

Trouble With Miss Gratwick

Miss Gratwick has taken a disliking to Mike Pilkington, and, one day, when she tells him off unfairly in front of the class, Mike becomes resentful and talks to his friend Chas about getting back at her.

'Pilkington,' said Miss Gratwick, 'is one of those mean and sneaky boys who call out behind their teacher's back.'

She had a very scathing voice, Miss Gratwick. Mike looked sulky. He didn't mind being ticked off if he deserved it, but this was unfair. He'd actually been trying to *help* Miss Gratwick. He'd been on her *side*. Chas had been prodding him in the back and trying to talk to him, and he had turned round to tell him to *shut up*, and this was the thanks he got.

Miss Gratwick turned as if to go on writing on the blackboard, but swung round again on the chance of catching him grinning at his friends. She was suspicious by nature.

But Mike hadn't moved. The class giggled, and Miss Gratwick felt foolish. She snapped, 'And you can take that nasty look off your face!'

Gleefully, Chas poked him in the back.

'Sneaky boys, sneaky boys,' he whispered. 'Pilkington is one of those mean and sneaky boys ...'

Mike edged away and ignored him.

'Neek-y boys, neek-y boys,' said

Chas delightedly under his breath. 'Pil-king-ton is wanna-those-mean 'n' neek-y boys ...'

Mike turned suddenly and swiped at Chas's face.

'Oh, shut up!'

'Pilkington,' said Miss Gratwick, 'I've had just about enough of you. Come out!'

She gave Mike a painful knock on the head with the knuckle of her bony forefinger, and made him stand behind the blackboard for the rest of the lesson.

'She's got it in for you,' said Chas, as they left school.

'I've got it in for her and all.'

'What you reckon you're going to do, then?'

'You'll see.'

'What?'

'Not going to tell you.'

'I'll believe it when it happens.'

Mike's heart was full of bitterness. He would have liked to murder Miss Gratwick. But he choked back his feelings and changed the subject.

