



Starts This Week! "JACK SIMONS, DETECTIVE!" Look Out for a Great Sensation!

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No. 6

VANITAS VANITATUM.

BY A. SHORTELOW.

What is it to be wise?  
'Tis but to know how little can be known.—P. P. P.

A poor, poor fellow, a very good fellow,  
Went wandering by the sea,  
Looking at times to the stary heaven,  
At times to the wild waves free;  
And said to himself, wise-looking,  
'I'd know the eternal plan;  
I'd solve the riddle of fortune,  
The meaning of God and man."

And a voice came out of the darkness,  
Out, perchance, from his soul—  
"Thou fool! wouldst hully the ocean  
Into the rim of a bowl?  
Wouldst make thine eye the circle  
Of all that the worlds contain,  
Or gather the stars in a chalice  
No bigger than thy brain?"

Out of the Jark came brightness,  
And a second voice replied—  
"Forgive me, oh, forgive me,  
My arrogance and pride!  
Wisdom is born of folly,  
And folly from wisdom grows;  
And he of men is the wisest  
Who knows how little he knows."

Jack Simons, Detective;

OR,  
The Wolves of Washington.

A Drama of Lives and Mysteries at the Gay Capital.

BY ANTHONY P. MORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "AZHORET, THE AXMAN," "THE FIRE FIENDS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A MYSTERIOUS BURGLARY.

It was the light of the season at America's gay capital.

The business thoroughfares were thronged; in the stray warm day of this crisp November, Pennsylvania avenue was filled with showy equipages moving swiftly, fashion-loaded, over the floor-like pave of concrete.

Just before the hour of noon, a messenger of the A. D. Telegraph Company entered the office of private detectives Lyon & Gatch, not far from the Treasury building, and placed in the senior's hand this brief dispatch:

"Please call or send representative to No. — Massachusetts avenue. Important business."

"Return to Mr. Allsworth and say that it will be attended to immediately. No other answer."

"All right, sir."

When the boy had departed, Lyon accosted his clerk.

"Where's Jack Simons?"

"Gone to dinner."

"Hunt him up and tell him I want him."

Within twenty minutes Simons reported. A fine looking young fellow with bold black eyes, a slight mustache, of muscular build and a demeanor of easy confidence.

"Take this and see what it means," said Lyon, handing over the message.

In due time Simons was at the mansion No. — Massachusetts avenue. A large, handsome structure—a corner lot—having an extensive garden with a fountain and rose-vine grown arbores, which, in summer-time, further beautified the place. The rear wall of the garden sided on a narrow court built in a block of humble two-story houses.

Simons ushered into a cozy little reception room, already aware, by the indications of his surrounding, that John Allsworth must be a very wealthy man.

A gray-haired gentleman of commanding mien and smoothly shaved face appeared in answer to the business card sent up.

"You are from Messrs. Lyon & Gatch?"

"Yes. My name is Simons," exhibiting his badge.

"Mr. Simons, I have a case for you."

"Let me hear what it is."

"My daughter is soon to be married to a man named Henry Daymon—quite a gentleman. On Tuesday last week Cecilia—that is my daughter—received a case of jewels from an aunt of hers: necklace, bracelets, ear-drops. All were set with superb diamonds; some parts, I know, were valuable heirlooms. Their value must certainly have amounted to \$50,000. This Tuesday—yesterday—just one week after Cecilia received them, they mysteriously and utterly vanished. They have been stolen."

"You wish me to find them?"

"Yes—more because, as I said, there are heirlooms. But I am willing to pay liberally for the catching and conviction of the thief."

"Describe this jewelry, please."

Simons rapidly took down in his note-book the description given.



"I am innocent, Monsieur. I swear to you I am no thief!"

have entered by the windows; there was nothing to afford a climbing hold except a waterspout fully three feet to the left of one of the sills, and a man's weight could hardly be sustained by it.

"Let me speak with the members of your household."

All were summoned.

"Yes," said Cecilia, who was noticeably pale during the brief examination, and replying to a direct question—"yes, my door was positively locked. You observe there is but one door. My key is different from every other key in the house; it has no duplicate."

Simons could but admit that the cloud of mystery deepened at this emphatic announcement.

"And the jewelry box was on your bureau when you descended to join the family in the rear parlor at eight o'clock last evening?"

"Yes."

"When you came up to retire, the door was still locked, but the jewelry gone?"

"Yes."

His eyes searched around vainly, as if for a trap-door, a secret panel, a hole in the ceiling, an entrance by the chimney. The room was heated by a register.

The last to be examined was Finfin, the French maid.

"My girl," looking her sharply in the face, "last night, when the jewels were stolen, you had on the back of your hand a blood-mark."

She turned a trifle white and stared at him.

"Do you remember it?"

"Yes, monsieur," was the uns eady reply.

"Ah! And on the jewelry box, too, there was a blood-mark. Now you will tell us how the stain came to be on the back of your hand."

"A pin scratch, that's all. If monsieur will look he can see at once."

"Fah!" broke from John Allsworth.

Simons motioned him to be silent. He examined the back of the maid's hand. True, there was a wound there very much like such a scratch as a pin would make.

"How came this to be in your bedroom, under your bureau?" he interrogated, further, and showing the diamond.

She gazed at the brilliant stone in amazement undoubtedly genuine. Then a new and startled look settled in her dusky face.

"My room!—you found it there?"

"Yes."

"Oh, monsieur!" throwing herself on her knees with clasped hands. "I see how it is. You think I am the thief!"

"I have not said so."

"But you think it of me. I am innocent, Monsieur Simons. I swear to you I am no thief. I know not where are the jewels of mademoiselle. I would not steal but protect them. Ah, Mon Dieu! believe me!"

Cecilia had remained in the room when Finfin was called.

"I have perfect confidence in Finfin. Besides, you may readily perceive the impossibility of her even having entered my room, as I tell you I have the only key in existence to fit that door-lock. Nor is it likely that any one could produce a fac-simile of it, as I never leave it in the lock. Will you look at it?"

It was a strikingly peculiar key. Simons discerned, by the intricacy of its levers for the wards that, unless an impression could be taken

directly from the key, the lock would be fairly burglar proof.

Finfin was dismissed.

"It will take time and patience to unravel this," the young detective said, to Allsworth. "Meanwhile insist upon secrecy on the part of all who are cognizant of the occurrence. I want it kept out of the newspapers."

"What of this girl—Finfin?"

"I believe she is innocent."

"You do?"

"That is my impression. I will now bid you good-day. I must debate with myself upon a course of operation. You will see or hear from me again."

As Simons was proceeding alone toward the front door, a lady appeared from a side room, beckoning him. He followed her.

"You are a detective?" she said, when they were alone.

"My name is Madeline Damer. I am governess to Mr. Allsworth's little girl, Amy."

He bowed.

"Have you interrogated Finfin?"

"I have."

"What is your opinion regarding her?"

"That she is innocent."

"Then how happened the valuable diamond to be found in her room?"

He answered by a counter question:

"Perhaps you know of that before the investigation up-stairs?"

"Little Amy brought it first to me. I sent her with it to her father."

"Oh, is that it?"

Simons studied her face keenly though not impolitely. She was rather tall, of comely appearance, self-possessed; her complexion was dark, hair black, the expression of her hazel eyes having an engaging candor and at the same time betraying great penetration.

"I have something to tell you," Madeline went on.

"Well?"

"I think I can give you more of a clew than you have yet gathered."

"I shall be glad to hear it."

"Last Tuesday, you remember, was a dark, rainy night?"

"True."

"On that night, at an early hour, I observed Finfin at the side entrance conversing with a man whose name was known only in a great cloak. Their voices were toned so low that I could not catch their sentences. But this I did hear him say to Finfin: 'No mistake, now! You are sure you have described to me exactly which window it is that open from Miss Allsworth's room on the garden side?'"

Jack Simons's ears pricked interestedly at this.

side, my position was wholly concealed by the shadow inside. I heard a sudden sound near the arbor, like running feet, and presently a scuffle. Then a voice cried, in an undertone: 'Ah! I have you at last!' The next minute some one stepped fully before my view in the moonlight, close to the arbor entrance. It was a man. In his hand he held something that sparkled and flashed, and pausing there in the act of inspecting it, he murmured: 'How very, very beautiful this is; and of great value, too. Quite a haul!' Then he disappeared."

"Of course this man was a stranger to you?"

"By no means."

"No!" in surprise.

"It was Henry Daymon."

"The affianced of Cecilia Allsworth?"

"It was he."

"And what was it he held in his hand, and you saw, in the moonlight?"

"It was, without any mistake, one of the diamond-studded bracelets Cecilia Allsworth had shown me as a present from her aunt."

"Then you think—"

"I think nothing," interrupted Madeline Damer, quietly. "I merely acquainted you with facts I have witnessed."

"At what hour was this? I mean when you saw Henry Daymon in the garden."

"It must have been about eleven o'clock."

"Can you tell me where he lives?"

She gave the number and street.

"Is there anything more?" he asked.

"Nothing."

He thanked her and withdrew.

In the hall he met Cecilia Allsworth. The detective instantly noted that her face was strangely pale; her deep blue eyes turned in a nervous, half-startled way upon him.

"Pardon, Miss Allsworth, but I would like to ask you a question or two."

"What is it?" she returned, with a strained composure.

"When did you last see Mr. Daymon?"

"Last evening."

"Here, in your father's house?"

"Certainly, sir, with an accent of hauteur."

"At what hour did he leave?"

She hesitated before answering.

"It was precisely half-past ten. I remember looking at my watch as he departed."

"Did you go straight to your room afterwards?"

"No. When I retired I again consulted my watch. It was then a few minutes after eleven."

"The jewels were gone?"

"Yes."

"They were surely there when you left your room earlier in the evening?"

"Positively."

"Did you look from your window? If so, did you see any one in the garden?"

"No."

"Did Henry Daymon know you possessed the jewels?"

"What do you mean by that, sir?" she flamed, quickly.

"Nothing in the world more than that I am putting purely business inquiries warrantable by my profession."

"Yes, then. I showed him the rare present from my aunt. We enjoyed together the beauty of so rare and precious a gift."

"Thank you. That is all."

Jack Simons left the house, but not the vicin-

ity. He wished to familiarize the premises on the exterior, and began a circuit of the garden wall, examining the gates carefully, but without attracting the attention of any chance-watching eyes. There were three gates, their fastenings stout and of newest pattern. One gate opened on the narrow court at the rear of the garden.

As he returned to the street forming the acute angle with the avenue, he saw Finfin issue from the gate there and start hurriedly away.

He observed that she was tucking something cautiously into her bosom, or feeling of something there to be assured of its safety.

Striding rapidly forward, he soon intercepted her.

"Stop!" he ordered. "I want to speak with you."

"Ah! Monsieur, the detective!"

The girl paused. She was in a perceptible tremor.

"You have in your bosom a note?"

"A note!" affected she, surprisedly.

"Yes. Do not try to deceive me. Come, I must see it."

"But if I have a note it is private," she protested.

"Who is its writer?"

"Mademoiselle Cecilia."

"And who is it for?"

The girl was silent.

"Give me the note. If you refuse I shall have you locked up. Remember who I am. Would you like being arrested?"

The threat had the desired effect.

"My mistress made me promise that I would deliver it to no one but the gentleman whose name is on it. Oh! what shall I do now?" she half moaned, drawing the note from her bosom and reluctantly handing it to him.

The envelope was addressed to Henry Daymon. Under the circumstances he felt warranted in opening it. Everything, however slight, in connection with Daymon, was now of interest to him.

"Say nothing, girl," he answered her, somewhat sternly. "Hail here is a discovery. Yes, you may do, and say something. Return to the house. After a proper time has elapsed, go to your mistress, tell her the note was delivered and that there is no answer."

"But such a lie, monsieur!"

"Do you wish to be lodged in jail?"

"No, no."

"Obey me, then. And, mark you, do not dare to breathe to any one that you have so much as met me. The note I shall keep."

The delicately-perfumed sheet contained this:

"DEAR, DEAR HENRY:—I fear, though am not sure, that you are suspected. You must fly at once! I will warn you. How could you do it! You must not see me any more. I have been deceived in you. We can now never marry. This warning of your danger, born of the last fading sparks of my love for you, must end all between us. I know all; I saw you in the garden. Farewell."

Cecilia.

This certainly savored of a warning to a known culprit from the witness to his criminal act. Could it be possible that Henry Daymon was the guilty party, and Cecilia Allsworth, though aware of the fact, was influenced, by her strong love, to shield rather than expose him?

"So far I have only gotten myself in a tangle," Jack Simons confessed to himself. "It