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"Hush!" Martha said. "I don't want Miss Helena waked. We've enough bother as it is, without her adding to it."

Martha glanced warningly at the closed door that led from Nurse Angela's room to the patient's.

"Whatever will you do if you can't wake her?" Cook was greatly disturbed. She stopped, and picked up something that lay on the carpet. "She's bin chloroformed! Smell that, Martha." Cook held out a large handkerchief dramatically. "Chloroform right enough," she repeated. "I oughter know, seein' I was under it—"

Mrs Cox cut her reminiscences short by pointing to Doris.

"She's coming to." She bent over the girl. "Better, my dear? That's right. Overslept yourself, ain't you?"

Doris struggled to her feet and gazed in a dazed manner at the group of servants.

"What's wrong? Is there a fire?"

"No," said the cook bluntly. "Burglary. The villin's chloroformed yer. See here," she held up the handkerchief triumphantly.

It seemed to Doris that history repeated itself. Everything became suddenly clear as crystal before her. She had not only been chloroformed, as cook declared. She had been drugged as well!

She felt exactly the same as she had felt when she awoke in the London house—in the nameless street.

"Miss Farr's jewels! Are they gone?" Her face was ashen, her hands trembled as she tottered towards the door of communication.

"No—no! Not as bad as that. It's the gold plate. Miss Lena's door is still locked on the inside."

"But it was open! I left it open on purpose," Doris cried, as she frantically battered on the white and gold panels. "Helena, open the door! Let me in. Quick—we shall have to break it in if you don't open it at once!"

And this was exactly what they had to do. A stalwart gardener was summoned, and beneath his lusty assault the door gave way.

"Send them away, Martha. Miss Farr would rather they didn't all come in."

The scene on which they gazed was an extraordinary one. On a sofa lay Helena Farr, unconscious. The sickly smell of chloroform filled the air. The bed was disarranged. Lace-edged sheets, soft eider-downs and pillows were flung hither and thither. The mattresses were turned back. The parcel of jewels was no longer there!

The key of the door was missing. Whoever the thief had been—he or she—had taken it away.

"Wanda! Where is she?"

Doris's nerves were not yet under control, or most certainly she would not have mentioned the name of her husband's accomplice.

"Fore dear! Ye're not quite yourself," Martha said. "Whoever's Wanda?"

No reply was needed, for at this minute Paul Weston entered, closely followed by the inspector of police.

"A bit of luck," Doctor Weston said. "I was called early to see Inspector Hughes's child, so we got the call at the station. 'What's up? You're ill!' He looked searchingly into Doris's white, agonised face.

"No; I'm all right. See to her." She pointed to Helena. "She's been drugged."

The inspector was looking at the unconscious girl. Quick as thought, whilst his back was turned, Doris Armer caught up the handkerchief which had been thrown down on a chair, and hid it in the pocket of her nursing apron.

"Is she in danger?" Doris forced her stiff lips to ask.

Doctor Weston got up, and laid Helena back.

"No, she will be all right. But, by jove, she's had a heavy dose. I can do nothing at present." He turned to Martha Cox. "We had better move her to another bedroom. You will want to search this room, Hughes?" and as Hughes nodded, the unconscious girl was carried to one of the spare guest-chambers.

Strange to say, no one except Doris Armer had given a thought to the new housekeeper, Mrs Warren. They were to be reminded of her existence in rather a peculiar manner.

As they passed through the gallery overlooking the hall, they saw a quiet-looking woman, in a neat, travelling dress, standing gazing about her in a bewildered way. The butler went up to her.

"I am Mrs Warren, the new housekeeper," she explained.

Rivers promptly. "More likely you're 'That I'm sure you're not,' cut in mixed up in the burglary. We've been burgled in the night. The new housekeeper came last night, and is in her room at the present moment."

"She can't be!" cried the real Mrs Warren. "I am Mrs Warren—Ada Warren—and I can prove it."

Inspector Hughes had been quietly listening to the conversation.

"I'm sure you can," he said quietly. "I've just come down from the housekeeper's room, and it's empty! The bed has not been slept in. The door was locked, we had to break in."

Consternation was depicted on every face. Doris stood on the landing above, white and shaken.

The gang had done its work well. She could never forgive herself for not having spoken last night. Fatal procrastination, that had brought about such dire results!

As soon as she could manage it without attracting undue attention, Doris Armer slipped away to a room where she would be undisturbed.

It was a small sitting-room leading into the Dutch garden, and never used in winter. Here she examined the man's handkerchief carefully. In the corner, printed in marking-ink, were two initials—"R.A."

With a low moan, and a gesture of intense horror, Doris dropped the evidence of her husband's crime.

THE DETECTIVE IS SUSPICIOUS.

How that day—to Doris Armer it seemed—unending—passed, few in Fairwell Manor House could tell.

Mr Farr arrived early in the day, summoned by the police. Paul Weston arranged his visit so as to give his best attention to Helena, who, though she had now recovered consciousness, was extremely ill.

It had been decided to keep from her the fact that her jewels had been stolen. To account for her removal to another suite of rooms, they allowed her to think that there had been a fire in that portion of the house.

To soothe her further, and make their story ring true, they placed the parcel of faked jewels beneath her pillow.

"I got such a fright," she told Doris, who sat by her bedside, looking as much in need of attention as her patient. "I thought my jewels had been stolen."

Doris turned the conversation.

Downstairs Mr Farr, Paul Weston, and Inspector Hughes of the local police, were in consultation with a detective—who was none other than the one engaged by Roger Armer to trace his wife.

It was pure accident by which Jeffrey Smart was selected by his superiors for this particular case, but he had been eager to take it when he discovered that Fairwell Manor was within an easy motor drive of Westways Court.

"The same gang that stole Roger Armer's jewels," he decided, as the express rushed him down. "I think," his eyes narrowed, "that I will take another name. I've grown a beard, too, since Armer saw me, and nothing changes a chap so much as that."

"The mystery of the Silent Wife's movements between the time she disappeared from The Grange and the discovery of her body in the river had never been satisfactorily cleared up. It is up to me to clear that mystery, and when I do—my jove! there'll be something to startle the great British public! The G.B.P. likes sensation and they shall have it!"

The rest of the journey was spent by "Mark Lewis" in jotting down notes for further consideration.

In silence he listened to the evidence Inspector Hughes put before him. His eyes became like pin points when the false Mrs Warren's arrival and swift departure were graphically described.

"Of course, she was in it," Hughes said.

"Yes, of course," agreed Mark Lewis. "There is no doubt she was one of the gang."

"And," said Mr Farr eagerly, "have you any suspicions who the others are? My neighbour, Mr Armer of Westways Court, was robbed in a similar manner a short time ago."

"Indeed!" Lewis raised his brows. "Ah—I do recall something of the robbery. His wife and jewels disappeared about the same time, didn't they?"

"Yes, poor chap."

A little later Mark Lewis took Mr Farr aside.

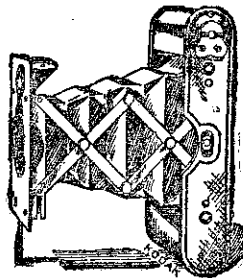
"Will you give me a free hand in this, Mr Farr?"

"Most certainly I will," the millionaire said. "My house, my servants, and as much money as you require are at your disposal."

"Thanks. In a week I arrive as a confidential secretary engaged by you. My disguise will be all that it should be," he smiled. "No one will connect the detective, Mark Lewis, with Mr Walter Smith, secretary. And now, as you please, I should like to put a few questions to the nurse who was in attendance on Miss Farr. I understand she, too, was drugged."

Morton Farr hesitated. He had seen but little of Nurse Angela, but he had been tremendously attracted by her beauty and womanly charm.

(Continued on page 4.)



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