

ing in the direction of the door labelled CAFE. "Had coffee? No. Let's have some. How are you, Artie. How's the missus's tooth?" He nodded genially to three or four attendants who rushed grinning to throw open the door, and distributed a handful of change, saying severely: "I want the whole force next time and a salute two fingers up. Good, now don't buy an American machine; buy a French one, they make more noise." He leaned on the bar, illuminating the whole room with a gorgeous smile, and said: "Joe, my friend, Mr. Stukey, and I want a little coffee—the usual, yes—and slight the Italian."

"I remember him now," said Stukey in a dazed way to himself; "but how the deuce did I meet him?"

He assembled his slightly fatigued wits and strove to recall the introduction. Wattville carried his flat-brimmed derby at defiance over one ear, a cane tucked under one arm and the tip of a rosebud peeping from his buttonhole. He wore his moustache thin in twin rat-tails, kept one eyebrow constantly quivering above the other and when he smiled—a smile that was irresistible—his plump cheeks rose up and dwarfed the twinkling eyes.

"I maintain," said Wattville, raising his glass and bowing, "that a Bronx cocktail is not intoxicating. It all depends. If you cut out water, coffee and tea, the system has got to accustom itself. The mistake is in mixing two theories. Of course, everything in moderation. Joe, the next one a little colder. I won't pay more'n a dollar for this one."

"I say, Wattville," said Stukey.

"Say on."

"Where did I meet you?"

"You don't know?" said Wattville, with an expression of amazement.

"I can't quite remember."

"Fact?"

"Honor bright."

"The devil, neither can I."

They burst out laughing, and shook hands an extra minute.

"Joe, on the job!" exclaimed Wattville, with a short, warning look.

"I say, Wattville, what time did we break up?"

"Oh, not later than four!"

"I remember your telling the chauffeur to drive to Philadelphia."

"Yes, I live there."

"What?"

"Always go back to Philadelphia. Can't sleep in New York—too much noise."

"What, in a taxi?"

"Sure, the motion soothes me."

STUKEY looked hard, first at the guileless countenance and then at Joe, who continued in correct fashion to study the construction of the ceiling; then, he hastily gulped down the contents of his glass, while in his admiring, timid brain two opposite thoughts passed simultaneously.

"What a glorious chap—best I ever met;" and, "pretty slick article. I'll be on my guard about those wagers."

"Joe, the third is all right," said Wattville, winking in his glass. "If you can make another just like that, you can take my pocketbook and pay yourself. There's a great deal of nutrition in a Bronx," he added, turning to Stukey; "but four's my limit until we take a little exercise. And now, let's sit down and see how we stand on the tablets."

At this, Stukey tried to expel from his face the admiration a disciple feels in the presence of a master, and to give to his thoroughly faithful dog features an expression of cunning and determined calculation.

"First bet," said Wattville, lighting his tenth cigarette. "Let me see—here it is."

"Mr. J. Wattville bets Mr. Ferdinand P. Stukey twenty-five dollars that he will drive the police automobile once around Madison Square without being arrested. Won by J. Wattville."

"I don't remember a thing about it," said Stukey, militantly.

"Neither do I," said Wattville. "That's why I always carry a betting tablet—simplifies matters—gaze on your signature."

Stukey considered his scrawl minutely, gazed apprehensively at the slips still to be offered in evidence, and slowly depleted his roll of bills.

"Mr. J. Wattville bets Mr. F. P. Stukey twenty-five dollars that the next married man they meet will have more sons than daughters. Won by F. P. Stukey."

"I have a faint remembrance," said Stukey, putting out his hand and pulling back the bills.

"Mr. J. Wattville bets Mr. F. P. Stukey twenty-five dollars that he will enter the first restaurant at the right going up Fifth avenue and lead the orchestra at the request of the management. Won by J. Wattville."

"Wonder where that was. I have conducted a symphonic poem," said Wattville. Then, glancing at another slip, he added: "This squares you."

"Mr. J. Wattville bets Mr. F. P. Stukey fifty dollars that he will address a Brooklyn meeting of the Sons of Erin on the advantages of a defensive and offensive alliance with Great Britain and remain speaking for five minutes. Lost by J. Wattville."

"That's rather strange. How the deuce did we



He advanced and having coughed correctly, said: "Mr. Stukey, Sir."

get over to Brooklyn," he said gazing at the paper in perplexity. "Do you remember anything about it?"

"I seem to have a slight recollection," said Stukey cautiously.

"I seem to remember a great audience cheering me madly," said Wattville, in a grieved voice. "However, there's my signature. I must have displeased them. There are a few trifling bets, two bucks apiece, that even up. I am in your debt twenty-five kazinkas." He looked at his tablets and started up hastily. "By Jove, we are due at the Bar and Bottle Club at one-thirty."

"How so?" asked Stukey, amazed.

"Here it is. Lunch at Bar and Bottle Club at one-thirty, Tuesday. Ask for Joe Harrigan or Eddy Luqueer. By Jove, I have it! It must have been those ripping chaps who rescued us in the wilds of Brooklyn and toted us home. Perhaps that was when I tried to address the meeting."

"I have a faint recollection of a couple of bully chaps," said Stukey faintly.

"We have ten minutes—just time for an easy walk," said Wattville, rising promptly. "Joe, cut out coffee and tea—better for your nerves! We go, but we return."

"They swung into Fifth avenue, arms linked.

"Funny we can't remember how we met," said Stukey, twirling his cane with an extra rakish flourish.

"Not at all, my boy, it's delightful. Mystery is the sauce of life, my dear old scout. I am beginning to like your map. It is so enthusiastic. Who knows! You may be the kindred spirit I have been seeking. Suppose we break the journey with a little repose in here. There's an old friend of mine who has quite a knack with the gin."

When they again resumed their progress, Stukey said effusively: "By Jove, Wattville, you certainly are a Prince. Why do you live over in Philadelphia?"

"It's a very sad story. I'll tell you later," said Wattville, lightly. "My dear boy, I think I can say that I am beginning to have a weakness for you. I like the way you come bobbing up the next day, eager and unspoiled. Now, just a few serious words."

"Oh, don't let's be serious," said Stukey.

"We must. Now, my philosophy of life is simple. I believe the problem of this country is how to utilize the unemployed rich. We must awake to our responsibilities. The first thing we must do is to promote the circulation of hoarded wealth—elastic currency is the word. I wonder, now, if these boys remember that they have invited us? My ideal of life is this: to live magnificently, to bring the greatest joy to the greatest number—to restore the glorious days of Pitt and Fox and the old beaux. By George, they did know how to live! It is all in leading a regular life. Be moderate and careful. I always take three hours' sleep—I don't believe I need but two; but I take three. In a way, I consider myself a scientific experiment. We all owe something to science, don't we?"

"I don't get that," said Stukey, who had been dependent too long upon a coffee diet to feel quite at ease on this sudden prescription.

"It's this. I have two uncles—a bank and a hospital. Never mind, I will tell you about them later. Here we are. I have always liked this Club from the outside—something gentle and refined about it. We must try and recognize them. If they have forgotten, it is their own fault. We can always ask if there's any one else who knows us."

STUKEY, who had listened in a daze, as if he had been the plaything of a whirlwind, searched anxiously the jovial, unconcerned features, wondering what importance to attach to the flow of words. He followed uneasily into the vestibule of the Club, where an attendant disappeared in search of their problematical hosts.

"The situation is a little unusual," said Wattville, with a quick turn to the stiletto, "but it seems to me that's what makes life interesting. Here they are. I wonder which is which?"

Two men, approaching forty, arrived at this moment, one quick-eyed, precociously bald, with stern lips that broke good-humoredly at the corners; the other oriental, angular and gliding; both laughing and cordial.

"Am I confronting the gentlemen who last night invited us to lunch?" said Wattville, raising his hat as a Prince of the blood might do. In other words, do we know you; or, as it might be stated, do you know us?"

"We certainly do," said the two in chorus.

"I can not imagine anything more delightful and impromptu," said Wattville. "Of course, introductions are a mere formality among men of the world; but this is my friend, Mr. Stukey, the philanthropist, and I am Wattville, the Wattville of Philadelphia."

Stukey, scarcely able to credit his ears, shook hands with extra cordiality with the bald and incisive stranger, who was Harrigan, and with Mr. Luqueer, whose uncontrolled merriment suddenly made him suspect an elaborate hoax. With a sort of misty cunning, he maintained an attitude of magisterial dignity, at the same time watching the faces of his three companions for the slightest indication of complicity that would furnish a logical explanation for this extraordinary luncheon. Unfortunately, with the cruel postponement of the luncheon hour, a gathering haziness made

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