



er it must be an important clue, or Eleanor Leavenworth would not have been to such pains to find it in the way she did from her uncle's table, and secondly—

"Wait," I said; "what makes you think this is the paper she took or was believed to have taken from Mr. Leavenworth's table on that fatal morning?"

"Why, the fact that it was found together with the key, which we know she dropped into the grate, and that there are drops of blood on it."

"Because I am not satisfied with your reason for believing this to be the paper taken by her from Mr. Leavenworth's table."

"And why?" "First, because Fobbs does not speak of seeing any paper in her hand, when she bent over the fire, leaving us to conclude that these pieces were in the scuttle of coal she threw upon it, which surely, you must know, would be a strange place for her to have put a paper she took such pains to gain possession of, and secondly, for the reason that these scraps were twisted as if they had been used for curl papers or something of that kind, hard to explain by your hypothesis."

The detective's eye stole in the direction of my necktie, which was as near as he ever came to a face, with an expression of great interest. "You are a bright one," said he, "a very bright one. I quite admire you, Mr. Raymond."

A little surprised, and not altogether pleased with this unexpected compliment, I regarded him doubtfully for a moment and then asked: "What is your opinion upon the matter?"

"O, you know I have no opinion. I gave up every thing of that kind when I put the affair into your hands."

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