

thought of how droll would be the scene at my unexpected resuscitation was uppermost in my mind. I had that indistinct preception of passing objects common to a state of *coma*, yet could concentrate my ideas upon a single point with considerable force. The lines

"Solemn strikes the funeral chime,"

rang in my mind. The job on which I had been engaged occupied much of my thoughts, and I computed over and over the measurement of the timber upon which I was reflecting at the moment of my attack.

The night passed rapidly enough, and daylight seemed as plain to me, through my closed eye-lids, as on any other occasion. Then I became a silent witness of a scene never to be eradicated from my memory.

A delegation from the Lodge came to the room, and, for a considerable period, stood around me in consultation. Their words were tender and sympathetic. They had telegraphed, as I learned, to my widowed mother, and the funeral would proceed as soon as she arrived. At a called meeting, the evening before, they had assumed all the expenses of my interment, together with those for a monument, which they had already ordered. They had adopted eulogistic resolutions in my honor. They had, in brief, taken prompt steps to assure my mother, my friends, and the entire community, of their respect for my memory.

Now I was laid in the coffin, and my body removed to the Masonic Hall, where a guard of Brethren was detailed to stand watch over me through the second night. It must have been one or two o'clock in the morning that a final consultation was held over my body to decide the solemn question of death. The ruddy appearance of my skin and the high temperature of my flesh, before adverted to, had excited much surprise, and no less than four physicians, together with the coroner, several experienced undertakers, and others, stood around me to settle the question.

And now, for the first time, I began to feel some alarm. The reader will, of course, understand that my mind was not in a logical condition. In truth, it must have been in a very feeble state of action, so much so, that I had not previously contemplated the possibility of premature burial, nor realized the horrible condition in which I was placed. But as one after the other tests failed, when acrid substances put under my eyelids, and sharp instruments penetrating my nerves, and charges of galvanism, throwing my muscles into spasms, failed to elicit a single evidence of real life; when I heard the coroner and the undertakers one and all declare me dead as *Julius Caesar*—in fact, when the last of the experts ceased his experiments, and retired from the Lodge room, a horrible fear began to come over me, to which language is inadequate to give expression, a fear which continued, but with ever increasing intensesness, until the end of the chapter.

My life was saved by the fortuitous circumstances of a railroad accident, which prevented the arrival of my mother. This necessitated the placing my body in a vault, that upon her coming she might once more look upon my face, before my remains were finally interred. In all other respects the funeral services proceeded as though I was placed in mother earth. The beautiful Masonic services were performed in opening a Funeral Lodge, my coffin lying near the altar in the centre. The appointment of a Marshal, his orderly arrangements for a procession, the beautiful prayer of the Chaplain, the selection of pall bearers—how well I understood these details! Every word of the Master's eulogy fell upon my ear, and I followed him, mentally, line for line, as he recited that funeral poem, commencing

"Dead, but where now," etc,

It would be spinning out this subject unnecessarily to describe the procession and the proceedings at the church and receiving vault. Suffice that all things were done with exceeding gravity and decorum. My body was taken first to the Methodist Church, where the funeral discourse was given, in which my character was tenderly reviewed; then to the graveyard, where I was deposited, as I have said, in one of the vaults, fortunately open to the air. At the suggestion of one of those who had retained a lurking skepticism as to the fact of my death, the lid of the coffin immediately above my face was slightly loosened, to which circumstances I probably owe my life. The horrors of that night why should I relate? Consciousness fully returned. One by one of my muscles yielded to my agonized will, and I moved my feet and hands, and opened my eyelids; I screamed aloud. More than once I must have fainted, and recovered. And when my mother, tottering into that horrible receptacle of the dead, came to look upon my face, it was bathed with a calm perspiration, the eyes were open, and an expression of horror overspread it which was too much for her affectionate heart. She fell upon my coffin senseless, and was long in being revived.

I need not say that no time was lost in releasing me from my confined situation, and restoring me by the aid of hot baths and tenderest care to strength. A handsome sum