

seething influence over me to force me to yield the position which I had taken up, so I recklessly unfolded the real reasons why I objected to playing tennis, for my list of excuses was exhausted.

"To tell you the truth, Miss Timmons, I don't care for the game."

"Why not?" came the answer in a dignified and injured tone. "I'm sure it does not afford such a brutal exhibition as Rugby does."

Now, I was on the first team, and did not like being called a brute. "Well, girls don't need to play it," I replied. "To my mind, football points out to a youth his place in society, and teaches him to rely not only on himself, but also on others. Tennis is essentially a selfish game."

"I'm sorry I'm so selfish," The answer came sharply, and she rose to her feet haughtily.

"Now, I no more intended to attribute the characteristic of selfishness to you, Miss Timmons, than you did to call me a brute."

Beaten on her own ground, she blushed with anger, dryly said "good evening," turned quickly, and walked majestically off to her rendezvous. I was in no fit humor to offer apologies, nor was she to accept them, so I did not try to intercept her, thinking that she would vent her anger on someone else, and that I should bow down and worship later in the evening when she would read me a more lenient and reasonable homily on my conduct. But it was not to be. The next number she and Tom Rice were together; after that I saw nothing of her, and I learned later that Tom had escorted her home. Of this I thought nothing, except that it was in the sequence of events that she should immediately pick up with a tennis player, after leaving me. But before many days were passed, I found that Tom was as deeply in love with Celia Timmons as I was myself, that he had taken advantage of our "tiff," had done homage to her god of tennis, and had apparently implanted himself in her affections. Hereafter she treated me coolly, and even my brilliant plays at centre half, against McGill (which Tom brought her to see), did not suffice to cause her to relent.

Thus affairs drifted on all winter, my rival retaining the place where I felt I ought and would like to be. But I could not attempt to regain it, for such a step would not have been honorable on my part, as long as Tom was favored. My success seemed to depend entirely on Celia's view of the case, and on her actions.

In the spring Tom and Celia were together more than ever; his position seemed to be secure; his rival could find not even a loop-hole in his fortifications whereby he might obtain a safe and honorable entrance. When entries were called for the tennis tournament, it was found that they had entered in the mixed doubles. They now practised together incessantly, and I began to despair of ever receiving friendly glances from Celia again. They were both good tennis players, but of course I thought they were not matched, and predicted an early defeat for them. But they seemed to have practised combination, for they came into the finals without encountering much difficulty.

And now the day on which the final match was to be played had arrived. Quite a crowd had gathered around the courts, and I was not the least interested spectator. As I was walking from my boarding-house to the tennis courts, I began wondering which side

had my sympathy in the match, and after much pondering, I came to the conclusion that my jealousy towards Tom outweighed all my old love for Celia, and that, if the decision of the match rested with me, they would lose. But such unworthy thoughts were soon dispelled when I saw Celia on the courts practising and going through some preliminary work to get her muscles into working order, and to get her "eye on the ball." Never had I seen her looking so beautifully. Without any particularly favorably surroundings, she was attractive, but as she stood out on the court alone, and as she delivered a few easy scientific strokes and took a few short runs from one side to the other, her straight, lithe, well-shaped figure, not above medium height, could not have been shown off to more advantage. Her face, tinged with a slight flush, her flashing, large, dark eyes, and her rich folds of glossy black hair, made her appear to my eyes, a "thing of beauty," and I wished she was my "joy forever."

But while in the midst of such reveries, I was disturbed by being called on to act as umpire, the official appointed beforehand not having arrived. I accordingly took up my position at the net.

The match proved to be a very even one and was characterized by many streaks of brilliancy. But a full description of the game is not necessary here; it sufficeth to say that at the end of the fourth set the score was "two—all." The fourth set Celia and Tom should have won, and this fact put Tom considerably out of temper, a change which Celia did not fail to notice. This discouraged her. She had been playing a brilliant game, but tired a little in the fourth set, became slightly "rattled," and failed at critical times. But after a brief rest she improved, and if Tom had played with his usual vim and dash, they would have won comparatively easily. But he was sulky, started losing, and his opponents had three games to their credit before he had started to win. But luck did not altogether desert my favorites, for they had tallied four games when their opponents had won five. If they lost this next game, they would lose the match; while if they won, there was still a fighting chance. Soon the score was run up to deuce. Both sides were playing well, and Celia received several rounds of applause for some brilliant rallies and strokes. Tom then missed a difficult return, and I was forced to announce "Vantage Out." Now came a swift serve from Tom. It was successfully returned, and Celia in her eagerness ran back half way to get it and put it back, in the shape of a high lob, whereas, if she had left it to Tom, he could have rised one of his strokes on it. But there was the lob! Every person was eagerly watching, and I forgot my neutral position of umpire, and was on tip-toes of excitement. I would have done anything at that moment to increase the danger in smashing that lob. If I could raise the net a couple of inches, I should likely stop the ball, for it would not likely be returned much higher than the net, whereas, I felt sure that if the ball was put over it would be such a smash as would not allow of a return. Suddenly an idea seized me and quick as a flash it was put into execution. Quickly and nervously I grasped the net-rope, and pulled. The net rose about two inches. The ball struck! Glory! But no—it dropped over, bounced feebly, rolled about a foot, and lay still. So mortified was I that I stared at the ball for some seconds, not because anyone had seen me pull the string (everyone had been too excited to watch the umpire), but because