

# The League of Lost Causes

Being the Romantic Adventures of Paul Lane, American Millionaire

## The Education of Edward

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AND this, I suppose, will be the last meeting of the club," said his majesty, King George of England, rising with a yawn and buttoning up his gloves.

"The last regular meeting," answered Lord Claude Tresham, secretary to the organization. "The promises will always be open."

"But for more convivial purposes," put in ex-King Manuel of Portugal, laughing. "I regret to say that an immediate engagement—"

"Mannet," interrupted the English monarch, clapping the young fellow upon the shoulder. "We owe you much gratitude. By detaching yourself from this criminal league you have put an end to its activities in Europe. When the Tsar withdrew his support you were the last prop left. And now—"

"Well, I did think it could get me back my throne," said Manuel, yawning. "And naturally I was not greatly averse to using it as a means toward that end. But now, if you will pardon me, a most important affair of state makes my presence imperative, and so—"

"It's curious," observed King George, lingering at the door. "It's up in a night and lost its influence in a day. When Professor Dvornak propounded his plan for the revival of aristocracy he had an immediate response from half the rulers of Europe. I confess that for a time he influenced me. I believe the league would have effected its purposes, too, had it not been used by base men for their own purposes, and sunk to the level of an anarchistic organization, thus compelling us to form a counter league to thwart it. And that we have succeeded is due entirely to you, Tresham."

"And to Paul Lane," said Tresham. "The American millionaire?"

"Yes, sir. He, too, was entrapped into joining the league and aiding it with his money, principally through the influence of her highness the Princess Clothilde of Austria. He came over to us when he learned the true nature of the society, and has since done all in his power to aid us. And I have hopes that the princess herself will join in giving the league the coup de grace."

"A very remarkable woman, the Princess Clothilde," said King George thoughtfully. "I know her well and hope to see her often now that she has abandoned Dvornak and his fellow conspirators. As for this Lane—where is he?"

"Not far from here, sir," answered Lord Claude.

"Well, you must bring him to see me next time we are both in Paris. Do you go my way, Mannet?" he continued, turning to the Portuguese sovereign.

"No, cousin. I have a most pressing appointment on weighty matters of state," replied the other, and vanished without further ceremony down the same stairs by which King George soon afterward took his departure.

It was in the private dining room of Monsieur Gabriel, in Paris. Seven kings had attended what was to be the last session of their club. Formed by the staid heads among the European rulers, to combat the perilous activities of the league, it had accomplished its purpose. The league was on its last legs. And Paul Lane, who had opposed it with all his resources, had been mainly instrumental in securing its overthrow.

Lord Claude Tresham stepped back to the mantel and lit a cigarette.

"I wonder," he mused, as he puffed out a cloud of fragrant smoke. "I wonder just how soon King George will learn that his heir has been kidnapped!"

He strode across the room and pulled back the curtain which separated the dining room from that of the attendants.

"Paul!" he called, "come in."

Paul Lane, in walter's garb, which was converted into conventional evening dress by the removal of the napkin protruding from his waistcoat, entered and took the cigarette which the other handed him.

"I wanted you to hear our conversation tonight, Paul," said Lord Tresham, "because I have good reason to believe that the activities of the league are not wholly ended. In fact, they have succeeded in pulling off a most daring coup. Prince Edward of Wales was kidnapped two hours ago."

"In Paris?"

"Yes, from the town house of the Marquis de Breteuil, whose guest he has been, as you know, for several months, in order that he might become proficient in French. King George and Queen Mary arrived in Paris this afternoon incognito, to see their son. They visited the marquis' house and met the prince, and, being satisfied that all is right with him, will not expect to see him again until tomorrow. Between now and then the prince must be found. I have just learned the news from one of our agents. Nobody knows it yet, not even the Marquis de Breteuil."

"But is there no clue? What was the purpose of the conspirators?"

"The purpose, Paul, is wholly unknown to me. There does exist a clue, however. The Princess Clothilde, who, as you know, has resolved to oppose the league, but fears to do so openly owing to some hold which Von Holzrath, their leader, has over her, wishes to see you at midnight in the Cafe Celestiel, on the Boulevard Richepin—a famous haunt of actors and soubrettes. She sent me this message half an hour before the club convened. It was something of an ordeal to keep all knowledge of this affair from King George, as you may well imagine. Now the best thing you can do will be to follow up this clue. I rely implicitly in you, Paul—only remember, Prince Edward must be found by daybreak and restored to

Paul, for heaven's sake follow on his track, for I must go back and play my part again. Von Holzrath is ubiquitous, his spies may even now be watching me. It is madness to be seen talking with you."

"One moment, Gabrielle thinks you the prince? It is incredible that a woman should be deceived."

"No, Paul. She is not playing her part. She knows nothing of the plot and thinks the whole thing a wasser, wherefrom she is to reap ten thousand francs for aiding in the fest. Now I must go." She rose.

"But the prince," Paul cried again in desperation. "Give me some clue."

"I cannot, Paul. Ask at the house of the marquis. That is all I can suggest. I must go, Paul—forgive me."

For a fraction of a moment he felt her hand in his, and then he knew that whatever the part which she must play, her love was his. Some day, when all their sufferings were ended, he would take her home with him, to dwell in peace and quiet for all their lives in his own land, Home! The thought, the memory of it burned in his heart and gave him new resolution. He buttoned his coat tightly and hurried away from the restaurant toward the marquis' town house.

But it was five miles from the Cafe Celestiel to that fashionable neighborhood where the Marquis de Breteuil resided, and Paul, when about to hail a taxicab, discovered to his consternation that he had no money in his pocket. He knew no one from whom to borrow in that region. It was almost as far to Lord Claude's abode as to that of the marquis. There was nothing to do but to walk. So he

George, who would believe the prince's own story that he had spent the night quietly at home, when the newspapers would be full of his night adventure in the Cafe Celestiel. Truly Von Holzrath had hit upon a cunning scheme, and one which far transcended the vulgar vice of kidnapping the heir apparent.

Paul's resolution was made up in an instant. He must hurry back to the Cafe Celestiel, acquaint Clothilde with the truth about the affair, and force her, by any means in his power, to accompany him to Lord Claude's house and there reveal the details of the conspiracy.

So he set doggedly to tramp back again through the long streets and over the bridge. And when at last he reached his destination, it was twenty minutes past three.

The Cafe Celestiel was still brilliant with lights, and the band still played, but the cafe itself was almost empty. A few newcomers lazily sipped their absinthe there—shabby folks, night birds, journalists, and writers who kept irregular hours. They were gathered in little groups and noisily discussing some topic of interest. Paul seating himself close by, made out the tenor of the conversation with no difficulty.

"I wish I had been there!" moaned a shaggy-haired newspaper writer. "Just my luck to miss such an event! Tell me, Alphonse, just what occurred."

Alphonse, the head waiter, rested his tray of empty glasses upon the marble top and disclosed the events of the evening with free gesticulation of his hands.

"He was here at midnight with her

knew Clothilde well enough to be sure that she would never disclose her identity.

He made his way drunkenly toward the corner in which he and Clothilde had sat. A scrap of paper was lying upon one of the chairs. Paul opened it mechanically and saw a scrap of writing upon it. He read:

"The little park in the Bois at five."

The blood tingled in his veins. Clothilde, in the supreme moment of the challenge, had, then, found time somehow to indicate that note to him, knowing that he would come back, and trusting that he would discover it. Paul knew the little park, an unrequented glade, one of the scores and more in which duelsists met to settle their differences. Perhaps Clothilde had hoped that Paul would contrive some method of saving her from the steel of Mannet. The duel would be farcical, for the young sovereign had been trained from boyhood in the rapier. Paul shuddered and racked his brains furiously as he endeavored to contrive upon the next step which should be taken.

It was a quarter before four. He had no time to go to Lord Tresham's house. He must decide immediately. If he set out at once he could reach the duelling ground some fifteen minutes before the appointed time. And come what might, the duel must be stopped. He thought only of Clothilde! He had already forgotten his mission.

The pale light of the summer morning had already begun to make the trees and paths distinguishable when Paul arrived at the gate of the Bois nearest to the duelling ground. It was twenty minutes to five. He quickened his steps, directing them

their stations. The man with the case, half between the two, raised a white handkerchief.

"One!" he counted.

Suddenly Paul saw a third carriage, driven at a furious pace, dash down the drive and come to a halt fifty yards away. A middle-aged gentleman and a lady, primly dressed, descended, and, perceiving what was taking place, began running wildly toward the combatants.

"Two!" shouted the man in the middle.

Paul bounded from the underbrush. "Put up your weapons!" he yelled in French. And the lady, startled by this sudden appearance and still more unaccountable command, obeyed.

"Monstros!" exclaimed the man with the handkerchief, as Paul stumbled toward him. "This is most unseemly. If you—"

"Well done! Well done!" shouted the middle-aged man, finding his voice as he staggered into the middle of the group, leaving the lady falling in the rear. "Just in the nick of time. Ed ward!"

But if the others were disconcerted the middle-aged man was more disconcerted than they. He seemed to totter backward, his eyes stared through their heavy fringes, and his mouth opened and remained open. The lady, who joined the group at that moment, seemed paralyzed with fear. She sank to the ground, sobbing. The gentleman raised her in his arms and, turning upon the group with an expression of sternness, said:

"That man is not my son."

Round the bend of the drive came a fourth carriage, and before it stopped a young man leaped from it and came bounding like a deer across the grass, shouting as he advanced. He burst into the midst of the assembled company and clasped his mother in his arms. And the rest, entirely overcome by the crescendo of these unparalleled circumstances, only looked wildly at one another. They could not find their tongues.

It was really astonishing how little they resembled each other—the true prince and the false. If clothes make the man, they had certainly made the prince in the minds of the Parisians. For save that each wore a trim English coat and patent leather boots and spats, and carried a cane with a dog's head, there was astonishingly little resemblance between the true Prince Edward, with his arms round his sobbing mother, and the false Prince Edward, still holding the duelling pistol.

"I heard that you had come here to look for me, father," exclaimed the prince. "What does it mean? They sent a telephone message to the marquis' house—"

"Who sent it?"

"The Daily Star." They told the marquis that I had been out all night in a cafe, that I was to fight a duel, that you had come to Paris and had been warned to be in the Bois, and so I—what does it mean?"

Queen Mary picked herself up and came forward, her eyes boring like steel daggers into Clothilde's face.

"Who is that woman, masquerading as my son, the prince?" she asked.

Then, rising to the occasion, Paul stepped forward, doffing his hat with his politest smile.

"It means, Madam," he said, "that a cinematograph picture was to be taken in the Bois, and that one of the chief actors unfortunately adopted a dress too similar to your son's."

"Ha!" snorted King George incredulously. "Where is your camera, sir?"

"I left it in the cab," replied Paul deferentially. "The cabman took it in charge because I had forgotten my money."

### THE BEGGAR GIRL'S MODESTY

Turkish Young Woman Refused to Uncover Face to Have Picture Taken.

London—While walking near the Mosque of St. Sofia some time ago I was arrested with the cry of "Alma for the Love of Allah!" coming from the trio whose photograph I am illustrating herewith, trusting that it will be of interest to your readers. I tried to get the girl in the group to uncover her face, but the teaching of her religion, which tells her that her modesty is great and must not be shown, had too great a hold, and my efforts were unavailing. Can one say the same of the average English beggar? Her father and brother, as can be seen from their expression, were at first averse to the picture, but a bribe of 20 pence over-



"Aims for the Love of Allah!"

penny) brought reluctant consent. Rumor has it that many beggars make small fortunes; certainly the number of them to be found would lead one to think that at least an easy living is to be obtained. Here in this most picturesque city one can hardly go a dozen yards without hearing the cry of "Alma for the Love of Allah!" sung at one, with the blessing or curse to follow, according to one's generosity or otherwise.

### CURTAIN DOWN ON ROMANCE

Asks Annulment of Marriage to Man Who Went Insane on Honeymoon in 1903.

San Francisco—A tragic final chapter has been written to the romantic elopement of "Jack" Breckenridge and Miss Adelaide Murphy, which stirred social circles in many cities ten years ago. Mrs. Breckenridge has instituted proceedings of annulment of marriage because of the incurable insanity of her husband.

"Jack" Breckenridge, scion of noted California families, is watched by keepers in Paris. His wife, after arranging with her attorney here for the filing of annulment proceedings, left recently for Philadelphia.

The marriage of Breckenridge to "Sallie" Murphy, as she was known by her friends, took the relatives and acquaintances of the couple by surprise. On the honeymoon trip to Paris the blight of insanity touched the mind of the young husband and all the efforts of the best physicians in Europe failed to cure him. For ten years he has remained there.

Mrs. Breckenridge recently brought the young son of the marriage, John Breckenridge, Jr., to San Francisco to be with his grandmother and with her concurrence the annulment proceedings are now under way here and in Paris.

### ALCOHOL MAKES MARE FIGHT

Seeking Cause of Racket in Barn, Owner Expostulates and Gets the Worst of It.

Bremerton, Wash.—William Braken, a Colby farmer, placed a quart of alcohol intended for horse liniment above a feed box in his barn. Shortly after midnight Mr. Braken heard a commotion indicating that somebody was pulling the barn apart. When he peered into the stall and gently inquired "What's the matter, Molly?" that spirited animal kicked him.

Mr. Braken returned with scuffling and slipped into the stall. The first kick missed Mr. Braken's head, but knocked the scuffling out of his hands. Then Molly kicked him behind the door and kicked the door on top of him.

When Mrs. Braken arrived and removed the door Mr. Braken announced that he would call the battle a draw for the night.

In the morning it was learned that Molly's indiscretion was due to the spilling of the alcohol in the feed box. Aside from exhibiting some eagerness to get to the pump, Molly's "morning after" was uneventful.

### CORK LEG CAUSES ARREST

Woman Says Husband Had Concealed His Possession of Two Artificial Limbs.

Portland, Ore.—Miss Eva Zelmer did not know P. D. Chamberlain had lost both legs when she married him. This is one of the reasons given by the young woman for readily consenting to appear as a witness against the man, who is charged with bigamy.

In addition to the Portland wife he admits he has a wife and child in Portland, Me.

It appears Chamberlain told Miss Zelmer he had one cork leg, but did not say anything about the other. When she learned that both legs were artificial the first quarrel occurred.

Chamberlain was released on \$250 cash bail. The money was the same which Chamberlain had raised a few days before to get the release of Miss Zelmer, who had been held in that amount as a material witness.



"Who is that woman, masquerading as my son, the prince?"

strode through the endless streets, crossed the Seine, and then proceeded through a mean region of little shops, while from time to time the pealing of the city clocks indicated the swift passage of the hours. It was nearly two before he stood at last in front of the old chateau in which the prince was harbored.

He knew his room! It had been indicated in many a diagram and plan in many a newspaper. It overlooked the avenue, and now Paul, standing directly under it, perceived that there was a light in the prince's window. And, as he looked up, straining his eyes to catch a clearer glimpse of the figure behind the curtain, suddenly the window was thrown wide open and the youthful figure of the prince looked out.

It was Prince Edward! There was no mistaking him! None could have mistaken that characteristic figure, that bright, English face, the profile—it was the prince complete, even down to the fashionable coat so often portrayed.

As Paul watched the prince turned round, the curtain fell, and the light went out.

He had come on a wild goose chase, and the true explanation of it suddenly flashed through his mind. Von Holzrath, the soul and cunning inspiration of the league, distrusting Clothilde, had merely pretended that the prince had been kidnapped, in order that she might reveal the story and spread the rumor, they incidentally throwing his enemies off their guard. Paul had not credited the man with so much originality. In the midst of these rumors, which would doubtless be communicated to King

—Mademoiselle de Soucy," he said. "Sapristi! they drank together for two hours. Mademoiselle and the prince, till both were tipsy. And he flaunted himself so daintily. Messieurs, in his English coat and his patent leathers, yes, even to the dog's-head cane that all Paris has learned to know. He won all hearts, this English prince. And then, just as we were wondering whether or not he would roll under the table, up steps—who do you think? Manuel of Portugal!"

"Ci! What a meeting! And then?"

"When Mademoiselle perceived him she grew pale as death and rose from the table with a little cry of fear, and stood facing the ex-king with arms stretched out as though to shield the boy prince from his wrath. And the prince rose, too, and looked upon Manuel with calm dignity—the dignity of a prince, an English prince, Messieurs. And then Manuel walked up to the prince and taking off his gloves in a leisurely way, folded them together and struck Prince Edward across the face. And then men sprang between them and—"

"A duel!" exclaimed the shaggy-haired journalist. "Mon Dieu! Where will it be?"

"None knows. They went off with their seconds in two taxicabs, leaving poor Mademoiselle de Soucy alone and half hysterical. But it is certain that they will fight before morning."

Paul sprang to his feet in horror. A duel! Clothilde, in a boy's garb, engaged in a fencing bout with the infuriated young man who had been ruler of Portugal! It was intolerable that such a thing could occur. Yet he

toward the little glade. At last he reached it—thank God, it was empty—and, flinging himself down upon the dewy grass, he rested. His limbs ached and his head was swimming; his eyes were heavy from want of sleep. He needed all his strength to control himself. He must act wisely, swiftly and say not one rash word.

Presently a flaccid rattle up and halted in the middle of the nearby carriage drive, and two men stepped out of it. Almost immediately it was followed by another, which, halting in the identical spot, disgorged three others. Through the bushes behind which he lay concealed Paul could see in the rapidly increasing light, that the first two men were Manuel and his second; the other three were the supposed prince, his second, and a man who carried a little black case and was evidently a doctor.

The parties saluted formally, and the man with the case stepped forward and communed for a while with Manuel's second. Then, being joined by their parties, they stationed them in chosen places, some fifteen paces apart. And as the man with the case opened it, Paul perceived to his horror that the case did not contain surgical supplies.

It contained two pistols. This was evidently to be a duel a l'outrance. And one of the combatants would fall, killed, or perhaps mortally wounded.

That the duel was to be a serious one was evinced from the fact that the combatants were set facing each other, and not back to back, as is commonly done in encounters when only honor is sought. The principals raised their pistols; the seconds took

be found by daybreak and restored to