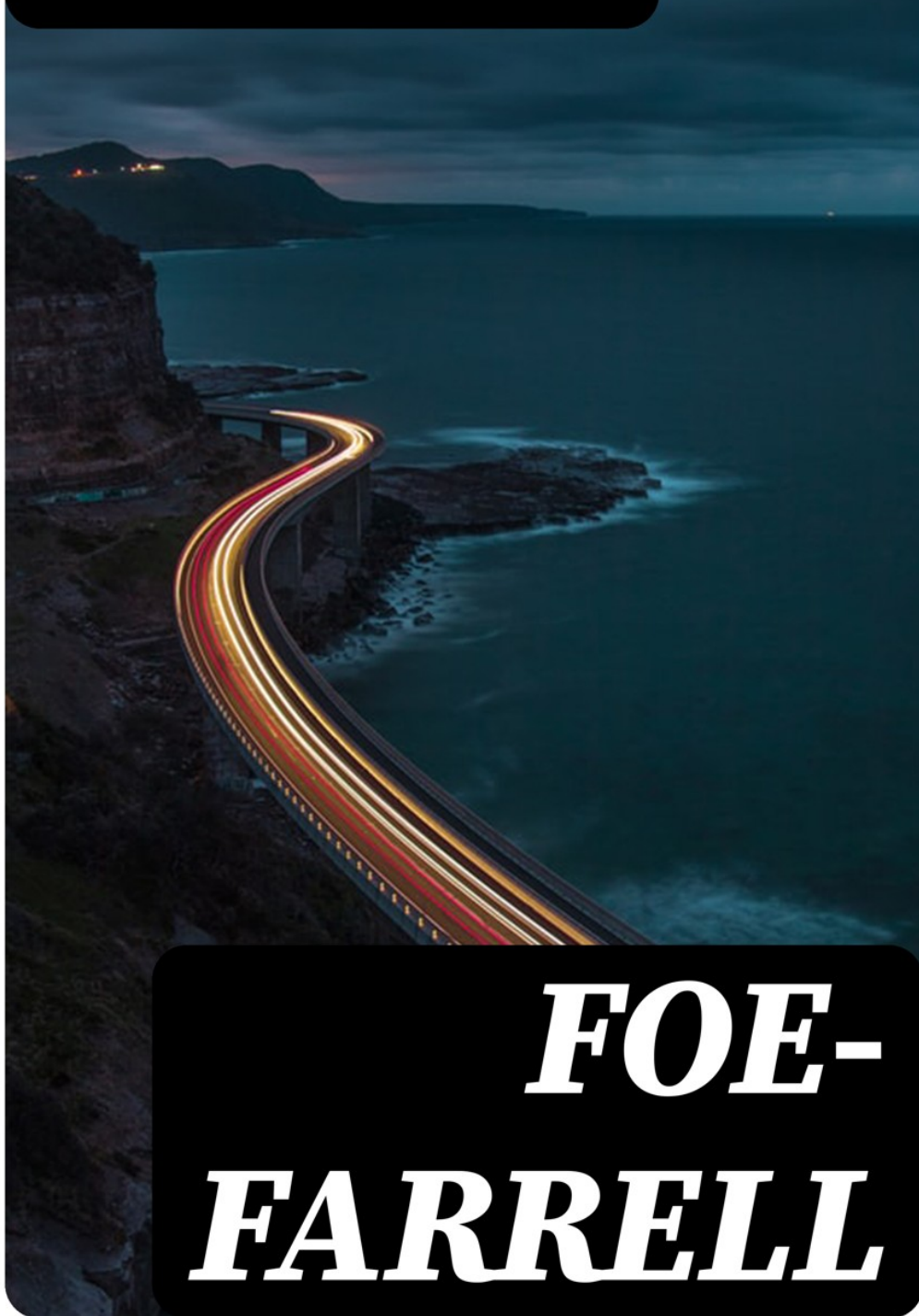


***ARTHUR
QUILLER-COUCH***



***FOE-
FARRELL***

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***FOE-
FARRELL***

Arthur Quiller-Couch

Foe-Farrell

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INGREDIENTS.

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If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.
EMERSON: *Brahma*.

The best kind of revenge is not to become like
him.
MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS.

PROLOGUE.

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Otway told this story in a dug-out which served for officers' mess of a field-battery somewhere near the Aisne: but it has nothing to do with the War. He told it in snatches, night by night, after the manner of Scheherazade in the

Arabian Nights Entertainments, and as a rule to an auditory of two. Here is a full list of:

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE

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NARRATOR.

Major Sir Roderick Otway, Bart., M.C., R.F.A.

AUDIENCE AND INTERLOCUTORS.

Lieut. John Polkinghorne. R.F.A., of the Battery.

Sec. Lieut. Samuel Barham, M.C. R.F.A., of the Battery.

Sec. Lieut. Percy Yarrell-Smith. R.F.A., of the Battery

Sec Lieut. Noel Williams, R.F.A., attached for instruction.

But military duties usually restricted the audience to two at a time, though there were three on the night when Barham (Sammy) set his C.O. going with a paragraph from an old newspaper. The captain—one McInnes, promoted from the ranks—attended one stance only. He dwelt down at the wagon-lines along with the Veterinary Officer, and brought up the ammunition most nights, vanishing back in the small hours like a ghost before cock-crow.

The battery lay somewhat wide to the right of its fellows in the brigade; in a saucer-shaped hollow on the hill-side, well screened with scrub. Roughly it curved back from the

straight lip overlooking the slope, in a three-fifths segment of a circle; and the officers' mess made a short arc in it, some way in rear of the guns. You descended, by steps, cut in the soil and well pounded, into a dwelling rather commodious than large: for Otway—who knew about yachts—had taken a fancy to construct it nautical-wise, with lockers that served for seats at a narrow saloon table, sleeping bunks excavated along the sides, and air-holes like cabin top-lights, cunningly curtained by night, under the shell-proof cover.

"It cost us a week," he wrote home to his sister, "to get the place to my mind. Since then we have been adding fancy touches almost daily, and now the other batteries froth with envy. You see, it had to be contrived, like the poet's chest of drawers."

A double debt to pay:

Doss-house by night and bag-of-tricks by day.

And here we have lived now, shooting and sleeping (very little sleeping) for five solid weeks. All leave being off, I have fallen into this way of life, almost without a thought that there ever had been, or could be, another, and feel as if my destiny were to go on at it for ever and ever. And this at thirty-five, Sally!

"It must be ever so much worse for the youngsters, one would say. Anyway I have had ten good years that they are missing... Cambridge, Henley, Lord's; Ascot, and home-to-tidy, and afterwards the little Mercedes, and you and I rolling in to Prince's and the theatre, whilst good old Bob is for the House, to take *his* exercises walking the lobbies;

clean linen after the bath, and my own sister beside me—she that always knew how to dress—and the summer evening over Hyde Park Corner and the Green Park.... No, I mustn't go on. It is *verboden* even to think of a white shirt until the Bosch hangs out the tail of *his*.

"My youngsters are missing all this, I tell myself. Yet they are a cheerful crowd, and keep smiling on their Papa. The worst is, a kind of paralysis seems to have smitten our home mails and general transport for close upon a fortnight. No letters, no parcels—but one case of wine, six weeks overdue, with half the bottles in shards: no newspapers. This last specially afflicts young Sammy Barham, who is a glutton for the halfpenny press: which again is odd, because his comments on it are vitriolic.

"No books—that's the very worst. Our mess library went astray in the last move: no great loss perhaps except for the *Irish R.M.*, which I was reading for the nth time. The only relic that survives, and follows us everywhere like an intelligent hound, is a novel of Scottish sentiment, entitled *But and Ben*. The heroine wears (p. 2) a dress of 'some soft white clinging material'—which may account for it. Young Y.-Smith, who professes to have read the work from cover to cover, asserts that this material clings to her throughout: but I doubt the thoroughness of his perusal since he explained to us that 'Ben' and 'But' were the play-names of the lad and his lassie.... For our personal libraries we possess:

"*R.O.*—A hulking big copy of the *International Code of Signals*: a putrid bad book, of which I am preparing, in odd moments, a recension, to submit

to the Board of Trade. Y.-Smith borrows this off me now and then, to learn up the flags at the beginning. He gloats on crude colours.

"*Polkinghorne*—A Bible, which I borrow, sometimes for private study, sometimes (you understand?) for professional purposes. It contains a Book of Common Prayer as well as the Apocrypha. P. (a Cornishman, something of a mystic, two years my senior and full of mining experiences in Nevada and S. America) always finds a difficulty in parting with this, his one book. He is deep in it, this moment, at the far end of the table.

"*Sammy Barham*, so far as anyone can discover, has never read a book in his life nor wanted to. He was educated at Harrow. Lacking the *Daily Mail*, he is miserable just now, poor boy! I almost forgave the Code upon discovering that his initials, S.B., spell, for a distress signal, 'Can you lend (or give) me a newspaper?'

"*Yarrell-Smith* reads Penny Dreadfuls. He owns four, and was kind enough, the other day, to lend me one: but it's a trifle too artless even for my artless mind.

"Young *Williams*—a promising puppy sent up to me to be walked—reads nothing at all. He brought two packs of Patience cards and a Todhunter's *Euclid*; the one to rest, the other to stimulate, his mind; and I've commandeered the *Euclid*. A great

writer, Sally! He's not juicy, and he don't palpitate, but he's an angel for style. 'Therefore the triangle DBC is equal to the triangle ABC—pause and count three—'the less to the greater'—pause—'which is absurd.' Neat and demure: and you're constantly coming on little things like that. 'Two straight lines cannot enclose a space'—so broad and convincing, when once pointed out!—and why is it not in *The Soldiers' Pocket-Book* under 'Staff Axioms'?

"When you make up the next parcel, stick in a few of the unlikeliest books. I don't want Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*: I have tackled that for my Little-Go, and, besides, we have plenty of 'em out here: but books about Ireland, and the Near East, and local government, and farm-labourers' wages, and the future life, and all that sort of thing. "Two nights ago, Polkinghorne got going on our chances in another world. Polkinghorne is a thoughtful man in his way, rising forty—don't know his religion. I had an idea somehow that he was interested in such things. But to my astonishment the boys took him up and were off in full cry. It appeared that each one had been nursing his own thoughts on the subject. The trouble was, none of us knew very much about it—"

Otway, writing beneath the hurricane-lamp, had reached this point in his letter when young Barham exclaimed to the world at large:

"Hallo! here's a tall story!"

The C.O. looked up. So did Polkinghorne, from his Bible. Sammy held a torn sheet of newspaper.

"Don't keep it to yourself, my son," said Otway, laying down his pen and leaning back, so that his face passed out of the inner circle of the lamplight.

Sammy bent forward, pushed the paper nearer to this pool of light, smoothed it and read:

"THAMES-SIDE MYSTERY"

"A Coroner's jury at C—, a 'village' on the south bank of the Thames, not a hundred miles below Gravesend—"

"Seems a lot of mystery about it already," observed Polkinghorne. "Don't they give the name of the village?"

"No; they just call it 'C—,' and, what's more, they put 'village' into inverted commas. Don't know why: but there's a hint at the end."

"Proceed."

Sammy proceeded.

"—Was engaged yesterday in holding an inquest on the body of an unknown man, found lying at highwater mark in a creek some way below the village. A local constable had discovered the body: but neither the officer who attended nor the river police could afford any clue to the deceased's identity. Medical evidence proved that death was due to drowning, although the corpse had not been long immersed: but a sensation was caused when the evidence further disclosed that it bore an incised wound over the left breast, in itself sufficient to

cause death had not suffocation quickly supervened.

"The body was further described, in the police evidence, as that of a middle-aged man, presumably a gentleman. It was clad in a black 'evening-dress' suit, and two pearl studs of some value remained in the limp shirt-front; from which, however, a third and fellow stud was missing. The Police Inspector—who asked for an open verdict, pending further inquiry—added that the linen, and the clothing generally, bore no mark leading to identification. Further, if a crime had been committed, the motive had not been robbery. The trousers-pockets contained a sovereign, and eighteen shillings in silver. In the waistcoat was a gold watch (which had stopped at 10.55), with a chain and a sovereign-purse containing two sovereigns and a half-sovereign: in the left-hand breast pocket of the dinner-jacket a handkerchief, unmarked: in the right-hand pocket a bundle of notes and a worn bean-shaped case for a pair of eyeglasses. The glasses were missing. The Police had carefully dried the notes and separated them. They were nine one pound notes; all numbered, of course. Beyond this and the number on the watch there was nothing to afford a clue.'—"

Here Barham paused for a glance up at the roof of the dug-out, as two explosions sounded pretty near at hand.

"Huns saying good-night," he interpolated. "Can't have spotted us. Nothing doing aloft these three days."

Polkinghorne looked across the light at the C.O., who sat unaccountably silent, his face inscrutable in the penumbra. Taking silence for "yes," Polkinghorne arose and put his head outside for a look around.

"Queer story, you'll admit, sir?" put in Sammy Barham during this pause. "Shall I go on, or wait for the rollicking Polly to hear it out?—for the queerest part is to come."

"I know," said Otway, after some two or three seconds' silence.

"Eh?... But it's just here, sir, the thing of a sudden gets mysteriuser and mysteriuser—"

Polkinghorne came back. "Nerves," he reported. "They're potting all over the place.... Here, Sammy, pass over that scrap of paper if you've finished reading. I want to hear the end."

"It hasn't any," said Otway from the shadow.

"But, sir, when I was just warning you—"

"Dashed good beginning, anyway," said Polkinghorne; "something like *Our Mutual Friend*."

"Who's he?" asked Sammy.

"Ingenuous youth, continue," Otway commanded. "Polky wants to hear the rest of the paragraph, and so do I."

"It goes on just like a detective story," promised Sammy. "Just you listen to this:—"

"An incident which may eventually throw some light on the mystery interrupted the Coroner's summing up and caused something of a sensation. This was the appearance of an individual, evidently

labouring under strong excitement, who, having thrust his way past the police, advanced to the Coroner's table and demanded to have sight of the body. The man's gestures were wild, and on being asked his name he answered incoherently. His manner seriously affected one of the jury, who swooned and had to be removed from Court.

"While restoratives were being applied at the 'Plume and Feathers' Inn (adjacent to the building in which the inquest was held), the Coroner held consultation with Police and Foreman of the Jury, and eventually adjourned for a second inspection of the body, the stranger accompanying them. From this inspection, as from the first, representatives of the Press were excluded.

"Returning to Court at the expiration of forty minutes—by which time the absent juror had recovered sufficiently to take his seat—the Coroner directed an open verdict to be entered and the inquiry closed.

"The intrusive visitor did not reappear. We understand that he was found to be suffering from acute mental derangement and is at present under medical treatment as well as under supervision of the police, who are closely watching the case. They preserve great reticence on the whole subject and very rightly so in these days, considering the

number of enemy plotters in our midst, and that the neighbourhood of 'C—' in particular is known to be infested with their activities."

"Is that all?" asked Polkinghorne.

"That's all; and about enough, I should say, for this Penny Reading."

"When did it happen?"

"Can't tell. The top of the sheet's torn off." Barham pushed the paper across. "By the look, it's a bit of an old *Daily Chronicle*. I found it wrapping one of my old riding boots, that I haven't worn since I took to a sedentary life. Higgs must have picked it up at our last move—"

"Do you want the date?" put in Otway. "If so, it was in January last—January the 18th, to be exact."

"But—"

"I mean the date of the inquest. The paper would be next morning's— Wednesday the 19th," Otway went on in a curious level voice, as though spelling the information for them out of the lamplight on the table.

Barham stared. "But—" he began again—"but *how*, sir?"

Polkinghorne, who also had stared for a moment, broke in with a laugh. "The C.O. is pulling your leg, Sammy. He tore off the top of your paper—it was lying around all this morning—noted the date and thought he might safely make a pipe-spill."

"That won't do," retorted Barham, still searching Otway's face on which there seemed to rest a double shadow. "For when I turned it out of my valise this morning I carefully looked for the date—I'll swear I did—and it was missing."

"Then you tore the thing in unpacking, and the C.O. picked up the scrap you overlooked. Isn't that the explanation, sir?"

"No," said Otway after a pause, still as if he spoke under control of a muted pedal. He checked himself, apparently on the point of telling more; but the pause grew into a long silence.

Barham tried back. "January, you said, sir?... and now we're close upon the end of October—"

He could get nothing out of the C.O.'s eyes, which were bent on the table; and little enough could he read in his face, save that it was sombre with thought and at the same time abstracted to a degree that gave the boy a sudden uncanny feeling. It was like watching a man in the travail of second sight, and all the queerer because he had never seen an expression even remotely resembling it on the face of this hero of his, with whose praise he filled his home-letters—"One of the best: never flurried: and, what's more, you never catch him off his game by any chance."

Otway's jaw twitched once, very slightly. He put out a hand to pick up his pen and resume writing; but in the act fell back into the brown study, the trance, the rapt gaze at a knot in the woodwork of the table. His hand rested for a moment by the ink-pot around which his fingers felt, like a blind man's softly making sure of its outline and shape. He withdrew it to his tunic-pocket, pulled out pipe and tobacco-pouch and began to fill....

At this point in came young Yarrell-Smith. Young Yarrell-Smith wore a useful cloak—French cavalry pattern—of black

mackintosh, with a hood. It dripped and shone in the lamplight.

"Beastly night," he announced to the company in general and turned to report to Otway, who had sat up alert on the instant.

"Yes," quoted Otway,

"Thou comest from thy voyage—
Yes, the spray is on thy cloak and hair."

That's Matthew Arnold, if the information conveys anything to you. Everything quiet?"

"Quite quiet, sir, for the last twenty minutes; and the Captain just come in and unloading. No accidents, though they very nearly met their match, five hundred yards down the road."

"We heard," said Polkinghorne.

"I tucked the Infant into his little O.P., and left him comfy. He won't see anything there to-night."

"He'll *think* he does," said Sammy Barham with conviction.

"The Infant is quite a good Infant," Otway observed; and then, sinking his voice a tone, "Lord, if at his age I'd had his sense of responsibility..."

Barham noted the change of tone, though he could not catch the words. Again he threw a quick look towards his senior. Something was wrong with him, something unaccountable....

Yarrell-Smith noted nothing. "Well, he won't see anything to-night, sir; and if Sammy will pull himself together and pity the sorrows of a poor young man whose trembling knees—"

"Sorry," said Sammy, turning to the locker and fishing forth a bottle.

"—I'll tell you why," Yarrell-Smith went on as the tot was filled. "First place, the Bosch has finished hating us for tonight and gone to bye-bye. Secondly, it's starting to sleet—and that vicious, a man can't see five yards in front of him."

"I love my love with a B because he's Boschy," said Sammy lightly: "I'll take him to Berlin—or say, Bapaume to begin with—and feed him on Substitutes.... Do you know that parlour-game, Yarrell dear? Are you a performer at Musical Chairs? Were you by any chance brought up on a book called *What Shall We do Now?* The fact is—" Sammy, who could be irreverent, but so as never to offend, stole a look at Otway—"we're a trifle hipped in the old log cabin. I started a guessing-competition just now, and our Commanding Officer won't play. Turn up the reference, Polky—Ecclesiastes something-or-other. It runs: 'We are become as a skittle-alley in a garden of cucumbers, forasmuch as our centurion will not come out to play with us.'"

Otway laughed. "And it goes on that the grasshopper is a burden.... But Y.-S. has given you the name, just now."

"I, sir?" Yarrell-Smith gazed, in the more astonishment to find that Otway, after his laugh, reaching up to trim the lamp, looked strangely serious. "I'm blest if I understand a word of all this.... What name, sir?"

"*Hate*," said Otway, dropping back into his chair and drawing at his pipe. "But you're warm; as they say in the nursery-game. Try '*Foe*,' if you prefer it."

"Oh, I see," protested Yarrell-Smith, after a bewildered look around. "You've all agreed to be funny with a poor

orphan that has just come in from the cold."

Barham paid no heed to this. "'Foe' might be the name of a man. It's unusual.... But what was the Johnny called who wrote *Robinson Crusoe*?"

"It *was* the name of a man," answered Otway.

"*This* man?" Barham tapped his finger on the newspaper. Otway nodded.

"The man the inquest was held on?"

"That—or the other." Otway looked around at them queerly. "I think the other. But upon my soul I won't swear."

"The other? You mean the stranger—the man who interrupted—"

At this point Yarrell-Smith sank upon a locker. "I beg your pardon, all of you," he moaned helplessly; "but if there's such a thing about as First Aid—"

"Sammy had better read you this thing he's unearthed," said Polkinghorne kindly.

Barham picked up the newspaper.

"No, you don't," Otway commanded. "Put it down.... If you fellows don't mind listening, I'll tell you the story. It's about Hate; real Hate, too; not the Bosch variety."

NIGHT THE FIRST.

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JOHN FOE.

John Foe and I entered Rugby together at fourteen, and shared a study for a year and a term. Pretty soon he climbed out of my reach and finally attained to the Sixth. I never got beyond the Lower Fifth, having no brains to mention. Cricket happened to be my strong point; and when you're in the Eleven you can keep on fairly level terms with a push man in the Sixth. So he and I were friends—"Jack" and "Roddy" to one another—all the way up. We went through the school together and went up to Cambridge together.

He was a whale at Chemistry (otherwise Stinks), and took a Tancred Scholarship at Caius. I had beaten the examiner in Little-go at second shot, and went up in the same term, to Trinity; where I played what is called the flannelled fool at cricket—an old-fashioned game which I will describe to you one of these days—

"Cricket? But I thought you rowed, sir?" put in Yarrell Smith. "Yes, surely—"

"Hush! tread softly," Barham interrupted. "Our Major won't mind your not knowing he was a double Blue—don't stare at him like that; it's rude. But he will not like it forgotten that he once knocked up a century for England v Australia.... You'll forgive our young friend, sir; he left school early, when the war broke out."

Otway looked across at Yarrell-Smith with a twinkle. "I took up rowing in my second year," he explained modestly, "to enlarge my mind. And this story, my good Sammy, is not about me—though I come into it incidentally because by a pure fluke I happened to set it going. All the autobiography that's wanted for our present purpose is that I went up to

Trinity College, Cambridge, in the footsteps (among others) of Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton, and—well, you see the result. May I go on?"

But although they were listening, Otway did not at once go on. Sammy had spoken in his usual light way and yet with something of a pang in his voice, and something of a transient cloud still rested on the boy's face. Otway noted it, and understood. When the war broke out, Sammy had been on the point of going up to Oxford....

Before the cloudlet passed, Otway had a vision behind it, though the vision came from his own brain, out of his own memory—a vision of green turf and of boys in white on it, a small regiment set orderly against a background of English elms, and moving orderly, intent on the game of games.

O thou, that dear and happy Isle,
The garden of the world erstwhile....
Unhappy! shall we nevermore
That sweet militia restore?

Snatches of an old parody floated in his brain with the vision—a parody of Walt Whitman—

Far off a grey-brown thrush warbling in hedge or in marsh; Down there in the blossoming bushes, my brother, what is that you are saying?...

The perfect feel of a "fourer"!...

The jubilant cry from the flowering thorn to the flowerless willow, "smite, smite, smite."

(Flowerless willow no more but every run a late-shed perfect bloom.)

The fierce chant of my demon brother issuing forth against the demon bowler, "hit him, hit him, hit him."

The thousand melodious cracks, delicious cracks, the responsive echoes of my comrades and the hundred thence-resulting runs, passionately yearned for, never, never again to be forgotten.

Overhead meanwhile the splendid silent sun, blending all, fusing all, bathing all in floods of soft ecstatic perspiration.

Otway lifted his stare from the rough table.

They have skinned the turf off Trinity cricket-ground... Such turf, too! I wonder who bought it, and what he paid for it. ... They have turned the field into a big Base Hospital—all tin sheds, like a great kraal of scientific Kaffirs. Which reminds me...

Foe read medicine. Caius, you must know, is a great college for training doctors, and in the way of scholarships and prizes he annexed most of the mugs on the board. All the same I want you to understand that he wasn't a pot-hunter. I don't quite know how to explain.... His father had died while he was at Rugby, leaving him a competence; but he certainly was not over-burdened with money. Of that I am sure.... Can't say why. He never talked of his private affairs, even with me, though we were friends, "Jack" and "Roddy" to each other still, and inhabited lodgings together in Jesus Lane. He owed money to no one. Unsociable habit, I used to call it; destructive of confidence between man and man.

But he was no pot-hunter. I think—I am sure—that so long as he kept upsides with money he rather despised it. He had a handsome face—rather curiously like the pictures

you see of Dante—and his mind answered to it, up to a point. Fastidious is the word,... gave you the impression he had attached himself to Natural Science much as an old Florentine attached himself to theology or anatomy or classics, with a kind of cold passion.

The queerest thing about him was that anything like "intellectual society," as they call it, bored him stiff. Now you may believe it or not, but I've always had a kind of crawling reverence for things of the mind, and for men who go in for 'em. You can't think the amount of poetry, for instance, I've read in my time, just wondering how the devil it was done. But it's no use; it never was any use, even in those days. No man of the kind I wanted to worship could ever take me seriously. I remember once being introduced to a poet whose stuff I knew by heart, almost every line of it, and when I blurted out some silly enthusiasm—sort of thing a well-meaning Philistine does say, don't you know?—he put the lid down on me with "Now, that's most interesting. I've often wondered if what I write appealed to one of your—er—interests, and if so, how."

Well that's where I always felt Foe could help. And yet he didn't help very much. He read a heap of poetry—on the sly, as it were; and one night I coaxed him off to a talk about Browning. His language on the way home was three-parts blasphemy.

Am I making him at all clear to you? He kept his intellect in a cage all to itself, so to speak.... What's more—and you'll see the point of this by and by—he liked to keep his few friends in separate cages. I won't say he was jealous: but if

he liked A and B, it was odds he'd be uneasy at A's liking B, or at any rate getting to like him intimately.

This secretiveness had its value, to be sure. It gave you a sense of being *privileged* by his friendship.... Or, no; that's too priggish for my meaning. Foe wasn't a bit of a prig. It was only because he had, on his record already, so much brains that the ordinary man who met him in my rooms was disposed to wonder how he could be so good a fellow. Get into your minds, please, that he *was* a good fellow, and that no one doubted it; of the sort that listens and doesn't speak out of his turn.

He had a great capacity for silence; and it's queer to me—since I've thought over it—what a large share of our friendship consisted in just sitting up into the small hours and smoking, and saying next to nothing. I talked, no doubt: Foe didn't.

I shall go on calling him Foe. He was Jack to me, always; but Foe suits better with the story; and besides... well, I suppose there's always something in friendship that one chooses to keep in a cage.... The only cage-mate that Jack—I mean Foe—ever allowed me was Jimmy Caldecott, and that happened after we had both moved to London.

He—Foe—had taken a first-class in the Tripos, of course; and a fellowship on top of that. But he did not stay up at Cambridge. He put in the next few years at different London hospitals, published some papers on the nervous system of animals, got appointed Professor of Animal Morphology, in the South London University College (the Silversmiths' College), and might wake up any morning to find himself a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was already—I am talking of

1907, when the tale starts—a Corresponding Member of three or four learned Societies in Europe and the U.S.A., and had put a couple of honorary doctorates to his account besides his Cambridge DSc.

As for me, I had rooms at first in Jermyn Street, then chambers in the Inner Temple—my father, who had been Chairman of Quarter Sessions, holding the opinion that I ought to read for the Bar, that I might be better qualified in due time to deal out local justice down in Warwickshire. I read a little, played cricket a good deal, stuck out three or four London Seasons, travelled a bit, shot a bit in East Africa (Oh, I forgot to say I'd put in a year in the South African War); climbed a bit, in Switzerland, and afterwards in the Himalayas; come home to write a paper for the Geographical Society; got bitten with Socialism and certain Fabian notions, and put in some time with an East-End Settlement besides attending many crowded and unsavoury public meetings to urge what was vaguely known as Betterment. When I took courage and made a clean breast of my new opinions to my father, the old man answered very composedly that he too had been a Radical in his time, and had come out of it all right. ... By all means let me go on with my spouting: capital practice for public life: hoped I should take my place one of these days in the County Council at home: wouldn't even mind seeing me in Parliament, etc.—all with the wise calm of one who has passed his three-score years and ten, found the world good, made it a little better, hunted his own harriers and learnt, long since, every way in which hares run. So I returned and somehow found myself pledged to compete as a Progressive

for the next London County Council—for a constituency down Bethnal Green way. In all this, you see, my orbit and Foe's wouldn't often intersect. But we dined together on birthdays and other occasions. One year I took him down to the Derby, on the ground that it was part of a liberal education. In the paddock he nodded at a horse in blinkers and said, "What's the matter with that fellow?" "St. Amant," said I, and began to explain why Hayhoe had put blinkers on him. "Where does he stand in the betting?" asked Foe. "Why, man," said I, "at 5 to 1. You can't risk good money on a horse of that temper. I've put mine on the French horse over there—Gouvernant—easy favourite—7 to 4 on." "Oh," said he, in a silly sort of way, "I thought St. Amant might be your French horse—it's a French name isn't it?... As for your Gouvernant, I advise you to run for your life and hedge: the animal is working up for a stage fright. A touch more and he's dished before the flag drops. Now, whether the blinkers have done it or not, that St. Amant is firm as a rock." "How the devil—" I began. "That's a fine horse, too, over yonder," he said, pointing one out with his umbrella. "John o' Gaunt," said I: "ran second to St. Amant for the Guineas, and second to Henry the First in the Newmarket, with St. Amant third. The running has been all in-and-out this season. But how the devil you spotted him, when I didn't know you could tell a horse's head from his stern—" "I don't profess to much more," said Foe; "but it's my job to read an animal's eye, and what he's fit for by the quiver under his skin. Now, I'd only a glimpse of St. Amant's eye, across his blinkers, and your John o' Gaunt is a stout one—inclined, you tell me, to run in second place. But if your money's on Gouvernant,

hurry while there's time and set it right. If you've thirty seconds to spare when you've done that," he added, "you may put up a tenner for me on St. Amant—but don't bother. Your book may want some arranging."

The way he said it impressed me, and I fairly shinned back to the Ring. I hadn't made my book on any reasoned conviction, you understand; for the horses had been playing at cat's-cradle all along, and as I went it broke on me that, after all, my faith in Gouvernant mainly rested on my knowing less of him than of the others—that I was really going with the crowd. But really I was running to back a superstition—my belief in Foe, who knew nothing about horse-racing and cared less.

Well, the race was run that year in a thunderstorm—a drencher; and if Foe was right, I guess that finished Gouvernant, who never looked like a winner. St. Amant romped home, with John o' Gaunt second, in the place he could be trusted for. Thanks to Foe I had saved myself more than a pony in three strenuous minutes, and he pocketed his few sovereigns and smiled.

That was also the day—June 1st, 1904—"Glorious First of June" as Jimmy Collingwood called it—that Foe first made Jimmy's acquaintance. Young Collingwood was a neighbour of mine, down in the country; an artless, irresponsible, engaging youth, of powerful build and as pretty an oarsman and as neat a waterman as you could watch. Eton and B.N.C. Oxford were his nursing mothers. His friends (including the dons) at this latter house of learning knew him as the Malefactor; it being a tradition that he poisoned an aunt or a grandparent annually, towards the close of

May. He was attending the obsequies of one that afternoon on the edge of the hill, in a hansom, with a plate of *foie gras* on his knees and a bottle of champagne between his ankles. His cabby reclined on the turf with a bottle of Bass and the remains of a pigeon pie. His horse had its head in a nose-bag.

"Hallo, Jimmy!" I hailed, pausing before the pastoral scene. "Funeral bake-meats?"

"Hallo!" Jimmy answered, and shook his head very solemnly. "Sister-in-law this time. It had to be."

"Sister-in-law! Why you haven't one!"

"Course not," said Jimmy. "That's the whole trouble. Ain't I breaking it to you gently?... Case of *angina pectoris*, if you know what that means. It sounds like a pick-me-up—'try Angostura bitters to keep up your Pecker.' But it isn't. Angina—short 'i'; I know because I tried it on the Dean with a long one and he corrected me. He said that angina might be forgiven, for once, in a young man bereaved and labouring under strong emotion, but that if I apprehended its running in the family I had better get the quantity right. He also remarked rather pointedly that he hoped his memory was at fault and that my poor brother hadn't really lost his deceased wife's sister."

"Do you know where bad boys go?" I asked him.

"Silly question," said Jimmy, with his mouth full of *foie gras*. "Why, to the Derby, of course. Have something to eat."

I told him that we had lunched, introduced him to Foe as the Malefactor, and invited him to come back and dine with us at Prince's before catching the late train for Oxford. He

answered that fate always smiled on him at these funerals, paid off his cabby, and joined us.

Our dinner that evening was a brilliant success; and we left it to drive to Paddington to see the boy off. He had dropped a few pounds over the Derby but made the most of it up by a plunge on the last race: "and what with your standing me a dinner, I'm all up on the day's working and that cheerful I could kiss the guard." He wasn't in the least drunk, either; but explained to me very lucidly, on my taxing him with his real offence—cutting Oxford for a day when, the Eights being a short week off, he should have been in strict training—that all the strength of the B.N.C. boat that year lying on stroke side (he rowed at "six"), one might look on a *Pêche Melba* and a Corona almost in the light of a prescription. "Friend of my youth," he added—addressing me, "and"—addressing Foe—"prop, sole prop, of my declining years—as you love me, be cruel to be kind and restrain me when I show a disposition to kiss yon bearded guard."

As the tail of the train swung out of the station Foe said meditatively, "I like that boy,"... And so it was. That autumn, when Jimmy Collingwood, having achieved a pass degree—"by means," as he put it, "only known to myself"—came up to share my chambers and read for the Bar, he and Foe struck up a warm affection. For once, moreover, Foe broke his habit of keeping his friends in separate cages. He was too busy a man to join us often; but when we met we were the Three Musketeers.