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the case. The idea of this girl sleeping with thousands of pounds' worth of jewels hidden beneath her mattress gave her an uncanny feeling.

She was glad when the night had passed, and she woke to see the glorious sunshine flooding her room.

"YOUR WIFE IS DEAD."

"Have you no news of her, Roger?" Isobel Vane's voice was full of sympathy. She was sitting in Roger Armer's study, Armer himself opposite to her.

He shook his head. He looked old and very weary, very different from the man who had stood beside an unwilling bride but a few months ago.

"No. It's extraordinary. She has disappeared as completely as though the earth had opened and swallowed her up. The detectives are at fault, too, and the offered reward has not brought any clue."

"Poor Roger!" sighed the girl, whose heart was filled with malicious joy at Doris's disappearance. "It's dreadful for you! And there seems to be no end to your troubles. First you lose Doris, and then your jewels!"

"The loss of the jewels is nothing," Roger said. "It is Doris that matters. You care for her still?"

Isobel could scarcely control her voice. "I have never cared for anyone before, I shall never care for anyone again, as I do my wife. My love for her has become part of myself."

Overcome by an emotion which the jealous woman saw all too plainly was genuine, Armer turned away.

"And yet," Isobel sneered, "you did not treat her as though you loved her."

A flame flickered in Roger's deep-set eyes.

"To my shame, I did not. If ever I find her, she shall see the difference. With my own lips will I confess my mistake."

Isobel laughed.

"And you will get no answer. I know Doris better than you do. She made a vow of silence, and she will keep it." She laid her hand on his arm. "Come, Roger; don't let us quarrel about Doris. Something tells me you will never see her again."

Such an expression of anguish swept the man's face as satisfied even Isobel's malice.

"If I thought that—" he murmured.

Isobel adroitly changed the conversation. She had succeeded in getting what she wanted. She and her aunt were now installed at Westways Court on a long visit.

"Have the police succeeded in tracing the burglars who stole the jewels?"

No; but that is quite a minor affair compared to—Doris."

"Do you think so?" Isobel said meaningfully. "I'm not so sure. The burglary was carried out about the time of Doris's disappearance. The police are agreed that the thieves must have had intimate knowledge of the house. The lock of the safe in which the jewels were was not tampered with. A duplicate key had been used. Roger, if ever you find Doris, you will discover the key to the mystery of the robbery!"

Roger swung round on her.

"Do you suggest that Doris, my wife is concerned in this?"

Isobel shrugged her shoulders.

"I suggest nothing," she said coolly. "There's no need to scowl at me like that." She went away.

Roger began to pace the room.

It certainly was a strange coincidence, he reflected, and it struck him as rather amusing that Isobel should try to make him believe his wife was implicated, when actually he himself was responsible for the "theft."

But, notwithstanding his troubles, life went on much as usual. Except for the fact that Isobel Vane, chaperoned by her aunt, acted as mistress of the Court, there was little change in the usual routine.

The clever London detective engaged by Roger to trace Doris came occasionally to talk matters over with his employer.

Several clues had been followed up for a time, only to be dropped. Mr Jeffrey Smart was inclined to agree with Isobel. He considered the simultaneous disappearance of Mrs Armer and the burglary at the Court to be more than a coincidence.

And then, all of a sudden, two things happened. At his offices in the City Roger Armer found, amongst his correspondence, a letter awaiting him. It ran thus:—

"Let Mr Armer be assured that his double life will end in disaster—that the cleverest detective in Scotland Yard is on his track—that the robberies are getting so daring that exposure is bound to follow. Beware! Mr Armer is very clever, but there are others quite as clever as he is—One who, in spite of all, wishes Roger Armer well."

An extraordinary letter—so extraordinary that the recipient adopted a bold

plan, and instantly went to the telephone and rung up Mr Smart.

"What do you make of that?" He placed the badly-written effusion in the detective's hands.

Jeffrey Smart perused it in silence. "A faked hand," he said curtly, "and written by a woman. Have you a specimen of Mrs Armer's writing?"

Roger drew one of Doris's few letters to himself from his pocket-book. These, and a beautifully painted miniature, which he had had painted recently from a photograph, were Roger Armer's dearest possessions.

Jeffrey Smart stood at the window, closely comparing the handwriting.

"There's a certain similarity—the 'i's' and 'g's.' Mr Armer, we must trace the writer of this anonymous letter, and when we have discovered her—or him—we shall be on the right track. Can you throw any light on the meaning of the words 'your double life'?"

"No, indeed I cannot. The whole letter is a mystery. It seems ridiculous, but it really almost looks as though the writer connects me with the robberies."

Smart laughed.

"Ridiculous? Rather!"

The telephone-bell rang sharply. Roger took up the receiver.

"Yes, Mr Smart is here—in Mr Armer's office." Then he passed the receiver on to Jeffrey Smart. "It's you they want. Excuse me a moment. Whilst you are engaged I'll just speak to one of my clerks in the outer office."

When, five minutes later, Roger Armer re-entered his office, he was met by a very grave-faced Smart.

"Mr Armer, I have news for you. Your wife is found."

Such a wave of pure joy surged within Roger Armer that for a moment he was incapable of uttering a reply.

"Found? Doris? Thank Heaven!"

"It's—bad news, Mr Armer," Jeffrey stammered. "It's—the worst. Mrs Armer is—is dead." Roger staggered back. "Hold up, sir! I'm a fool!" Smart told himself. "I should have broken it easier. Poor chap—how he feels it! And, after all, she wasn't worth it—a silent wife! Ah, well, she'll never get the chance of speaking to him again. Better, sir?"

Armer staggered to his feet.

"Tell me—how—where is she?"

Briefly Smart gave the details of the tragedy. The body of a young woman, dressed in Doris Armer's clothes, had been recovered from the Thames, where it must have been for many days, as the features were unrecognisable, and only the clothes afforded any clue as to her identity.

An hour later Roger Armer had gazed for the last time upon the woman he believed to have been his wife.

"You will, of course wish to discover, if possible, what happened to the unfortunate lady during the weeks that elapsed between her mysterious disappearance and the discovery of—of her body in the water?" Jeffrey Smart ventured.

Armer turned on him almost savagely. "I shall never rest till I know!" And then bitterly, "You see, you made a mistake, Mr Smart. That anonymous letter couldn't have been written by my wife."

Mr Smart agreed.

"No, it couldn't. I made a mistake."

Later on, the unknown girl to whom Doris had given her clothes and money was buried in a pretty little churchyard in a Sussex village by the sea.

Roger felt that he could not bear the publicity that would come if he brought her to her old home. Doris and he had once visited Sea Cove.

"One could rest in peace here."

That was what Doris had said as they stood under the shadow of the old Norman Tower.

Isobel's conduct was perfect. She left Roger Armer to himself. Time heals everything. This was what she thought.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

Doris's life at Fairwell Manor most certainly did not lack excitement. Her patient provided that. Excitable, prone to violent likes and dislikes, Helena kept her nurse in constant attendance upon her.

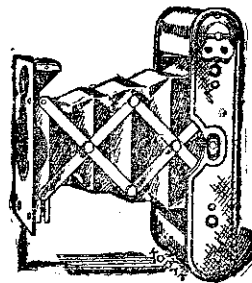
For a week, too, Nurse Angela had to act as housekeeper, for the new housekeeper had written to say she was unavoidably prevented from coming on the day she was expected; and Miss Farr was as capricious about her food as she was in every other way.

"I'm sure I shall hate Mrs Warren," she remarked one day to Doris. "She's father's find, and I never like anyone father chooses."

Doris rather pitied the new lady-housekeeper, who would have to please both father and daughter.

"Anyway, when she comes," Doris thought, "I shall have more time to myself."

(Continued on page 4.)



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