

"Only a little," he replied ; "a stolen kiss or two and a half squeeze was all I got from her. Ellerton had it out with her though."

"You surprise me," I said. "I thought she was very chary of her favors."

"Chary, the devil ! I could tell you of a dozen men in college who were engaged to her. She lived on flirtation. 'Twas reported that you were swamped terribly. They say you were the only one in earnest."

"Those who say so know nothing about it," I replied warmly, for I was nettled at his words.

"Well, well, no offence I hope ; but, changing the subject, you will come to my supper, Friday evening, will you not ? I'll take no refusal. There will be a select company, and we cannot do without you."

He was so urgent in his invitation that I finally consented to attend.

As I started to the supper room Friday night, Ned said, in his kind way :

"Do not drink much, to-night, John. It is hard to count one's glasses in the midst of so much hilarity."

"Never fear for me," I said, gaily, as I ran down the stairs. Frank had secured rooms down town, and on reaching them I found the company all assembled. There were Markham and Bolton, two Seniors, to contribute dignity ; Trickle, a Soph., who was brimful of song ; Ellerton, who was considered a wit ; two or three others whose names I have forgotten, and last a little Fresh named Peepsy, who was so exceedingly verdant that Frank had brought him down as a butt for us. I shook hands round and bowed stiffly to Ellerton, whom I had not spoken to since the duel.

The time before supper was laid was, as is always the case, dull, the Seniors discussing Mill and Say, Vattel and Montesquieu, as if the fate of the nation depended on their opinion, while the rest of us addressed each other in short

sentences after long intervals of silence. At length a servant announced that supper was on the table. We passed through a folding door, and gathered around a table that was really groaning beneath its massive load of delicacies. Frank had ordered the supper from Richmond, and Pazzini had excelled himself. After the usual chair scrapings, waiter trippings, plate turnings and comic graces, some of which were shockingly irreverent, we got to work. With some flow of conversation and a laugh at Peepsy, who called Swiss Meringue a syllabub sandwich, we came to the removal of the cloth.

I had determined, on my way thither, not to touch wine unless courtesy compelled it, but now, as I caught the contagion of hilarity, and found that what I said was applauded and listened to—dangerous flattery—a reckless spirit of conviviality seized me, and I threw restraint to the winds, resolving to have a “good time” for once. Conscience had withdrawn into a corner of my heart, and revelry held its carnival.

The green seals were broken and the amber fluid bubbled in our glasses.

I drank one as we toasted Frank, another after his reply, and the third at a compliment to myself.

As the glasses were large, and I was unused to more than half a glass at a time, I felt what I had imbibed glowing over my system. A warm flush came into my face, and the mercury of excitement went up several degrees.

After we had exhausted all the cut and dried toasts, and all the studied things had been said, we were thrown back upon our own originality. Markham then proposed that we sing the old song of *Vive la Compagnie*, toasting each other in turn, while the man who was toasted must reply by a distich of the song.

Ellerton immediately rose with a brimming glass in his hand and said :

“A good idea, Markham, and to commence I propose, gentlemen, Mr. Smith, the block on which Miss Carrover sharpened the blade of her coquetry.”

I felt the blood surge to my temples and a harsh retort rise to my lips, but I controlled myself, as the chorus paused for my reply, and sang :

“The block will be happy to sharpen a bit
What so much needs edge, as the gentleman’s wit.”

Amid cries of Good ! good ! we drank again, with a noisy
“Vive la, vive la, vive l’amour !”

Others were then proposed, and with each toast my glass was filled. And now the first effects of the wine began to be felt. I became conscious of a slight unsteadiness of vision, and found that when I attempted to look at any object my eyes went past it like the pendulum of a clock, then went back again, so that I had to move them several times before I could concentrate on what I wished to see. Even then my sight was not very clear, for the lamps had misty rings around them, and when I reached out my hand for my glass I had to make an effort or two before I could touch it. The table, too, seemed to have a wave or elevation in the middle, and the wall on the opposite side of the room was not exactly perpendicular. My consciousness, too, was an unreal consciousness, as if I were dreaming of all these surroundings, and this uncertainty of vision somewhat confused me in ideas and actions. Remembering how much wine I had taken, a sudden fear came over me that I might be a little intoxicated, and with the thought an intense desire to conceal it. The best way to conceal it, I said to myself, is to talk on and convince them that nothing is the matter with me. Markham was sitting next to me and I resolved to speak to him of Lillian, for I was afraid that Ellerton’s remark had produced the impression on his mind that I had been jilted.

“I say, Mis’er Mar’c’um,” I said, leaning much more

heavily on his shoulder than I intended, "you did'n think I loved Lill'yun the most, did y'r? Ellert'n was only jok'n. B'cause I got's much's she did in that game. Umph? Don't you think so. Umph? Say, don't you think so? Umph?"

"Who the devil is Lillian?" he said, turning a red face and bloodshot eyes upon me. "Hold up. Trickley is going to sing."

"All right," I said, pushing myself up from him; "just's you say; I'll tell you 'bout it again."

I saw Trickley indistinctly on the other side of the table and heard him sing something about

"The world is all an ocean and the people are the fish,
The devil is the fisherman and baits us as we wish;
When he wants to catch a boy he baits with sugar plums,
When he wants to catch a man he baits with golden sums,"

and closing my eyes to relieve them of the misty light I dozed in a half sleep with my head upon my breast till I was awakened by the applause at the conclusion of Trickley's song.

"H'rah!" I shouted, a little louder than any one else, smashing my glass as I brought it down upon the table.

"Com mere, Jim," I said, beckoning to the waiter who stood near me, "brush off these glass, and hold me up and sweep under me. D'you hear?"

Negro-like he was full of laughter at my condition, and snickered outright as he swept off the fragments of glass.

"Who're you laughing at, you scoundrel? Umph?" I said, boiling over with rage, and seizing a goblet which Markham barely caught in time to save.

"I declare, sir, I wasn't laughing at all, sir," said Jim, frightened at my anger.

"You're a lie, aint you? I say, aint you a lie? Markham, lend me your pist'l."

Markham was just drunk enough to do it, and handed a Sharpe's four-shooter, but the negro had fled from the room,

while Frank and Ellerton took the pistol away from me. Seeing how much intoxicated I was, they told me the poor negro had no idea of laughing at me, and that I had hurt his feelings very much, and ought to beg his pardon.

"Bring him in and I'll do it ;" as I spoke he came in again with some cigars, and I called him to me. He had not lost all of his recent fright, however, and hesitated about coming any nearer.

"Why don't you com mere, Jim. I'll throw a chair at you 'f you don't come," I said, making an effort to rise. At length he drew near enough for me to touch him, when I threw one arm around his neck and said, with half sobs :

"I beg your pard'n, Jim ; I won't hurt you. Are you 'fraid of me ? Umph ? I love you, Jim, b'cause you're all right, aint you ?"

The others pulled me from him, and told him to get on the other side of the table.

"No ; I want Jim to com mere. I know what I want ; you all don't know what I want."

"No, no, Smith, let Jim alone. Here, take a cigar," said one or two, offering a case.

"No ; I want Jim. Jim's all right," I said, looking sleepily defiant.

"Wait till after supper," said Ellerton, "then you can see him. It's your time to give us a song now."

"Th—hat's all right, Ellerton ; you'll help me sing, won't you ? Now, I'm going to sing :

"Then fill up your glasses—and your tumbler 'sand your goblets,
And drink to the health of it—all up and ask—for more"—

"Oh, we've had enough of that, Smith. Sing us something, or we will have to try Peepsy, here," said Tricklely, who had been trying to make Peepsy say something all the evening.

"Vive la ! vive la compagnic !" I sang, winding up with a hiccup.

"Smith, that's stale, and boring as the devil," said Ellerton; "hush! and let us hear the Fresh sing."

I was too stupid to make any reply, but made out to hear poor little Peepsy protest that he knew but one song in the world, and that was a hymn. But they would all take no refusal, and swore that unless he sang it they would tie him and leave him in the street all night, a threat he implicitly believed. I was almost in a second doze when I heard his little, quivering voice, as he sang :

"I love to steal a while away," etc.

A song learned at his mother's knee rendered in a drunken carousal! Poor little fellow, he was not in fault!

Ellerton now proposed that we light our cigars and go up to the campus to have some fun.

The Seniors said it was too undignified for them, and took their leave, and little Peepsy begged so hard we let him off.

When I rose from my chair the floor seemed to rise in waves before me, and, attempting to collect my senses and steady my feet, I fell, and, striking my head against the table leaf, lay unconscious till they carried me out. The fresh air revived me somewhat, and we staggered on with a noise and tumult that called several others from their beds to join our plans, which were to bar the doors, tar the benches and put a cow in the belfry, if possible.

Drunk as I was, I recognized in the accessions to our crowd the lowest men in college—fellows that I never spoke to, and who were evidently surprised at my plight. But it was no time for proud reserve, and so I led the way, shouting every few steps :

"Come on, boys; we're all right, ain't we?"

We procured some tar and smeared on all the benches in the accessible rooms, barred the doors and then went up to the belfry, which we burst in to get to the bell. While a part staid to ring it others went down to look for a cow to

bring up. I sank down on the steps in a stupid sleep, with the thought piercing my drunken brain like a sword, "I am disgraced for ever. My parents will be mortified and my friends desert me."

I was awakened by a terrific noise near me, and some one's stumbling over me. 'Twas some time before I could see what was the matter, but at length, by a dingy lantern, I saw students above me with ropes in their hands. The ropes were tied to the horns of a cow that was standing with glaring eyes and frightful bellowing a few steps below me. I was too much frightened to move, and with great relief heard Frank reply to some one who suggested to run over the fool :

"No, no ; that's Smith. He's all right. Help him up, Donnery."

The person addressed caught me by the arm and gave me a rough jerk that landed me on the top step, from which I managed to crawl off to one side out of the way.

"Now for it !" exclaimed several voices below ; " pull, Donnery, you and Haggam pull."

They seemed to strain and tug at something without effect, and Haggam said, with a long breath :

"What makes her so devilish hard to move ? She came up the lower flights very well."

"She got scared of that drunken fool on the steps," I heard the coarse voice of Donnery reply, and, intoxicated as I was, I breathed a solemn vow to Heaven that I would never merit that term again.

Drawing the ropes tight again, Donnery shouted to Frank :

"Twist her tail, Paning, — her ! that will move her."

"I have," said Frank, "and she won't budge."

"Let me get hold," said a great rough fellow standing by him, and, taking the vaccine caudal in his two hands, he gave it such a wrench that, with a horrid roar, the poor

creature clattered up the steps, her hoofs sounding on the wood as if the building were falling. Once on the floor, they drove her on to a lecture room, and nailing up the door, left her there. Having finished this job they dispersed, Frank calling out good night ! to me as he passed. I heard some one tell him he had better see to me, and heard him reply carelessly :

“ Never mind, he rooms on this floor, Cheyleigh’ll find him,” and my vow gained all the more strength from his neglect.

I had just sense enough left to try to find my room, and was trying to totter to my feet, when some one took hold of my arm and said :

“ Mr. Smith, let me help you. Are you hurt much ? ”

It was little Peepsy, who roomed on the same floor, and whom I had laughed at so, at Frank’s supper. He kindly endeavored to assist me to walk, but I was too drunk to make any progress, even with his assistance, so I sat down on the floor while he went to call Ned. A dizzy sickness came over me, and I essayed to lean on one arm to steady myself, but my elbow doubled under me and I fell over heavily on one side, bruising my forehead against the hard plank. The only consciousness left was a sense of shame, and I murmured, “ What would father and mother say if they could see me now.”

A light appeared at the farther end of the corridor, and I saw Ned approaching. A last tinge of pride made me desirous to seem less intoxicated to him, and, as he came up, I called out, trying to raise my head :

“ Hel-lo-old fellor, I’m all right ; I want t’go t’me room, Ned. Where’s se key ? ”

Ned did not make any reply, but with Peepsy’s aid got me to our room and assisted me to bed.

I had scarcely tumbled lifelessly upon it before I was asleep.