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A CONFLICT OF EVIDENCE.

BY RODRIGUES OTTOLENGUI

AUTHOR OF "AN ARTIST IN CRIME," ETC.

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tilda—that is, the first name has 'M.' for the initial. And I feel satisfied that your father's was 'W.'"

"Is it a matter of any importance?"

"It may be. The ring that your uncle wore bore the inscription, 'W. to M.' I have sent Everly to Dover to find out if the same is on that medallion. I may have overlooked the word 'to' when I had it in my hand, and if it is there it will indicate that there were two of those lockets."

"And that would help to prove that Walter is innocent, would it not?"

"It would help, for it would show that the one which you found in the dead man's hand was not the one which Mr. Marvel had."

"God grant it. Otherwise I should never forgive myself for furnishing that evidence against him. But what about the clothes which he says he threw into the river? The squire told me that he and my cousin, Mr. Lewis, have had the stream dragged, but did not find anything."

"I mean to have a try at that myself. Now I have another point which I wish to investigate, and if you will excuse me I will be off."

"You will return and take supper with me, will you not? The proprieties will not be invaded, for Sarah is here with me, and will stay as long as I wish her. Therefore you can have a room here if you desire."

"Thank you very much. Don't lose heart, Miss Lewis. If it be in the power of man, I will clear your lover from this charge."

Virginia showed her gratitude in her face, and the detective went away. From the farm he went to the house of Dr. Snow, and was fortunate enough to find him at home, though he had but just returned from a visit to Mine Marvel, whom he reported as slightly improved. Mr. Barnes proceeded to ask a few questions of the old physician about the people most nearly connected with the crime and its consequences. Finally he said:—

"There is a question that I would like to ask, doctor. Would a man's fingers swell, or would they shrink after death?"

"That would depend upon the circumstances of the case. If the death were from dropsy or from some poisons, they would swell, but ordinarily of course they would shrink. Again, the time has something to do with it, for in all cases the tissues must waste eventually."

"Since there is some doubt about it, I must give you a specific case. Take the body of Mr. Lewis, for example. Would you expect any shrinking of his fingers?"

"I think I should, though they may not have done so to any considerable extent in the few days which have elapsed."

"They would not have swollen?"

"No, I am positive that they would not."

"Thank you, doctor; you have settled an important point for me. When the trial comes on, please remember this interview, in case you should be questioned about it on the witness stand."

"I will testify, of course, though as yet I cannot see what it is that you are trying to prove."

"Pardon me, if I say no more at this time I must think only of the interests which I am serving, and I deem it wisest to work quietly, as yet. Will you oblige me by not mentioning this to anyone?"

"I will be discreet, since you seem to think it so important." Leaving the doctor's house, Mr. Barnes went to the bridge from which Marvel claimed that he had thrown the bundle of clothing. Looking over the edge into the water, he concluded that on whichever side it had been thrown the bundle must have been carried by the current toward the dam; otherwise it would have been found on the banks, which were shelving on the south side of the bridge.

Next he left the bridge and went to the side of the stream north of the dam, and from that point studied the apparent conditions. "Well," thought he, "if Marvel had sought for a place to lose a thing he could not have chosen better." This conclusion was most probable, for he saw a large number of enormous boulders of jagged rock projecting from the water, which is shallow as it passes over the stones, and these rough projections made innumerable eddies and smaller currents. A bundle of clothing might easily be caught and held among these rocks, and held there against all time, or at least long enough to be of no practical value to Walter Marvel.

The detective saw that he had almost a hopeless task to make this river yield up its secret, if indeed it held one. However, he was not a man easily daunted by obstacles, and he determined to make an attempt that night. He chose the night for his experiment, deeming it wisest to make the conditions nearly as possible similar to those under which the accused had acted. He thought that the currents among these rocks might be different at night, as then the mills would not be working. He closely examined the dam and conceived a new idea. The dam was made of wood, and as its construction must be clear to you in order that you may understand the course pursued by Mr. Barnes it becomes necessary to describe it.

The bridge is about 100 feet south of the point where the water goes over the dam. Standing on this bridge, one notices a smooth body of water flowing toward the place where it rushed over the dam, but he forms no idea of the power of the current from this point of view. On the line where the stream dashes downward he sees some boards projecting above the surface from each side of the river toward the centre for a distance equal to one-quarter of the width of the stream. Between these points where the dam rises above the level the water rushes over the dam, which is two feet lower along the centre than at the side. Going below the dam—that is, to the north of it—one easily sees how it is constructed. Immense triangles of timber are laid along the rocks, resting on the short sides. Then their hypotenuses face the south, and on them are nailed the boards which form the dam. Therefore, as the water rushes over, there is a space under the dam where it is comparatively dry—at least, no great amount of water finds its way there, as only what leaks through drips down.

It was while looking at this space that the new idea occurred to the detective. In order to turn the mill wheels, sluices are built which conduct the water in the desired direction. When these are open, it is evident that a strong current sets in the direction of the mill. This is so powerful and there is such a suction downward that objects on the surface would be drawn below and carried into the mill, were it not that the sluice gates are furnished with gratings to keep out such jetsam. Studying this point, it became evident to the detective that if the sluices were open on Sunday night, the bundle of clothing must be looked for at these gratings.

He therefore went to the mill and asked for the man who had the care of the sluices. From him he learned that they had been closed on the night of the murder, and then persuaded him to have them closed this evening also, so that the conditions might be the same.

Leaving the vicinity of the mill, he went back to Riverside and enjoyed his supper with Miss Lewis. After the meal he said:—

"Where is Mr. Lewis? Is he not staying here?"

"He accepted an invitation to visit the squire to-night."

"And the man went downhill."

"All the better, the fewer people who know what I do to-night the more pleased I shall be. Now, then, I want a suit of your uncle's clothing, old ones will do."

"I will get what you want." Virginia left the room, returning a few minutes later with some clothing. The detective placed the articles in a pail of water, allowing them to become thoroughly wet before he removed them. Next he rolled them into a compact bundle, which he tied securely.

"I am now ready for my experiment. My idea is to go to the bridge and throw that bundle over, as Marvel claims that he did, and then see what becomes of it. I am sorry that I cannot ask him at just what point he did this, but I must do the best I can without this knowledge. The probability is that he tossed the bundle over as soon as he got on the bridge and with his right hand. Therefore he would have thrown it over on the side nearest the dam. At any rate, this is what I shall do."

"I see what your idea is, and am anxious to have the experiment tried. Shall we go at once?"

"No, for I cannot tell what difference the hour may make on the currents, and so many days after they may be totally different. However, I shall go at the same hour as he did. At least it will insure our not being observed. Besides, I wish, if possible, to see Everly, and I think he will return before eleven o'clock."

"You will wait till that hour?"

"Yes. You left Marvel at the river and reached your room at 10.30. He came here after that, then went to his own house and back to the bridge, where he must have arrived at or about 11.30."

The evening passed slowly, most of the time being consumed by these two in a discussion of the subject which absorbed their minds, until, at about a quarter to eleven, a horse's hoofs sounded without, and a moment later they were joined by Will Everly.

"Well," said the detective, "what news?"

"I found Ainsley, and through him I was enabled to see the locket."

"Very good! What is the inscription?"

"Simply 'W. M.' The word 'to' does not appear, and the letters are close together; there is no chance that it ever was there. It occurred to me that it may have been and have become worn out, but that is impossible."

"As this hope was dispelled Virginia seemed much disappointed.

"What do you think now, Mr. Barnes?" said she. "This is discouraging, is it not?"

"Do you know if your mother had more than one name?"

"I cannot be certain, but I never heard of any other except 'Matilda.'"

"Still, she may have had another, and it may have been 'Winona' or some other with 'W.' for the initial. We must look at it. If the initials are hers, it will answer our purpose as well. Now we will start on the other errand. Mr. Everly, you may come with us if you wish. We are going to try to recover the clothes which Marvel says he threw over the bridge."

"I should like to go with you, but I doubt if you will succeed. Young Mr. Lewis inaugurated a regular search, and besides I went myself and looked thoroughly more than once after the inquest. I think I should have made up a bundle for them to find, only I could not supply the locket which he said is in the pocket."

"No, no! We must not resort to manufacturing any evidence. If Marvel is guilty, he must suffer, but if he is innocent, he must be saved. Let us work only for the truth." So saying, he took up the bundle of wet clothing and started. Virginia and Everly followed in silence, neither of them relishing the last speech of the detective, however just they knew it to be. The trio soon reached their destination, and Mr. Barnes stopped at a point near the rail.

"Here," said he, "if my calculations are correct, is the place from which I think Marvel must have thrown his bundle. I will now explain to you what I expect will happen. I have soaked my bundle, because his was wet. If dry, the clothes would float nearer to the surface of the water and would soon be hurried over the dam, as the current here is very rapid, and, being wet, and therefore more weighty, this bundle will float below the surface, if at all." His companions listened with much interest. He continued: "I will now commence my experiment. Fortunately the moon is bright, and we can see easily. First, I will take a piece of wood."

He looked about and soon found a large, heavy piece of timber near the sawmill. Approaching the rail, he said, "Now I will throw this over, and you will see that it will be carried, first, against the boarding which projects above the level, and then be swept toward the centre and over." He let it drop, and the result was exactly as he had predicted. "That much was easily foreseen. But my next may not be so accurate, for it is but a surmise on my part. My idea is this: That wood went over readily. But with a bundle of clothing it may be different. If it is first taken against the projecting portion, and then drawn toward the centre, it will go over more slowly than if carried directly. Now, if the weight is sufficient to hold it some distance below the surface, and there are any ragged edges to the woodwork of the dam, the cloth would most likely catch on them. In that case it would not fall into the stream below, but would remain suspended awhile, finally dropping into the space under the dam. Mr. Everly, you will go around to the other side, so that in case it does go over you can see where the currents take it."

Everly at once obeyed, and, receiving the signal that he was in his position, Mr. Barnes dropped his bundle. Virginia scarcely breathed, so great was her anxiety as to the outcome of the trial. As in the first experiment, the bundle, which could just be seen as it floated below the surface, drifted straight to the projecting ridge; thence slowly it went toward the centre, where it remained stationary for a moment. This moment seemed an age to the girl. She almost thought that her lover's fate depended on that bundle of clothing. At last it moved again, and slid over, partly disappearing; but, as had been predicted, it seemed to catch and remain hanging. Virginia was about to utter an exclamation of joy, when, to her dismay, it was forced from its slender hold and carried down into the rapids below. Virginia uttered a groan as she thought the experiment had failed.

"Come, come," said Mr. Barnes, reassuringly, "what did you expect? Surely not that my bundle would drop on top of the other? That would have been miraculous. You noticed that, as I predicted, it caught on the ledge. Perhaps the other dropped on it now, even though mine did not. You may have tied my parcel tighter than the other, and so have left less chance for the cloth to be caught. Come be-low, and we will search under the dam. Let us see what Everly will report."

Virginia accompanied him, but when

He laid before the delighted gaze of the others a locket.

they reached the spot where Everly had last been seen by them he was nowhere in sight. His coat and hat, however, were on the bank, and from this the detective concluded that the young man, in his zeal, had entered the stream in pursuit of the bundle, and Mr. Barnes decided to await his return before proceeding further with his plan. As the minutes passed, however, first Virginia and then Mr. Barnes himself became alarmed at Everly's prolonged absence, and he was about to make some search when a loud shout arrested their attention. Besides, it was in the direction of the dam, and Mr. Barnes realized at once that Everly, instead of following the bundle which had just been thrown over, had gone under the dam in search of the original one. A few moments later he was seen emerging from among the timbers which supported the dam, presenting a very wretched and bedraggled appearance. He held a large bundle in his hands, and exclaimed, as he came toward them:—

"God bless you, Mr. Barnes, you were right. As soon as I saw your bundle catch I could not wait, but taking off my coat I went under the dam and searched for what we were after. What is more, I found it not ten feet the other side of where yours would have fallen had it dropped."

"You have done well, and if this is really the bundle that Marvel threw over, you have repaid your debt to him and saved his life."

Virginia and Everly were anxious to open the bundle at once, but the detective would not permit it until they should reach home.

"We might lose the locket here in the road," said he, "and, besides, Mr. Everly is all wet." So they were guided by him and returned to the farm, where the detective insisted on a change of garments for Everly before he would examine the bundle. When it was opened, Virginia claimed that she recognized the clothes as those worn by Marvel on the night of the murder. Mr. Barnes next searched the pockets of the vest, which Marvel had designated as the garment wherein he had placed the medallion, and withdrawing his hand laid before the delighted gaze of the others a locket, the exact counterpart of the one found in the hand of the corpse.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. BARNES ON THE SCENT.

As soon as it was settled beyond all doubt that the clothes and locket found under the dam were the ones on which the fate of Walter Marvel depended Mr. Barnes was all activity again.

"Now," said he, speaking rapidly, "there is not a moment to lose. We have saved the innocent, but we must save the guilty, and he has a week the start on us. How soon can I get away from this town?"

"A train passes Lee Depot at 1 o'clock. You have three-quarters of an hour in which to catch it. My horse and waggon are at your disposal, of course."

"Thank you, Mr. Everly. You must drive me to the station. Before I go I will give you some instructions, though, on the whole, all I wish is that you two will not tell anyone of what we have found until you hear from me again."

"But while you are gone must Walter remain in prison?" asked Virginia.

"Yes? It will not hurt him. Neither you nor I must go to him, for if you do you might betray what I wish kept secret. Do you promise?"

"But may I not tell Alice that her brother is safe? She is desperately ill, and I fear that she may lose her reason if she does not soon hear that there is no danger threatening Walter."

Mr. Barnes considered a moment and then said:—

"If you find it necessary, you may tell her that your uncle, Mr. Lewis, is not dead."

"Not dead!" exclaimed his two auditors in a breath.

"Yes, tell her that he is not dead. That will certainly relieve her mind."

"But how can I explain that when she knows to the contrary?"

"You must exercise your ingenuity. Tell her that there has been a mistake as to the identity of the corpse, or anything that occurs to your mind, only do not tell her about the finding of this bundle. I do not wish Mr. Burrows to know what I have done, for fear that he may make trouble for me and perhaps defeat the ends of justice. Now I must be off. Use your judgment, and, above all things, whatever you do tell your sick friend, keep it from getting out. Good-by! Trust me?"

Mr. Barnes was fortunate in finding trains to meet him as he pursued his way to New York by a circuitous route. The one which he boarded at Lee took him as far as Worcester and thence he went on to Albany, knowing that from that point he could easily reach New York. As it was, he arrived in that city before noon on the following day. Leaving the train he hurriedly proceeded up town to Washington Heights. Consulting his memorandum book, he turned a few pages, then paused at one which contained the following address:—

"John Lewis, Esq. Care T. Jamison, Washington Heights, N. Y."

This he had obtained from Burrows, to whom, it will be remembered, had been shown three letters by John Lewis, who claimed that they had been written to him by his father while he was at school. Mr. Barnes made inquiries, and very readily found that Mr. Jamison kept a large boarding school for boys, and that he had done so for the last thirty years. Receiving the correct address, he at once proceeded to the schoolhouse, and was soon in the presence of a pleasant old man.

"Good morning, Mr. Jamison," began Mr. Barnes. "I am looking for a man who has recently inherited some property, but he cannot be found. He is supposed to be dead and probably is. The case therefore stands thus:—If he had a son, that son would inherit, but if not the property goes elsewhere. I have heard that he did have a son, who was for some time at your school, and so I have ventured to trouble you, hoping that you might be able to assist me."

"I am at your service, and if you will give me the name I will look over my books and see what I can find."

"The name is John Lewis, and it is about fourteen or fifteen years since the lad was supposed to be here. Moreover, it may help you to remember him if I tell you that it is further supposed that he ran away from school and went to sea."

"I am afraid you have been misinformed," said the schoolmaster, shaking his venerable head. "Nothing of that kind ever occurred here. I do not recall such a name of a pupil, but I knew a man of that name once, and have good reason to remember him."

"Will you tell me about it?"

"Certainly. Now let me see. It must have been about the very time that you mention, though I could give you the exact date, a gentleman called here and wished to see the school. He said that he had a son whom he wished to place in a military institution, such as this. His name was Lewis. After I had explained our methods to him he went away, promising to call again. This he did, and on his second visit he told me that his son had refused to go to a military academy, and that he had placed him elsewhere. Hover, he seemed very much interested in the school, and made several suggestions as to improvements. When I explained to him that there were no funds for any such purpose, he generously offered to pay any bills that might be incurred. I protested at first, but he persisted. He even came here himself to superintend the alterations."

"You say that he lived here a short time?"

"Yes, about a month."

"Can you tell me whether his mail was received here?"

"Oh, yes. He was a stranger in the city, and had no other address while he was here. So of course his letters came to the academy."

"While he was with you did his son ever come to visit him?"

"No, I never saw the boy, but he constantly spoke of his son, and if he is the party for whom you are looking I have no doubt that he has or had a son. That seems to be the fact which you wished to substantiate, I believe?"

"Yes, that is all that I wish, except that I would like to find the son. However, as you cannot aid me there, I will bid you good morning, and I thank you for your courtesy."

Leaving the academy, Mr. Barnes walked as far as the nearest station of the elevated railroad, and went down to Grand street; thence he walked to the office of the Norwich line of steamers. Addressing the clerk, he said:—

"Do you keep a passenger list?"

"Well, hardly that, in the strict sense of the term. But we keep the names of all who take staterooms."

"Can you let me see that list for last Saturday night's steamer?"

The list was handed to him, and he carefully ran his finger over the column until it rested on the name "Walter Marvel." He copied the number of the stateroom assigned, and left the clerk with a smile of satisfaction. "I think I may have some dinner now," said he to himself, and he entered a restaurant where he partook of a substantial meal, after which he went to police headquarters, asked for the inspector, and was at once shown into the private office of that official.

"Good-morning, Inspector," said Mr. Barnes. "I would like to ask whether there has been a report of anyone missing in this city during this week?"

"Why, yes, there has!" The inspector eyed him keenly. "Mr. Barnes, what do you know?"

"I am working on the Lewis murder case, inspector, up in Lee, N.H., you know."

The inspector nodded, and Mr. Barnes continued:

"I have left the Pilkingtons because they permitted another man to interfere with me. If my theory be correct, I must trace a man from this city to Lee."

"And you have left the Pilkingtons," said the inspector. "I will help you. A woman reported here yesterday that her husband has been missing since last Saturday, and that she feared foul play. I put a man on the case, and he has traced him as far as a Sound steamer, so he is probably down your way."

"Is any name given?"

"Yes, but as you must be in a hurry, take the papers with you. I entrust the whole matter to your judgment."

Mr. Barnes thanked the inspector for this mark of confidence, and then left the building. Half an hour later he was at a fashionable up-town hotel, and had sent his card up to the woman named. In a few minutes more he was in her presence.

"I see by your card that you are a detective," began the woman, "and I suppose that you have brought me news of my husband."

"I have found out that he left the city last Saturday night. Did you know of his intention to do so?"

"I did not, but it does not surprise me that he has done so. Where has he gone?"

"I came to see if you can help me on that point. All I know is that he went away on a Sound steamer. Have you any idea of any object which would call him East?"

"Yes, but I may be wrong, and would prefer not to commit myself. I might be betraying what he wishes kept private."

"Will you answer a few other questions?"

"I will answer all that I think I should."

"First, then, tell me how long your husband has been in New York?"

"We arrived about two weeks before he disappeared."

"You say 'arrived.' Am I to understand that you came from abroad?"

"Yes. We have been in Europe for many years."

"Had your husband any special reason for returning to America?"

"Yes; but I cannot explain that to you further than to say that it is a purpose which for many years he has wished to accomplish."

"Why, then, did he delay the matter so long?"

"I must not tell you that." She colored deeply.

"I do not desire to appear too inquisitive, madam, but I wish me to accomplish anything you must give me more information. Tell me this: Do you suppose that it is in pursuance of this purpose that your husband has gone out of the city?"

"I fear so."

"You fear so? Is there any danger, then, that he risks?"

The woman bit her lips at this slip and said:

"There might be. I do not know."

"Has he gone in search of an enemy?"

"I cannot say." She seemed decidedly uneasy at the questions of the detective. The latter paused a moment, considering, and then asked:

"Do you know the name of this man who is your husband's enemy?"

"I did not say that it is a man or that my husband has an enemy."

"You did not, but that is evidently the case. Now, do you happen ever to have heard of John Lewis?"

The woman started up in dismay and excitedly exclaimed:

"What do you know of that man?"

"Then you admit that you know him?"

"I know who he is, but what is it that you know, and why do you mention his name?"

"I know, madam, that your husband left this city for the east on Saturday night last, and that on the following night John Lewis was murdered."

"My God! This is terrible!" cried the woman, as she sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. Mr. Barnes waited a moment for her to recover from her surprise, and then said:

"I will tell you more. An innocent man has been arrested for the crime and is in prison."

"How does all this interest me? Of course, it shocked me to hear so suddenly that one whom I knew has been murdered, but further than that, what is it to me?"

"That is what I am trying to find out. Was Mr. Lewis a friend of yours?"

"A friend? Far from it," she answered, almost fiercely.

"Ah! Then it is not his death that troubles you?"

"Who says that I am troubled?"

"I do, and I think it is because you know or think that your husband went to that town expressly to kill Lewis."

"He did nothing of the kind," she answered, quickly, losing her self-possession in her excitement. "My husband only wanted to recover his child, whom that man had stolen from him."

"At last we have it," said Mr. Barnes, with satisfaction. "Your husband, then, is the father of the girl. In that case you must be her mother, and therefore Lewis' sister?"

"His sister? Her mother? You are mad."

"Explain it, then." Mr. Barnes was puzzled.

"I will explain nothing. You have got more out of me now than I should have told."

"Then I will hunt for your husband, for he must be the man who killed Mr. Lewis. Let me tell you that I have tracked him backward from the scene of the crime to this city. Another detective followed his trail from the murder, but he did not succeed in apprehending him."

"Then, thank God, he is safe!"

"You are wrong. The other detective failed, but I will not."

"You dare to tell me this and want my help?"

"We must think of the innocent."

"What do I care for the innocent? I do not know them."

"Let me tell you who they are. There is the girl, the daughter of your husband."

"Well? Is she accused?"

"She is thought to be an accessory."

"Good! I am glad. And the other, who is that? You spoke of a man."

"The other is thought to be the murderer. It is Walter Marvel."

"What! Young Walter? This is worse than I could have imagined. Well, so be it. I care nothing for him either."

"Madam, have you no heart? Would you see the innocent suffer for the guilty?"

"The innocent? How do I know who is innocent? You say these people are accused. The authorities must know what they are doing. There must be evidence against them, and most likely they are guilty. Why should I do anything, and what can I do anyway?"

"All I ask of you is to give me the information that I wish."

"What information?"

"Tell me the exact relations which exist between your husband and John Lewis?"

"I will tell you nothing."

"You are determined?"

"I am! Do your worst."

"Very well, madam! Perhaps I may yet find a way to make you suffer for your stubbornness."

"How dare you threaten me? I'll have you turned out of this hotel!"

"Stop a minute! You forget that I am a detective. If you ring, I will arrest you."

"Arrest me? And pray what charge will you make? I am not easily frightened."

"I will charge you with complicity in the murder of John Lewis!"

"That is farcical. I have been in New York only."

"You are an accessory before the fact. You know that your husband went out of the city with a murderous intent. Therefore I think that in this State, under our penal code, you could be indicted as a principal."

"Curse you, you are a demon!"

Mr. Barnes considered a moment, and then said:

"I have half a mind to arrest you anyway."

"Do so if you wish! But I will tell you nothing, though I should be kept in prison forever."

"I haven't time to wait in the city, or I would try the experiment. As it is, I must be sure that I can get you when I want you. So saying, Mr. Barnes stepped up to the electric call and pressed the button. A moment later a bell-boy knocked at the door. Mr. Barnes opened it and said:

"Call a district messenger and bring me some writing materials."

"What do you mean to do?" asked the woman.

"You shall see."

In a short time the bell-boy returned, and with him the messenger. Mr. Barnes took a piece of paper and wrote as follows:—

Send me your best shadow. Important. BARNES.

Placing this in an envelope, he sealed it and addressed it to the inspector whom he had seen at Police headquarters. Handing it to the messenger, he said:—

"Deliver that as quickly as possible. Here is an extra quarter for yourself."

He then sat down and commenced to read a newspaper. The woman said nothing for a time, but at the end of half an hour, during which the imperturbable detective had not raised his eyes from his paper, she jumped up, walked to the window and stood looking out. Mr. Barnes may not have seen her move, so little notice did he seem to take. After a few minutes at the window she went in the direction of the door, but apparently with no special object in view. Suddenly, with the agility of a cat, she made a dart for the knob and grasped it. Still the detective made no sign. She turned the knob, and gave the door a pull, but it did not open as she had expected, and after a few futile attempts she turned on Mr. Barnes like a fury:

"How dare you lock my door?"

"Is it locked?"

"Of course it is, and you locked it."

"You are mistaken."

"How is it fastened then?"

"You said it is locked, did you not? I have not examined it."

"How did it get locked?"

"Since you are so anxious to know, I will be more amiable than you and tell you. I asked the bellboy to turn the key on the outside."

"Why did you do that?"

"I did not wish to lose your pleasant company until the arrival of my friend, for whom I have sent. Ah, there's his knock!" Going to the door he said, "Turn the key and come in." The lock shot back, and a man entered. Addressing Mr. Barnes, he said:

"I am No. 56."

"A shadow?"

"A shadow."

"What is the meaning of this impertinence?" said the woman, in a rage, but neither of the men appeared to notice her. Mr. Barnes continued:

"Look at this woman well. I will expect you to know where she is when I ask you for her. Do you understand?"

"I do."

"Good-morning." No. 56 left the apartment.

"Now perhaps you will explain what this means."

"I was about to do so. Understand that if you make any attempt to leave the city that man will prevent it. You

He saw the great mastiff lying on the floor within.

may change boarding places as often as you please, but remain in the city. That is all. Good-morning." Before she could say a word he had gone.

Mr. Barnes went directly to the Grand Central railroad depot, and started for Lee, where he arrived early on the following morning. Reaching the farm, he found Virginia in the parlour. She advanced to meet him with a cordial greeting.

"I am so relieved to see you back again. What news have you?"

"I have discovered the murderer."

"You have? Who is he? Tell me at once."

"It is the man who has passed as your cousin."

"My uncle's son?"

"No, not your uncle's son, though that is what he called himself. I must find him at once. Where is he?"

"He has gone."

"Gone! Gone where? I will follow him to the end of the earth. He shall not escape me. Where has he gone?"

"We do not know. I told you, when I last saw you, that he would pass the night at the squire's, but it seems that he must have retired to his room after the funeral, for he was here at breakfast."

"Well? Go on! Go on!" The detective was impatient.

"After breakfast he again went to his room. We saw nothing more of him until dinner time. Then I went in to call him to his meal, but he was not there. He has not been seen since."

"Perhaps he went to the squire's."

"I went over to see Alice this morning and learned that no one had seen him since the funeral."

"Too late! Too late after all my trouble!" moaned the detective. He leaned his head on his hands and seemed almost about to weep. Virginia did not know what to say to him, so thinking it best to leave him to himself she noiselessly left the room. Mr. Barnes remained in one position for fully ten minutes, but suddenly he jumped up and seemed all animation again.

"Miss Lewis, Miss Lewis!" he cried, in great excitement. At the sound of his voice Virginia came hurrying in and was astonished at the change in his demeanour.

"Miss Lewis," said he, speaking rapidly, "you say that he went to his room and has