

I had seen, day after day, every sunlit or night obscured detail of the funny old house I had visited so many years ago. Through it, handsome, cadaverous and so quiet, had walked Death himself, tapping unnoticed at the very walls of the mansions of life ; trying here, failing there, lightly fingering for the sign of a breach. A tiny opening. Apparently the person who slept in the lock-up at that county town on the Severn, or perhaps woke, would hear this time. I had found that I could face my usual mixture of Peaberry Mysore and Blue Mountain. I had made certain havoc of two on toast, their silver skins laced with their golden blood. To think of the tiny Clem mixed up, nay, a prime mover, in such affairs. Useful, courteous little chip of a bat. He had hushed my brat for me when he was only six, one morning on which I had wanted to go out for a walk.

NOTES