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MY FIRST EVENING AT THE L-CLUB.

"Edward, your election to the noble brotherhood of which I am a member took place last evening. Will you accept my best congratulations?"

Elliessley Whyte entered my chambers one afternoon with the above announcement. Languidly reclining upon my lounge, I half rose from the recumbent position, and, taking Elliessley outstretched hand, asked him to repeat this remark, and as I had been three-quarters asleep when I heard it.

My friend complied. I may as well state, *entreeux*, dear reader, that I had heard, with a thrill of the intensest joy, every word of Elliessley's greeting the first time that he uttered it. But, among men of fashion, anything that resembles emotion is a *grossiere*—a vulgarity, a nonsense; besides, I had another reason for concealing my satisfaction at having been created a member of the L-Club, and that reason was pride. I have lived so long among fashionable circles, without enjoying the honor, that I was unwilling Elliessley Whyte should see how highly I valued it.

"Thank you for coming to tell me, my dear fellow," I drawled, lazily, in reply to a repetition of my friend's most welcome announcement. "It's quite a surprise, really. Chetwynde mentioned my having been proposed the other day, but I had completely forgotten the matter, I assure you."

Elliessley Whyte smiled a little oddly. Perhaps he was keen enough to penetrate my mask of indifference but he only remarked, walking toward the door:

"And now that my message is delivered, Edward, I must leave you for an evening, about further up-town. By-the-way," he continued, "Holmes and Erskine and Mortimer, and a half-dozen other men, wait you to be round at the club tonight, if you can spare an hour or so. At about eleven they said. Can you manage it?"

"I think so," was my reply. "Yes, they can depend on me. Will you be there?"

"Yes. *Au revoir*."

"*Au revoir*."

At eleven o'clock precisely I entered the modest but elegant club-building in the street, with a feeling of delightful triumph that I cannot recall in those advanced years of mine without a smile at the foolish ambition I used then to cherish so fondly. The one social distinction which I had so long coveted was, I thought, mine at last.

Out of the many who would have sacrificed so much for the honor of calling themselves members of the L-Club, I had enjoyed the compliment of being chosen. It was a very pleasant and flattering trait to reflect upon. But I had little time for reflection just then. George Erskine, one of the friends who had been most zealous in obtaining my election, met me as I entered the large and handsome hall of the building.

"Ah, Stenforth," he said, advancing and taking my hand cordially in his, "I am delighted to find that you have so soon assumed the rights of membership. Come into the card room; you will find a host of old friends there."

I found most of those assembled in the card room, as it was called, men with whom I had long been on various terms of intimacy or acquaintance. They all appeared glad to see me—all treated me with a mixture of cordiality and courtesy which was very flattering to my self-love and to my new sense of importance.

While I stood among a knot of friends, and shared in the conversation that engaged them, Clive Erskine touched me on the shoulder, saying:

"I have secured a vacant card-table, Stenforth. Will you be my partner in a game of whist against Holmes and Rivers?"

"Willingly," I said. Erskine, I well knew, was accounted one of the best whist players in his circle and I could not appreciate the compliment conveyed by his request. "But you must not forget," I added, "to introduce me to Mr. Rivers. We are not acquainted."

A few minutes later the introduction took place, and a lively and interesting game was entered upon. The stakes were high, and, although I was a practiced player, my luck seemed quite marvelous. Weakly assisted by Erskine, I easily won the first three games.

As the deal was made by Rivers a the beginning of the fourth game, I happened carelessly to glance toward his face. It was one of those mobile faces on which the passions or emotions of the "inner man" are easily portrayed. I read there, to my intense surprise, the profoundest contempt, mixed with an apparently almost un-governable anger. He returned my glance with a fierce expression in his deep, black, Spanish

sort of eyes that was far from pleasing me.

It was the kind of look which no gentleman cares about receiving from another.

My blood rose on the instant. Was it possible that he suspected me of foul play? What could I have done to merit this most singular indignation, tacitly expressed, it is true, but none the less evident.

"Oblige me by explaining," I said, in a voice that thoroughly controlled the annoyance I felt, "the cause of your somewhat peculiar demeanor toward me, Mr. Rivers. I am loth to believe that any misunderstanding should have occurred between us, but—"

To my consternation, he interrupted me with a sneer and a contemptuous wave of the hand in my direction.

"Mr. Stenforth need not assume with me the manners of an injured party. I have played whist to offend not to detect swindling, especially when so palpable and open as his. The manners of low gambling houses have been up to the present time, I believe, wholly foreign to the card tables of the L-Club. I regret that one whom I believed to be a gentleman should have introduced them this evening."

I was on my feet now with clenched hands, and a face that must have been white and ghastly with half smothered rage.

"Do you dare to assert—" I began; but passion choked me and the cold sneering tones of Rivers continued:

"I dare to assert, Edward Stenforth, that you are a swindling card sharp."

I answered him with a blow this time; not a damaging blow, however, for the quick hand of Erskine thrust mine aside before it had time to more than graze the cheek of my insulter. Then there was a great noise of rushing feet, and before I well realized my position, fully fifty men stood between Rivers and myself.

"It was an outrageous insult," said the voice of Erskine, who stood close at my side amid the throng; "and you returned it bravely, or would have done so, had I not prevented you."

"Which I greatly regret, Erskine."

My coolness was beginning to return now.

"Why regret it?" continued Erskine. Gentlemen should find other weapons than their fists, Stenforth. A blow is a blow, however, no matter how lightly dealt. I suppose Rivers will challenge you."

He had hardly finished speaking before Holmes, the gentleman who had been Rivers' partner at whist, made his way toward the throng.

"I am request d by Mr. Rivers," he said, "to demand immediate satisfaction from you for the insult you have inflicted."

"Immediate satisfaction," I said, coolly. "How is that possible. Although the age of duelling is past—"

"Ah, ah! you hesitate!" exclaimed twenty voices.

I looked about me. It seemed as if the eyes of every man present were fixed instantly upon my face.

"You are mistaken gentlemen," I said with the greatest calmness of manner I could assume. "I do not hesitate. I merely desire to know what is expected of me in this matter."

"If then do not refuse Mr. Rivers' challenge. I am skillful at no weapon but the pistol; and as I have, I believe the choice of weapons"—a dressing myself now exclusively to Holmes. "I shall of course choose that. Any further charge in the matter of time and place, will, I trust be assumed by my friend, Mr. Erskine."

Erskine bowed assentingly. A few moments of conversation took place between him and Holmes when, turning to me I at length said:

"I have decided upon both place and time—here and now. Does the arrangement meet your approval? There is no necessity of making this affair—provided it is entirely public—Rivers has expressed a wish that the duel, if you accept his challenge, take place at once. The weapons also are in the building."

Very well, I said, with a voice that shook a little, in spite of my efforts to control it; "I consent to your proposition."

It is not the first time that matters of this sort have been settled here in the club upon the evening of their occurrence Erskine went on. "So far I am glad to state that nothing more serious than flesh wounds have been a result. Will you remain here while Holmes and I measure the paces in another portion of the room? All will be prepared in a very few moments."

With these words Erskine left me among the crowd of gentlemen by whom they were surrounded. I had

not long to wait, he returned presently, saying:

Everything is in readiness. The distance is twelve paces. Will you follow me if you please? Rivers is already waiting for you to appear."

We passed arm-in-arm to the lower end of the large apartment. Rivers, as he had said, was there waiting my appearance. I could see a very miserable feeling when the pistol was put in my hand by Erskine. The suddenness of the whole matter had scarcely left me room for thought until now. Visions of a face that I loved better than all else in the world haunted me in a hundred pleading ways during the next three minutes that followed. I thought of the agony, too, that my family would feel on the morrow, if the news of my death were to reach them in their quiet country home. My death! Great God! was I to die like this?—not down for the mere obedience to a tyrannous social code that in my heart I had always despised and hated?

Well, hope of life was strong within me at the last. God help me, God help her, if—

"One."

Erskine's voice had spoken the first word of signal. And somehow that monosyllable wrought a change in my feelings—added a force to my arm and a courage to my heart, that I had wholly despaired of experiencing.

"Two."

I wheeled half round toward my opponent. The pistol was clutched in my hand, now, with a grasp of steel. I was no interior marksman at ordinary times. I felt that my aim would be deadly now.

"Three."

I stood face to face with my opponent.

"Fire."

Both pistols, discharged simultaneously, made one sharp report.

Was I hurt? I moved my limbs slightly, feeling no pain in any of them.

My opponent, seen faintly through a cloud of smoke, was standing erect—uninjured, perhaps like myself. And yet my aim had been sure; or, at least, I fancied so.

Suddenly George Erskine's voice sounded at my side, raised to a tone of the most extraordinary loudness: "Three cheers for Ned Stenforth! He has stood the test bravely."

I looked about me in utter bewilderment while five cheers were given clamorously from every side.

"For heaven's sake," I said, turning toward Erskine, what does this singular behavior mean on the part of yourself and the other members? What have I done to deserve this enthusiasm? Oblige me by explaining."

"That task is mine," said the voice of Rivers, as he approached to where I stood. "I have been acting a part tonight, Mr. Stenforth, which I assure you was most disagreeable to me. This evening's entire performance may be summed up in two words—your initiation. Perhaps you can now understand why it is that the L-Club is so difficult to enter. The men who fail to stand the test upon you this evening fall in becoming members. The secrecy of our initiation system is nothing remarkable. Those who have experienced it without afterward becoming members are not the ones to inform society of their inability to stand fire. Most confidential usually keeps them silent. And now," continued Rivers, extending his hand, "I trust that an epilogue to the ridiculous incidents I hurried at you this evening will be fully accepted. Let the whole matter, like the charge of those bullet-proof pistols we fought with, end in—smoke."

He offered me a cigar. I accepted it, and his extended hand likewise, and so ended my first evening at the L-Club.

THE BEGAL CYLONE.—The fuller account of the great cyclone, which on the 31st of October swept up the coast of the Bay of Bengal, proves that it was even more disastrous in its effects than the first dispatch described. A great wave, to the depth in many places of twenty feet, swept over the cluster of islands to the eastward of the mouth of the Ganges, entirely submerging them and also the main land for miles inland. Two-thirds of the population were destroyed. The islands alone were inhabited by three or four hundred thousand people. To add to the horrors of the calamity, the putrifying of the dead bodies is breeding cholera, of which a general outbreak is feared. This Bengal cyclone, must be remembered as one of the most awful in its effects of any of which we have the record.

An old lady hearing of a pedes-train's "great feat," wondered why they didn't interfere with his fast walking.

Robbers in Lincoln's Tomb.

THE ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE MARTYRED PRESIDENT'S REMAINS.

THE VANDALS SHADOWED AND FREIGHT AWAY BY DETECTIVES.

[Special Correspondent of the World.]

CHICAGO, November 18.—The arrest of two of the participants in the recent attempted desecration of the tomb of Abraham Lincoln has brought to light the history of a scheme unparalleled in the history of crime. The parties arrested are Jack Mullins, alias Terence, and one Jack Hughes, a notorious counterfeit, who has followed the business successfully for the past ten years or more. They expected in the first place to secure from the Monument Association, if not from the Government, a large sum of money, and obtain, in the second place, the pardon of the notorious Ben Boyd, now serving out a sentence of ten years in the United States Prison. The den kept by Mullins and Cornelius, his partner, in this city, is known as the "Hub," and generally believed to be the resort of counterfeiters and other desperate characters. This place Detective Tyrrell, of the United States Secret Service, had under surveillance since, in order to ascertain who made the "Hub" a resort, he called to his assistance "a roper" by the name of Swegles. For some time Mullins and Hughes fought shy of Swegles, but finally admitted him to confidence after being assured by a detective of the Central Station that the youth was one of the greatest horse-thieves in the country. Having obtained this assurance they commenced swagging Swegles, and finally intrusted him with

THE PLOT.

Having fully tested Swegles, as they believed, and dismissed all suspicions of his fidelity, they eventually unfolded their plan to carry off the remains of Mr. Lincoln from Springfield, Ill., then not only secure the pardon of Boyd from Joe's, but also obtain from the Federal or State Government some \$200,000 or more for a return of the relics. While apparently leading himself to the plans of the conspirators, Swegles was in consultation with a friendly lawyer, Mr. Deane, through whom the plot was communicated to Robert Lincoln, Mr. Sweet, Colonel Stuart and the Chief of the Secret Service at Washington. Swegles was directed to go on with the conspirators, and in the meantime necessary measures would be taken to prevent the consummation of the heinous plot and secure the persons of the tomb-visitants. After many secret conferences the conspirators finally fixed upon election night for the

DESECRATION OF THE TOMB.

Although a person had been sent down one week in advance to reconnoitre, the scheme desired the assistance of a fourth man, Swegles cunningly managed to have this matter left to himself. He selected a man named Brown but the latter would have nothing to do with the business until assured that Swegles was acting under proper advice, having secured the necessary tools and arranged a plan whereby negotiations might be opened for a return of the remains when a reward should be forthcoming the party left this city on Monday evening via the St. Louis train. Through an understanding with Swegles, Brown having first sworn himself to Mullins and Hughes, left the train at Burlington Crossing and proceeded no farther. Having reached Springfield, during the course of the day Hughes and Swegles paid a visit to the cemetery and took a look at the tomb. Having returned to Mullins and explained how the body was bolted, he introduced a lengthy bag, explaining that in case the casket proved too heavy to carry away, they would burst it open, double the body up and carry it away in the bag. Detective Tyrrell had kept the would-be despoilers constantly in view and held daily conferences with Swegles and Mr. Deane. Having seen the conspirators off for the scene of their depredation, he, accompanied by Eimer Washburne and a couple of Pinkerton men, followed on and took the necessary steps to battle and secure the burglar. In the dusk of the evening the officers drove out to Oak Ridge. Having sent the carriage

back, they proceeded to Monument Hill and were admitted by the doorkeeper to the charge of the plot. Having secured admission, preparations were made for the RECEPTION ON THE BURGLARS.

The door of the entrance containing the sarcophagus faces south and that of the hall in the contrary direction, the distance between the entrance being something more than 100 feet. It was deemed best to remain indoors and give the robbers no sign of their presence. A party was posted in the lobby in the rear with orders to report any noise he might hear in the tomb. About 9 o'clock two of the robbers was flushed into a hall and a voice exclaimed "All is right." This remark was made by Swegles, and he served to announce to the officers that the party were there to begin work. Hughes also came to the door and was recognized by the officers, standing back in the dark. After satisfying themselves that all was right within the hall the burglars proceeded to the tomb, and after much difficulty succeeded in effecting an entrance. Operations were begun at once by prying off the upper lid of the sarcophagus and then starting the under one with an axe and chisel. In the meantime the sentinel on duty in the labyrinth hearing a grating sound several doors as if blows were being dealt towards where the officers were and whispered. The detectives however did not hear him and waited for a signal to be given by Swegles. A signal was given at last, and all passed quietly. Each man had a cocked revolver in his hand, prepared to shoot. As the party were turning toward the entrance of the tomb the hammer of a revolver accidentally exploded a cap, and gave the alarm. The burglars were off at once, and when the officers reached the vault no one was there. The detectives made a careful search in the vicinity but the villains had made good their escape. The marble sarcophagus containing the casket stands upon pedestals in the vestibule kept there to be seen by visitors to the tomb. The body rests in a lead casket, and this again is included in a cedar chest and the whole in sarcophagus. The double lid of the latter had been pried off and disfigured by the operation. The casket itself had been chipped and pulled out about a foot from the sarcophagus.

On Friday evening last officers visited the "Hub," a party going inside and the remainder waiting at the door. Hughes was sitting composedly in a chair while Mullins attended to business behind the bar. Both were arrested and locked up in the Central Station. To-day they were forwarded to Springfield, where they will have a hearing on Monday.

The first internment in Savannah, Ga., from yellow fever was on August 21st. In nine weeks over 1,200 persons died. The total population is about 28,000. About 19,000 remained to meet the plague. In Brunswick the epidemic began later and ended earlier. Yet in these two or six weeks 10 per cent of her resident population were swept away.

"What brought you to prison, my colored friend?" said a visiting clergyman to a negro. "I'm constabular, sah."—"Yes, but I mean had anything to do with it?" "Yes, sah; dey was buf ob em drink."

In London a Jew has been charged with the murder of a Jew. It is said that this is the first time such a thing has happened, and that the Jew hanged in England was hanged 200 years ago for forgery.

A Norwich man has invented a machine which will turn out fifty broomhandles a minute. It will be patented under the name "discouragement to matrimony."

"If Smith undertakes to pull my ears," said Jones, "he will just have his hands full, now." The crowd looked at the man's ears, and thought so, too.

Nearly every man tells his wife there is another man in town who closely resembles him, and who is frequently seen coming out of his house.

"Did you do nothing to reanimate the body?" was recently asked of a witness at a coroner's inquest. "Yes, sir; we searched his pockets," was the reply.

[An old maid—A woman that's been made a long time.

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