.

Once the secret of the mill was discovered, Tom and his chums had an enjoyable time in camp. They remained until it was almost time for school to begin, and then returned to their several homes.

And now, once more, they were together in Elmwood Hall, and, most unexpectedly, had come the news of the return of the two bullies, Sam and Nick. It was startling news, in a way, for, after the mean fashion in which the two cronies had treated Tom's chums, when they were held prisoners in the old mill, Tom scarcely believed that Sam and Nick would dare show their faces at Elmwood Hall again.

"And yet they're here," said our hero, as he and the others hurried on across the broad campus.

"And they're going to stay, if what George says is true," added Jack.

"Oh, it's true enough," declared the questioning lad.

"There they are!" suddenly exclaimed Bert Wilson, pointing toward a small building just outside of the school property. It was a shack where "Pop" Swab sold soda and "pop," from which he took his name.

"Yes, that's them all right," assented Tom.

"And some car they have," added Jack. "I wonder where they got it?"

"They won't have it long, if they treat it as recklessly as that," commented Bert, for the two lads having leaped into the auto, Sam threw in the gears so clumsily that the machine was stalled, with a grinding that did not augur well for the mechanism.

It was evident that the two cronies, having satisfied their thirst, were about to drive on, but Sam's error made it necessary for him to get out to crank the car again. This gave our friends a chance to come up to them.

Sam had his back to them, as he bent over to take hold of the crank, but something Nick said in a low voice caused him to turn around. Then he saw Tom and the others.

There was something in Tom's manner that caused Sam to take an attitude of defence, though our hero had no intention of coming to blows with the bully.

The oncoming party of lads came to a halt a short distance from the auto, and Sam, straightening up, surveyed them, a shade of wonder, not unmixed with apprehension, passing over his face. Nick, sitting in the car, openly sneered.

"So you've come back," spoke Tom cuttingly.

"Of course we have," answered Sam, breathing a little easier, as he saw that he was in no immediate danger.

"And we're going to stay," added Nick with a laugh.

"You are?" Jack almost yelled.

"We certainly are," was the answer. "This is a free country, you know; and we've paid for our board. See you later, fellows. Crank her up, Sam!"

The brazen effrontery of the two amazed our friends. They had not believed that the two cronies would come back. And that they would dare remain, after what they had done, seemed incredible.

"Are you in earnest?" asked Bert, raising his voice to be heard above the thundering exhaust of the auto which Sam started.

"Of course we are," declared Sam calmly, as he took his seat. "What's the matter with you fellows, anyhow? Why shouldn't we stay?"

"You know why you shouldn't stay!" cried Tom, shaking his finger at Sam and Nick. "After the mean trick you played on Bert and Jack, standing guard over them in the old mill, in league with that scoundrel Skeel—giving Jack and Bert only bread and water—after that you dare come back here and expect to be treated decently? Well, you're expecting too much, that's all I've got to say! We'll make Elmwood Hall too hot to hold you! You'll live in Coventry all the while you're here. You won't get a decent— —"

"Oh, get out of my way, Fairfield, or I'll run you down!" snapped Sam, as he threw in the gear and released the clutch, and, had our hero not leaped back, he would have been struck by the heavy touring car.

"Well, of all the gigantic, unmitigated nerve!" gasped Jack, as he stared at the swiftly moving car. "That is the limit!"

CHAPTER III

THE ADVICE OF BRUCE

The silence amid the group of Tom's friends, punctuated at first by the exhaust from the car, was finally broken by Bert Wilson, who asked:

"Well, Tom, what do you think of that?"

"I don't know what to think," was the answer, given slowly. "It gets me!"

"And it does all of us," added Jack. "In the first place, I never thought Sam and Nick would have the nerve to come back, but since they had, I surely thought they'd cave in when they saw we meant business."