

NO DEFENSE

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"The Seats of the Mighty"
"The Right of Way"

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THE DUEL.

Synopsis.—Returning home after a day's shooting, Dyck Calhoun, gifted young Irish gentleman of the time of the French and American revolutions, meets Sheila Lynn, seventeen-year-old girl visiting in the neighborhood. They are mutually attracted. Sheila never knew her disipated father, Erris Boyne, her mother having divorced him and resumed her maiden name. Reaching home, Dyck finds Leonard Mallow, son of Lord Mallow, with a message from the attorney general summoning Miles Calhoun, Dyck's father, to Dublin. Dyck and his father go.

(CHAPTER III—Continued.)

One day Erris Boyne said to Dyck: "There's a supper tonight at the Breakneck club. Come along and have a skinful. You'll meet people worth knowing."

"The Breakneck club isn't a good name for a first-class institution," remarked Dyck, with a pause and a laugh; "but I'll come if you'll fetch me."

Erris Boyne, who was eighteen years older than Dyck, laughed, flicked a little pinch of snuff at his nose with his finger.

"Dear lad, of course I'll come and fetch you," he said. "There's many a man has done worse than lead a gay strapping like you into pleasant ways. Bring along any loose change you have, for it may be a night of nights. It's the best place to come to ever an honest man had."

"Are they all the right sort?" asked Dyck, with a little touch of malice. "I mean, are they loyal and true?"

Erris Boyne laid a hand on Dyck's arm.

"Come and find out. Do you think I'd lead you into bad company? Of course Emmet and Wolfe Tone won't be there, nor any of that lot; but there'll be some men of the right stamp." He watched Dyck carefully out of the corner of his eye. "It's funny," he added, "that in Ireland the word loyal means being true to the Union Jack, standing by King George and his crowd."

"Well, what would you have?" said Dyck. "For this is a day and age when being loyal to the king is more than sought else in all the Irish world. We're never two days alike, we Irish. There are the United Irishmen and the Defenders on one side, and the Peep-o'-Day Boys, or Orangemen, on the other—Catholic and Protestant, at each other's throats. Then there's a hand thrust in, and up goes the sword, and the rifles, pikes and bayonets; and those that were ready to mutilate or kill each other fall into each other's arms."

Erris Boyne laughed. "Well, there'll be an end to that. The Irish parliament is slipping into disrepute. It wouldn't surprise me if the astute English bribe them into a union, to the ruin of Irish independence. Yet maybe, before that comes, the French will have a try for power here." He came a step nearer, his voice lowered a little. "Have you heard the latest news from France? They're coming with a good-sized fleet down to the south coast. Have you heard it?"

"Oh, there's plenty one hears one doesn't believe is gospel," answered Dyck, his eyes half closing. "I'm not believing all I hear, as if it was a prayer-meeting. Anything may happen here; Ireland's a woman—very uncertain."

Dyck flicked some dust from his waistcoat, and dropped his eyes, because he was thinking of two women he had known; one of them an angel now in company of her sister angels—his mother; the other a girl he had met on the hills of Connemara, a wonderfully pretty girl of seventeen. How should he know that the girl was Erris Boyne's daughter?—although there were times when some gesture of Boyne, some quick look, some lifting of the eyebrows, brought back the memory of Sheila Lynn, as it did now.

Since Dyck left his old home he had seen her twice; once at Loyalist tower, and once at her home in Limerick. The time he had spent with her had been very brief, but full of life, interest and character. Whether at Loyalist tower, or at her mother's house in Limerick, there was no touch of forwardness in her, or in anything she said or did. She was the most natural being, the freest from affectation, he had ever known.

As Erris Boyne talked to him, the memory of Sheila flooded his mind, and on the hood his senses swam like swans. He had not her careful composure. He was just as real, but he had the wilfulness of man. She influenced him as no woman had ever yet done; but he saw no happy ending to the dream. He was too poor to marry; he had no trade or profession; his father's affairs were in a bad way.

He did not know that Erris Boyne was set to capture him for the rebel cause. How could he know that Boyne was an agent of the most evil forces in Ireland—an agent of skill and address, prepossessing, with the face of a Celtic poet and the eye of an assassin?

Boyne's object was to bring about the downfall of Dyck Calhoun—that is, his downfall as a patriot. At the

Breakneck club this bad business began. It was here that Dyck again met that tall, ascetic messenger from the attorney general, who had brought the message to Miles Calhoun. It was with this man—Leonard Mallow, eldest son of Lord Mallow—that Dyck, with three others, played cards one afternoon.

The instinctive antipathy which had marked their first introduction was carried on to this later meeting. Dyck distrusted Mallow, and allowed his distrust exercise. It was unfortunate that Mallow won from him three-fourths of the money he had brought to the club, and won it with a smile not easy to forgive.

Dyck had at last secured a real success in a scheme of his cards when Mallow asked with a sneer:

"Did you learn that at your home in heaven?"

"Don't they teach it where you live in hell?" was Dyck's reply.

At this Mallow flicked Dyck across the face with his handkerchief.

"That's what they teach where I belong."

"Well, it's easy to learn, and we'll do the sum at any time or place you please." After a moment Dyck continued "I wouldn't make a fuss over it. Let's finish the game. There's no good prancing till the sport's ready; so I'll sit and learn more of what they teach in hell!"

Dyck had been drinking, or he would not have spoken so; and when he was drunk daring was strong in him. He hated profoundly this man—so self-satisfied and satanic.

He kept a perfect coolness, however. Leonard Mallow should not see that he was upset. His wanton wickedness came to his rescue, and until the end of the game he played with sang-froid, daring and skill. He loved cards; he loved the strife of skill against skill, of trick against trick, of hand against hand. He had never fought a duel in his life, but he had no fear of doing so.

At length, having won back nearly all he had lost, he rose to his feet and looked round.

"Is there anyone here from whom I can ask a favor?"

Several stepped forward. Dyck nodded. One of them he knew. It was Sir Almeric Foyles.

"Thank you, Sir Almeric," he said; "thank you. Shall it be swords or pistols?" he asked his enemy coolly.

"Swords, if you please," remarked Mallow grimly, for he had a gift with the sword.

Dyck nodded again.

"As you will. As you will!"

Never in all Ireland's years had she a more beautiful day than that in which Dyck Calhoun and the Hon. Leonard Mallow met to settle their account in a secluded corner of Phoenix park. It was not the usual place for duels. The seconds had taken care to keep the locale from the knowledge of the public; especially as many who had come to know of the event at the Breakneck club were eager to be present.

The affair began an hour after sunrise. Neither Dyck nor Leonard Mallow slept at home the night before, but in separate taverns near Phoenix park. Mallow came almost jauntily to the

obsure spot. Both men had sensitiveness, and both entered the grounds with a certain thrill of pleasure softening the acerbity of the moment.

Dyck moved and spoke like a man charged with some fluid which had abstracted him from life's monotonous routine. He had to consider the chance of never leaving the grounds alive; yet as he entered the place, where smooth grass between the trees made good footing for the work to be done, the thrill of the greenery, the sound of the birds, the flick of a lizard across the path, and the distant gay leap of a young deer, brought to his senses a gust of joyous feeling. He was not normal; he was submerged. He was in the great, consuming atmosphere of the blizz world and the greater life.

He even did not hate Mallow at the moment. The thing about to be done was to him a test of manhood. It was a call upon the courage of the soul, a challenge of life, strength and will.

As Mallow entered the grounds, the thought of Sheila Lynn crossed Dyck's mind, and the mental sight of her gladdened the eyes of his soul. For one brief instant he stood lost in the mind's look; then he stepped forward, saluted, shook hands with Mallow, and doffed his coat and waistcoat.

As he did so, he was conscious of a curious coldness, even of dampness, in the hand which had shaken that of Mallow. Mallow's hand had a clammy touch—clammy, but firm and sure. There was no tremor in the long, thin fingers nor at the lips—the thin, ascetic lips, as of a secret service man—but in his eyes was a dark fire of purpose. The morning had touched him, but not as it had thrown over Dyck its mantle of peace. Mallow also had enjoyed the smell and feeling of it all, but with this difference—it had filled him with such material joy that he could not bear the thought of leaving it. It gave him strength of will, which would add security to his arm and wrist.

Dyck had learned swordsmanship with as skilled a master as Ireland had known, and he had shown, in getting knowledge of the weapon, a natural instinct and a capacity worthy of the highest purpose. He had handled the sword since he was six, and his play was better than that of most men; but this was, in fact, his first real duel. Many times, of course, in the process of his training, he had fought as men fight in duels, but with this difference—that now he was permitted to dislodge or kill his foe.

Physically, there was not a vast deal to choose between the two men. Mallow was lank and tall, nervously self-contained, finely concentrated, and vigorous. Dyck was broad of shoulder, well set up, muscular, and with a steadier eye than that of his foe. Also, as the combat developed, it was clear that he had a hand as steady as his eye. What was more, his wrist had superb strength and flexibility; it was as enduring and vital as the forefoot and ankle of a tiger. As a pair they were certainly notable, and would give a good account of themselves.

The two men fighting had almost the air of gladiators. Their coats were off, and the white linen of their shirts looked gracious; while the upraised left hand of the fighters balancing the sword-thrust and the weight of the body had an almost singular beauty. Of the two, Dyck was the more graceful, the steadier, the quicker in his motions. His momentary vision of Sheila Lynn remained with him—not as a vision, rather as a warmth in his inmost being, something which made him intensely alert, cheerful, defiant, exactly skilful.

He had need of all his skill, for Mallow was set to win the fight. He felt instinctively what was working in Dyck's mind. He had fought a number of duels, and with a certain trick or art he had given the end to the lives of several. He became conscious, however, that Dyck had a particular stroke in mind, which he himself was preventing by masterful methods. It might be one thing or another, but in view of Dyck's training it would perhaps be the Ennisceorthy touch.

Again and again Dyck pressed his antagonist backward, seeking to muddle his defense and to clear an opening for his own deadly stroke; but the other man also was a master, and parried successfully.

Presently, with a quick move, Mallow took the offensive, and tried to unsettle Dyck's poise and disorganize his battle-plan. For an instant the tempestuous action, the brilliant, swift play of the sword, the quivering flippancy of the steel, gave Dyck that which almost disconcerted him. Yet he had a grip of himself, and was fortunate to preserve his defense intact; though once his enemy's steel caught his left shoulder, making it bleed. The seconds, however, decided that the thrust was not serious, and made no attempt to interrupt the combat.

Dyck's tactics changed. Once again he became aggressive, and he drove his foe to a point where the skill of both men was tried to the uttermost. It was clear the time had come for something definite. Suddenly Dyck threw himself back with an agile step, lunged slightly to one side, and then in a gallant foray got the steel point into the sword-arm of his enemy. That was the Ennisceorthy stroke, which had been taught him by William Tandy, the expert swordsman, and had been made famous by Lord Wellington of Ennisceorthy. It succeeded, and it gave Dyck the victory, for Mallow's sword dropped from his hand. He clasped the wounded arm with his left hand as the surgeon came forward.

"Well, you got it home," he said to Dyck; "and it's deftly done."

"I did my best," answered Dyck. "Give me your hand, if you will."

With a wry look Mallow, now seated on the old stump of a tree, held out his left hand. It was covered with blood.

"I think we'll have to forego that courtesy, Calhoun," he said. "Look at the state of my hand! It's good blood," he added grimly. "It's d-d good blood, but—but it won't do, you see."

"I'm glad it was no worse," said Dyck, not touching the bloody hand. "It's a clean thrust, and you'll be better from it soon. These great men!" he smiled toward the surgeons—"will soon put you right. I got my chance with the stroke, and took it, because I knew if I didn't you'd have me presently."

"You'll have a great reputation in Dublin town now, and you'll deserve it," Mallow added adroitly, the great paleness of his features, however, made ghastly by the hatred in his eyes.

Dyck did not see this look, but he felt a note of malice—a distant note—in Mallow's voice. He saw that what Mallow had said was fresh evidence of the man's arrogant character. It did not offend him, however, for he was victor, and could enter the Breakneck club or Dublin society with a tranquil eye.

Again Mallow's voice was heard.

"I'd have seen you d-d to be—"

Calhoun, before he had apologized at the Breakneck club; but after a



The Time Had Come for Something Definite.

fight with one of the best swordsmen in Ireland I've learned a lot, and I'll apologize now—completely."

The surgeon had bound up the slight wound in Dyck's shoulder, had stopped the bleeding, and was now helping him on with his coat. The operation had not been without pain, but this demonstration from his foe was too much for him. It drove the look of pain from his face; it brought a smile to his lips. He came a step nearer.

"I'm as obliged to you as if you'd paid for my board and lodging, Mallow," he said; "and that's saying a good deal in these days. I'll never have a bigger fight. You're a greater swordsman than your reputation. I must have provoked you beyond reason," he went on gallantly. "I think we'd better forget the whole thing."

"I'm a loyalist," Mallow replied.

"I'm a loyalist, and if you're one, too, what reason should there be for our not being friends?"

A black cloud flooded Calhoun's face.

"If I'm a loyalist, you say! Have you any doubt of it? If you have—"

"You wish your sword had gone into my heart instead of my arm, eh?" interrupted Mallow. "How easily I am misunderstood! I meant nothing but that 'if.' He smiled, and the smile had a touch of wickedness. "I meant nothing by it—nothing at all. As we are both loyalists, we must be friends. Good-by, Calhoun!"

Dyck's face cleared very slowly. Mallow was maddening, but the look of the face was not that of a foe.

"Well, let us be friends," Dyck answered with a cordial smile. "Good-by," he added. "I'm d-d sorry we had to fight at all. Good-by!"

CHAPTER IV.

The Killing of Erris Boyne.

"There's many a government has made a mess of things in Ireland," said Erris Boyne; "but since the day of Cromwell the Accursed this is the worst. Is there a man in Ireland that believes in it, or trusts it? There are men that support it, that are served by it, that fill their pockets out of it; but by Joseph and by Mary, there's none thinks there couldn't be a better! Have a little more marsala, Calhoun?"

With these words, Boyne filled up the long glass out of which Dyck Calhoun had been drinking—drinking too much. Shortly before, Dyck had lost all his cash at the card-table. He had turned from it penitently and discomfited to see Boyne, smiling, and gay with wine, in front of him.

Boyne took him by the arm.

"Come with me," said he. "There's no luck for you at the tables today. Let's go where we can forget the world, where we can lift the banner of freedom and beat the drums of purpose. Come along, lad!"

The time was critical for Dyck—critical and dangerous. He had lost money heavily; he had even exhausted his mother's legacy. Of late he had seen little of his father, and the little he had seen was not fortunate. They had quarreled over Dyck's wayward doings. He had angered his father terribly, and Miles, in a burst of temper, had disclosed the fact that his own property was in peril. They had been estranged ever since; but the time had come when Dyck must at least secure the credit of his father's name at his bank to find the means of living.

It was with this starting him in the face that Erris Boyne's company seemed to offer at least a recovery of his good spirits. Dublin knew little of Boyne's present domestic life. It did not know that he had injured his second wife as badly as he had wronged his first—with this difference, however, that his first wife was a lady, while his second wife, Noreen, was a beautiful, quick-tempered, lovable, eighteen-year-old girl, a graduate of the kitchen and dairy, when he took her to himself. He had married her in a mad moment after his first wife—Mrs. Lynn, as she was now called—had divorced him; and after the first thrill of married life was over, nothing remained with Boyne except regret that he had sold his freedom for what he might, perhaps, have had without marriage.

Then began a process of domestic torture which alienated Noreen from him, and roused in her the worst passions of human nature. She came to know of his infidelities, and they maddened her. They had no children, and in the end he had threatened her with desertion. When she had retorted in strong words, he slapped her face, and left her with an ugly smile.

Of visitors they had few, if any, and the young wife was left alone to brood upon her wrongs. Erris Boyne had slapped her face on the morning of the day when he met Dyck Calhoun in the hour of his bad luck. He did not see the look in her face as he left the house.

Ruthless as he was, he realized the time had come when by bold effort he might get young Calhoun wholly into his power. He began by trying Dyck into the street. Then he took him by an indirect route to what was, reputedly, a tavern of consequence. Outwardly it was a tavern of the old class, superficially sedate, and called the Harp and Crown. None save a very few conspirators knew how great a part it played in the plan to break the government of Ireland and to ruin England's position in the land.

The entrance was by two doors—one the ordinary public entrance, the other at the side of the house, which was on a corner. This could be opened by a skeleton key owned by Erris Boyne.

He and Dyck entered, however, by the general entrance, because Boyne had forgotten his key. They passed through the bar-parlor, nodding to one or two habitués, and presently were bestowed in a room, not large, but well furnished.

They played cards, and Dyck won. He won five times what he had lost at the club. This made him companionable.

"It's a poor business—cards," he said at last. "It puts one up in the clouds and down in the ditch all at the same time. I tell you this, Boyne—I'm going to stop. No man ought to play cards who hasn't a fortune; and my fortune, I'm sorry to say, is only my face!" He laughed bitterly.

"And your sword—you've forgotten that, Calhoun. You've a lot of luck in your sword."

"Well, I've made no money out of it so far," Dyck retorted cynically.

"Yet you've put men with reputations out of the running, men like Mallow. Try a little more of this marsala, Calhoun. It's the best in the place, and it's got a lot of good stuff. I've been coming to the Harp and Crown for many years, and I've never had a bad drink all that time. The old landlord is a genius. He doesn't put on airs. He's a good man, is old Swinton, and there's nothing good in the drink of France that you can't get here."

"Well, if that's true, how does it happen?" asked Dyck, with a little flash of interest. "It means a lot of trouble, eh?"

"It means some trouble. But let me tell you"—he leaned over the table and laid a hand on Dyck's, which was a little nervous—"let me speak as an old friend to you, if I may. Here are the facts. For many a year, you know as well as I do, ships have been coming from France to Ireland with the very best wines and liquors, and taking back the very best wool—saugled, of course. Well, our little landlord here is the d-d-d rogue of all. The customs never touch him. From the coast the stuff comes up to Dublin without a check, and, as he's a

special favorite, he gets the best; to be had in la belle France."

"Why is he such a favorite?" asked Dyck.

Erris Boyne laughed, not loudly, but suggestively.

"When a lady kisses a man on the lips, of her own free will, and puts her arm around his neck, is it done, do you think, because it's her duty to do it or die? No, it's because she likes the man; because the man is a good friend to her; because it's money in her pocket. That's the case with old Swinton. France kisses him, as it were, because"—he paused, as though debating what to say—"because France knows he'd rather be under her own revolutionary government than under the monarchy of England."

His voice had resonance, and, as he said these words, it had insistence.

"Do you know, Calhoun, I think old Swinton is right. We suffer here because monarchy, with its cruel hand of iron, mistreats us, brutalizes us."

He did not see enlightenment come into the half-drunken eyes of Dyck. He only realized that Dyck was very still, and strangely, deeply interested.

"I tell you, Calhoun, we need in Ireland something of the spirit that's alive in France today. They've cleaned out the kings—Louis' and Marie's heads have dropped into the basket. They're sweeping the dirt out of France; they're cleaning the dark places; they're whitewashing Versailles and sawdusting the Tuilleries; they're starting for the world a reformation which will make it clean. Not America alone, but England, and all Europe, will become republics."

"England?" asked Dyck in a low, penetrating voice.

"Aye, England, through Ireland. Ireland will come first, then Wales, Scotland and England. Dear lad, the great day is come—the greatest the world has ever known. France, the spirit of it, is alive. It will purge and cleanse the universe!"

The suspicious, alert look passed from Dyck's eyes, but his face had become flushed. He reached out and poured himself another glass of wine.

"What you say may be true, Boyne. It may be true, but I wouldn't put faith in it—not for one icy minute. I don't want to see here in Ireland the horrors and savagery of France. I don't want to see the guillotine up on St. Stephen's green."

Boyne felt that he must march carefully. He was sure of his game; but there were difficulties, and he must not throw his chances away.

"Well, I'll tell you, Calhoun. I don't know which is worse—Ireland bloody with shootings and hangings, Ulster up in the north and Cork in the south, from the Giant's causeway to Tralee; no two sets of feet dancing alike, with the bloody hand of England stretching out over the Irish parliament like death itself; or France ruling us. How does the English government live here? Only by bribery and purchases. It buys its way. Isn't that true?"

Dyck nodded.

"Yes, it's true in a way," he replied. "It's so, because we're what we are. We've never been properly put in our places. The heel on our necks—that's the way to do it."

Boyne looked at the flushed, angry face. In spite of Dyck's words, he felt that his medicine was working well.

"Listen to me, Calhoun," he said softly. "You've got to do something. You're living an idle life. You're in debt. There are but two courses open to you. One is to join the British forces—to be a lieutenant, a captain, a major, a colonel, or a general, in time; to shoot and cut and hang and quarter, and rule with a heavy rod. That's one way."

"So you think I'm fit for nothing but the sword, eh?" asked Dyck with irony. "You think I've got no brains for anything except the army?"

Boyne laughed.

"Have another drink, Calhoun." He poured out more wine. "Oh, no, not the army alone; there's the navy—and there's the French navy! It's the best navy in the world, the freest and the greatest, and with Bonaparte going at us, England will have enough to do—too much, I'm thinking. So there's a career in the French navy open. And listen—before you and I are two months older, the French navy will be in the harbors of Ireland, and the French army will land here." He reached out and grasped Dyck's arm. "There's no liberty of freedom under the Union Jack. What do you think of the tricolor? It's a great flag, and under it the world is going to be ruled—England, Spain, Italy, Holland, Prussia, Austria and Russia—all of them. The time is ripe. You've got your chance. Take it on, dear lad, take it on!"

Dyck did not raise his head. He was leaning forward with both arms on the table, supporting himself firmly; his head was bowed as though with deep interest in what Boyne said. And, indeed, his interest was great—so great that all his manhood, vigor, all his citizenship, were vitally alive. Yet he did not lift his head.

Dyck is charged with the murder of Erris Boyne, Sheila's father.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Disposing of the Dead.

Cremation was common in ancient days among the Greeks and Romans, the funeral pyre marking the final disappearance of many heroes. Certain tribes of American Indians wrapped the bodies of their dead and fastened them in cradles on the branches of living trees. But burial remains the common and perhaps permanent custom of disposing of the dead.