

Trumlett's head prepared as I expected it to grow. He led through dummy with perfect facility, and it was the same if Austin missed, or if he missed me. But every time Trumlett led, it was as if he saw every card in my hand, and each time I looked up I caught the same haunting expression of face which had struck me the moment we were partners. As far as I could think without neglecting my game, I tried to recall the face of which his remembrance me. It must have been the war on his cheeks—where had I seen any one with a scar on his cheek-bone? And yet, when I thought over it again, I remembered that I had only noticed the scar after he had played the first card; the room-boys had struck me while I waited for his lead. What was it, then? Oh, I have! It is the youthfulness of his dyed whiskers bringing out the hard old look of the lines about his mouth when he was thinking. Yet there was something more wanting.

I had neglected my game during this last moment of thought, and I was recalled by my partner. "Your play, Mr. Solly," he said, in a strange hush, "is so different from the pleasant tones of the beginning of our game. It only wanted that to bear out the resemblance; the voice was now entirely in keeping with the face. Through the deepening twilight it grew upon me like something ghastly; the knowledge of the cards I held, the command of the game, the reading my thoughts, except with the gleam of his fresh whiskers and his hard face, seemed to pass upon me. Many times I was on the verge of making fatal mistakes; but each time it seemed that Trumlett looked at me understandingly, and his look suggested the card I should play. We won the first game with ease, but we lost the second. Trumlett said, "I like your play better as an antagonist than as partner, Mr. Solly. You made a mistake."

"I own I made one," I replied. "It is the light. My eyes are rather weak, and I can't see my longer."

Trumlett looked at me, and then he looked at the cards we dealt round. As soon as the light came full on his face I felt lock in my chair with horror. I had recognized the face now; it was the man I had killed at Pisa!

We won the next game, but it was all Trumlett's play. I let him play my cards for me, as it were; I sat watching him without thinking of the game, and my hand moved as if by the exercise of his will to the right card when it came to my turn. He was getting ghastly pale; the lines of his face had assumed a rigidity almost fearful, and his whiskers fell from their jaunty curl into a limp, straggling appearance. He scarcely spoke now; when he did, it was in monotonous tones, with a grating, rasping voice, and there was a fierce glare on his lips, which remained immovable. I sat opposite to him as if mesmerized.

We changed places and partners now; and I took advantage of the change to walk to the other end of the room for a breath of air, and to get a glass of brandy. I could not breathe freely with his cold glazy eyes glaring at me from over his cards, with his look in every direction. It was agonizing my ears to drink any thing stronger than brandy while I played at whist; but I could not face this game without acquired strength, and I took off three glasses of brandy, one after the other, without a pause between them.

Trumlett took dummy now, and I was on his right. I felt excited, having Austin facing me, the more so nothing had stirred his composition. He never struck me that the power of knowing my partner, could continue to him now. We played a couple of games without incident. I kept my eyes riveted to the green baize; or if I had the time to raise them only as my partner, or on dummy cards. The third game it was my deal; and when I took up my cards I felt certain of the result. I doubt if ever before I held such cards; I shifted them hastily over while I thought out my play, and then I noticed one little flaw in my cards. If Trumlett held a peculiar hand—if he had a certain card, and persisted in that suit, I was ruined. But I had no ground for supposing that he had such a hand, or that if he had it, he would play it in such a way.

I felt safe.

What was it induced me to look up in his face? Fatally, I suppose. He had kept us waiting rather longer than usual, and I forgot my resolve of avoiding the sight of him. It is the natural impulse of a whist-player to look impatiently at any one who keeps you waiting for his lead, and I glanced up at Trumlett. He was looking at me curiously, with a cool, collected stare on his face, and a sterner resemblance than ever to the cold, stony face I had seen before in the field of my dead. As I turned away from the field of my dead, his eyes caught his in quietly took a card from his hand, and with the same look directed at me, placed it softly on the table. It was the fatal card, face upward, and fell lock in my chair.

"Game!" stretched Trumlett, in his most grating tones.

Austin looked at me with the dreadful frown of compromise of an injured partner, and said, "Allow me to observe, Mr. Solly, that if you had the worst cards ever dealt I had the game in my own hand; I had three honors, and you turned up the fourth."

I could only point to the card Trumlett had led; I was speechless. Austin shrugged his shoulders, and was rising from the table.

"You won't play my game, Austin?" asked the victor.

"Not you, Mr. Solly?"

With great difficulty I forced out a few words.

"I am not quite well to-night? You will give me my revenge another time?"

"Ay, that I will. When shall we say? Let us—to-day is Friday?"

"God help me! it was that day week we had fought."

"To-day is Friday," he repeated. "I must go down to Pisa to-morrow morning, and I shall be back for some days. Shall we say to-day week?"

I met Austin the next afternoon down the Arno. He was cold at first, but I apologized for having made a mistake in my calculation, and accounted for it by a certain feeling of indisposition. He had received a letter that morning from a London friend, speaking of my play in the highest terms, and he was flattered by an apology from one of the first whist-players in Pall Mall. He took my arm, and we walked together along the canal.

"So Trumlett was off to Pisa early this morning," began Austin. "He played 9/10 at the club till after six, and left by the train at half past six. He's after a good now, I expect; but when a man once gets launched in those indulgent he can't stop. Well for him if he don't get caught on one of those days."

"I heard something about him in England from a friend of mine."

"Yes, I expect more is known about him in England than is known on the Continent. If one of his associates would speak out loud, not in whispers, it would be all up with his reputation, even in Florence. A Scotchman I know has been pretty hard on him, and he only got off by knowing the oscillator of another state, who claimed him."

"Who was the Scotchman? Not Jack MacIntyre, surely?" I asked.

"Who else? Jack MacIntyre? Don't you mention his name to Trumlett; he's down on him. Jack would not fight a man who had been turned out of London and Paris, or else Trumlett is a dead shot."

The next Friday I went to the club to keep my engagement. I was sure something had happened as soon as I came there. No game of any kind was going on. A knot of men stood about, talking earnestly in whispers. I did not join the talk, but I saw that by this show of rivalry, and he was wont to read down at a table—the same table which had witnessed my disastrous game. Some of the men talking turned round and saw me; one I knew slightly came up and spoke to me.

"You are some time late, Mr. Solly. Trumlett promised to give you your revenge to-day, did not he?"

"Yes. What are you thinking of?"

"He can't give you your revenge. He has been killed in a duel."

QUESTIONINGS.

A smother of moss-alls falls through the open window and down.

Let shadows tremble all over the clean and sandal floor.

And a young girl stands with upturned face to the silver rain.

Her nose-white hand pressed close to her heart, as if to still its pain.

300 moss-bleeds wind from the balmy West, leaving the beach-blossoms, You come from a land blood-red with stain, studded in with glooms!

Say you to my love as you wandered on over cold, wet leas of dead—

Did his night-black curls in any gorge glow close to his leaty head?

"Is he in Southern prison halls fighting a terrible doom,

A ghastly and grim-angled Torve more dread than death's own's been?"

Or stands he, leaves among the leaves? Can you tell me, O South wind!

I was his face, and hear his voice, and press his lips again?

But the South wind told to the questioning girl the tale of Southern plains,

But through the pondless loam-blossoms was any sweet melody.

As though 'twere others' tears it had been washed as flying rain.

To lose its direction, when between you and the Leaf of earth and skies.

INTERESTING ITEMS.

ERRORS OF MODERNITY.—The effects of modern and modern medicine are doing more to injure the body and to shorten life than to prolong it. In the treatment of cholera, modern medicine is doing more to shorten life than to prolong it. In the treatment of cholera, modern medicine is doing more to shorten life than to prolong it.

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