

From this moment until she was taken to the police station. I let her mother accompany us in the carriage, to which she seemed to have no objection.

Before the examining magistrate the same scene was gone through. The young girl confessed she was guilty of the robbery, but refused to give any further explanation. She only asked that there might be no delay in passing sentence upon her. The mother declared her daughter was mad, and denied all knowledge of the matter.

At the domiciliary visit to Mrs. Reiersen's, no trace could be found of the money. I informed Mr. Frick, by letter, that the diamond was found, and of Evelina's arrest and confession; at the same time, I asked him for the present not to mention the matter to Mr. Howell, who was expected back about this time.

Mr. Jurgens was declared by his relations incapable of looking after his affairs, and the authorities decided to drop the proceedings against him for having bought stolen goods.

It was discovered that the money for the diamond had been paid in thousand kroner notes. Next day a person had changed five of these in one of the banks in the town. But the cashier had not taken any particular notice of the appearance of the person. He declared it might possibly be Frederiksen the actor, but he could not say anything definitely about it.

No trace of the remaining notes could be discovered.

CHAPTER IX. THE PHOTOGRAPH.

The next morning, as I was sitting in my office, writing a note to Mr. Howell—it was on the day he was expected back—to request the favor of an interview with him, the constable came in with a visiting card. A gentleman desired to speak to me. I read:—

Mr. REGINALD HOWELL.  
Villa Ballarat, Christiania,  
The Traveller's Club, London.

"Ask him to step in."

Mr. Howell entered and shook my hand in his free-and-easy English manner.

"Glad to see you."  
"Welcome back again."

He had quickly mastered Norwegian, and we always talked together in that language.

"I was just writing a note to you, Mr. Howell, to request the favor of an interview with you; you have forestalled me, perhaps for the same purpose."

"I—suppose so," answered the Englishman, hesitating. "I should like to say a few words to you in confidence, with regard to the robbery at Mr. Frick's."

He looked round as if to assure himself that we were alone.

"You can speak freely; we are alone; I was wishing to ask you a few questions about this same matter. You were, of course, in the house on the day, right up to seven o'clock."

"Quite right; but tell me, Mr. Monk, shall I be called as a witness in this case?"

"When the case comes before the court, there is every probability that you will be called to give testimony."

"But am I bound to appear and answer?"

"Yes, you are! I hope you have no objection?"

There was something in the young man's manner which caused me to pay the greatest attention to his words and behavior.

"But can the matter come before the court before you have found the thief?"

"As soon as we have got sufficient evidence against some person, that person will be charged and brought before the court."

speaking to him about the affair. I could also see that my answers to the questions he put to me had not told him anything which he did not know before; he was not altogether so ignorant about the matter. He must have put these questions to me as a feint, for some purpose or another. I was almost certain that he knew something of importance to the discovery of the robbery.

"I decided at once to inform him of Evelina's arrest, but not of her confession. It would, indeed, be strange if he did not betray how far the knowledge he had of the matter did not point in the same direction.

"Besides," I continued, "you need not be afraid that your evidence will be of such fatal significance. We have already got the diamond back, and the guilty party arrested. It is Evelina, Miss Frick's maid. Circumstantial evidence is so strong that a confession is unnecessary."

"Well," said Mr. Howell, quietly, "I can just as well tell you now what I know, as later on. It was on the afternoon when the diamond disappeared, after the old crank, Jurgens, had dined at Villa Ballarat. Soon after we had had some coffee in the museum I went up to my room and loaded some cartridges, for I was going to Osterdal for some shooting, you know."

"Yes; I know what took place in the house that afternoon. Please go on."

"Well, when I was ready with the cartridges, I went down into the garden to smoke a cigar. The other people had gone to their rooms, I suppose, for I did not see any of them. As I went by the museum it seemed to me that the door wasn't shut, and when I touched it it slid right up. You know it is a large iron door, but so well balanced and oiled that it moves quite noiselessly. Well, I glanced into the museum, and there I saw a lady standing before the cupboard on the opposite side of the room, with her back toward me. With one hand she held up the iron lid, and in the other she had an article which she seemed to have just taken from the case, and which she was examining. It did not occur to me to think it was anybody but Miss Frick; I thought I recognized the light spring jacket with dark braid."

I looked up suddenly and met Mr. Howell's gaze; his eyes did not impress me pleasantly, and it appeared to me that their expression was dark and cunning.

"Continue," I said hurriedly, and I believe, rather roughly.

"Well, you know, Mr. Monk, that I am very fond of photography, and that I always go about with a little snap-shot camera. You know it, of course—we have often had fun at Villa Ballarat photographing people when they least expected it!"

I nodded.

"I had the apparatus with me, and so it struck me that I would photograph Miss Frick as she stood there, without her knowing it. I went hurriedly and softly inside the door, took the photograph, and went out again without her seeing me. She stood quite still as if she was wondering what she should do with what she had in her hand."

The Englishman paused, as if to give me an opportunity to speak. But as I did not even look up, but went on drawing figures on the paper before me, with as careless an expression as possible, he continued:—

"Later in the afternoon I took a carriage outside and drove to the station. On the way I took some negatives to the photographer, amongst them the picture of which I have just spoken, as there were some of them that I wanted to get developed by the time I got back. On my return from Osterdal I heard that the diamond had disappeared, and then I remembered the photograph. I naturally said nothing about it to Mr. Frick or his niece, but I called for the prints. Would you like to see the one from the museum?"

This was the second time that Sigrid's name had been mentioned in connection with the disappearance of the diamond. It awoke the most unpleasant feelings in me; but as I felt Mr. Howell's searching look resting upon me, I assumed perfect calmness, and took what he handed me.

It was quite a small photograph on thin prepared paper, and placed between two glass plates held together by an india-rubber band.

I took it with me to the window to examine it closely.

It was, as before said, a small picture, only two or three inches high and very narrow, but exceedingly clear.

A young girl stood before the well-known cupboard in old Frick's museum. Her position was exactly as Mr. Howell had described it.

The one hand held the lid open, the other held an article which was hidden by the shoulder; the head and neck were bent somewhat forward, examining the object.

It was a tall, fine figure in a light walking costume, trimmed with dark braid.

There was not much to be seen of the room. One saw part of the cupboard on both sides; a chair, the arm of another chair, but nothing else. Over the cupboard, at about the same height as the young girl, was a shelf. Part of this shelf, on which could be seen several small curios, was included in the picture.

"One glance was enough for me to be certain who the young girl was."

I turned round to Mr. Howell. "It is Evelina, as I suspected."

"Yes, of course; I am only astonished that I could have taken her for Miss Frick when first I saw her. It must have been the costume which deceived me. Miss Frick has worn it all the spring."

"Yes, I know," I answered curtly. It was irritating always to have to return to Sigrid in this manner.

"Very well; on this occasion I also played the detective, Mr. Monk. I have privately found out from the other servants that Miss Frick had, the same afternoon, given the costume to Evelina. You see, everything is quite clear in that respect."

"Will you allow the police to keep the photograph, Mr. Howell, and is there anything else you can tell us about the matter?" My manner was, perhaps, somewhat abrupt.

"Wait a little," he answered; "I hope you understand now the reason for the question which I put to you at the beginning of our conversation?"

"Yes; you would rather not appear as a witness, as far as I could understand."

"Exactly; and, as you yourself say, the person in question is already arrested, and the circumstantial evidence is so strong that my evidence cannot be of much importance one way or other. This being the case, would it not be possible for me to avoid appearing in court? and could you not consider what I have said as confidential, so that I might take the photograph and destroy it? Otherwise I shall appear very much in the light of a spy or a thief-catcher, Mr. Monk. Also, it would be most objectionable to me to have to testify against the unfortunate woman."

"Your sentiments do you, all honor, Mr. Howell; but I cannot, all the same, prevent your being called as a witness. Neither can I, of course, keep your photograph against your will; but I must mention it in my report, and most earnestly request you to preserve it. What you have said to me in my office, with respect to a matter concerning which inquiries are now being conducted, I cannot, in my capacity as a police official, consider confidential."

"Well, Mr. Monk, I see it cannot be helped, and I ought, perhaps, to have denied all knowledge of the matter. But you can, at any rate, bear evidence that I appear most reluctantly; I would like both the unhappy girl and the Frick family to understand this."

"I can only confirm what you yourself say, Mr. Howell," I answer stiffly, for I began to be more and more convinced that the man was playing a part. "You will leave the photograph then in the hands of the police?" I continued.

"Yes, I may just as well leave it; I cannot see that I can do any one any good by not doing so. You police deal with people in your own way,—we speak and do just as you want us to do."

"Allow me one question, Mr. Howell,"—I had again taken the photograph in my hand,—this photograph is very small; it looks as though it had been clipped at the sides. Was the photograph originally broader, and did it include nothing more of the room?"

"Yes, it was originally broader, but only the middle part was clear and distinct. Either side of it was, for some reason or another, very foggy, so I cut it off to get the picture to fit between the two glass plates. I had, besides, no interest for anything but what you see there. The young girl is, of course, the principal object of interest,"—he sighed gently.

"What time could it have been when you took the photograph?"

"Well, that question I cannot answer very exactly. I thought, of course, at the time, that I should never be asked about it, but—let me see—it can't have been far off six o'clock, for it was not long after that I left for the railway station, and that was somewhere about seven."

The next minute Mr. Howell was gone, and I sat beside my desk in deep thought.

The Englishman's visit had made an unpleasant impression upon me, and I could not make out what his purpose in making it really was.

The man wished to come forward as a witness—that I felt sure about. All the rest was mere dissimulation; but for what purpose? What could be his motives?

It puzzled me at the time, and it puzzles me still!

During the whole of this long story, Monk had remained calm. He had been speaking evenly and dispassionately, as if he had been reading a police report. But now he changed in expression and manner. He began to pace up and down the floor with contracted eyebrows, and I saw that the perspiration stood on his brow.

You look astonished at me (he continued). After what you have heard, does the whole affair seem clear to you? It will, perhaps, seem still clearer when you have heard me for a few minutes longer; and you will not be able to understand how it could become an enigma. Yes, an enigma which I would give half or the whole of my life to solve!—But wait a bit! When you have heard the rest of my story, you will join with me in asking, "Who stole old Frick's diamond?" And you will likewise understand that upon that question my fate has depended from that day to this. But I shan't proceed any longer in that strain; I will continue as impartially as I can. On that will, perhaps, depend how far you or anybody else can help me,—alone I can do nothing. I, who was so proud of my own acuteness and ability to penetrate where others failed to see a way!—No, don't interrupt me. We shall discuss it afterward, when I have finished my story.

I had got as far as Evelina's arrest and that Mr. Howell had called on me with the photograph. So far, everything was in order. The accused had confessed, and the stolen article had been brought to light. But it had been impossible to discover where the five thousand kroner had disappeared.

Evelina refused positively to say a word beyond the confession, and as we were not able to prove any complicity against the actor and Mrs. Reiersen, they were discharged.

The state of affairs in Mr. Frick's house was anything but satisfactory. Sigrid had been suffering from nervous

headaches ever since a few days before the robbery. Old Frick was in a rage, and spent the whole day in swearing at the duplicity and untrustworthiness of mankind. I believe, however, that sympathy for the wretched Evelina was the true cause of his anger. The young girl's arrest had, in fact, brought gloom and sadness into the house. Einar Frick was still absent on business. Mr. Howell decided to go to Spitzbergen as soon as the case against Evelina was settled.

It vexed me that I could not trace the money, or obtain any proof of the actor's complicity; and I took it for granted that the sly fellow had succeeded in getting it safely put away in Gøteborg, before he was arrested.

But although we had a clever officer there, and got all possible assistance from the Swedish police, we did not succeed in obtaining any proofs, and as long as Evelina would not speak we could proceed no further in the affair.

Thus matters stood, and I think that all the actors in this drama were only wishing that it would come to an end as soon as possible.

Suddenly one day I received the most astonishing news—Evelina had demanded to be brought before the examining magistrate, and had retracted before him her confession in full. She had declared that when she confessed she had not been herself, and that she was really innocent and knew nothing of the robbery. She would not say anything further, and refused to answer any questions.

Of course, those who knew the ins and the outs of the case only shook their heads at this unexpected development, and began to doubt her reason. The doctors, however, who examined her, could not discover any signs of a deranged mind.

The proofs were otherwise very strong against her; and as there was no prospect of any new evidence in the matter, the hearing of the case was fixed for the first sitting of the court.

I visited the young girl in prison and found her taciturn, depressed, and pale; but she gave me the impression of being entirely normal. I tried earnestly, and in a friendly way, to prevail upon her to adhere to her confession and to give a full explanation; but she only smiled sadly, and begged to be left alone. What could have caused her to retract her confession? The more I pondered over this, the more sure I became that this step must be due to some outside influence; that she must have received some message or communication from within. She did not wish to receive any visitors in her cell. Only the mother had obtained permission to visit her once, and then the conversation had been quite short, and had taken place in the presence of a constable.

The mother had, on that occasion, until interrupted by the constable, tried to continue her reproaches against her daughter, because she had confessed something which she had not done.

But her daughter had contemptuously turned away from her, and soon after the mother was taken away without the robbery having been further discussed between them.

I felt sure that these reproaches from the mother, which the daughter seemed to treat with disgust and contempt, had had no effect, and that the explanation must be sought for elsewhere.

By closely examining the jailer, he at last told me that he one day surprised the young girl while she had a small piece of paper in her hand, but that she immediately turned away and had swallowed it. The man declared, however, that it all happened so quickly that he could hardly be quite certain about the matter, and Evelina, as usual when I spoke to her about it, took refuge in an obstinate silence.

My suspicion that Evelina acted on other people's advice was now strengthened. How far this circumstance can have any influence upon your opinion, when you have heard me out, I don't know. To me, all is dark; but I shall try to tell my story in such a way that nothing of what I know shall be hidden from you.

Fortunately, I have got on so far with it that I can now let others speak for me—at least for a while. The next great event in my story is the trial of Evelina, which took place about three weeks after her arrest.

The proceedings are to be found fully reported in all the papers at that time, and you will get a more complete idea of the case by reading one of these reports, than if I give you a verbal account.

(To be Continued.)

CROUP AND WHOOPINGCOUGH.

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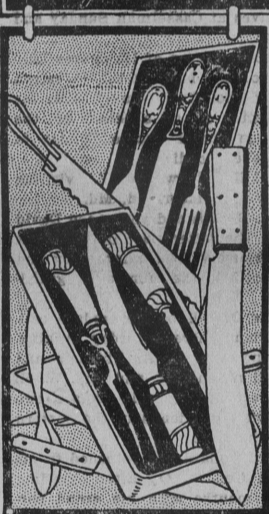
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KANSAS MAN WOULD PROHIBIT COSMETICS

Other Odd Bills in Legislatures of Various States.

Washington—Many odd bills have been passed recently or are pending in legislatures of various states of this country.  
Representative McGinnis of Greeley county, Kan., introduced a "pure complexion bill" prohibiting the use of cosmetics of nearly every kind, besides face powder, rouge, perfume, false hair, hair dyes or "bleaching materials for the purpose of deceiving, advertising or creating a false impression." It also prohibits piercing ears for rings and forbids the wearing of earrings. The act applies only to women under forty-five years and provides a punishment of \$25 fine for each offense.  
The queerest of all the odd bills introduced in the present Colorado legislature comes from Senator William

Adams, Democratic leader. This provides that chickens shall go to roost between the hours of 6 and 7 o'clock p. m. and provides penalties for violation of the curfew. Another senate measure declares jackrabbits eligible to election as state senators and cottontails as representatives. A third measure provides that bulls in the road must wear high power headlights.

"Freak" bills in Massachusetts include one to have all weeds that cause hay fever and summer asthma removed from all roadsides, a bill that all bachelors over thirty-five years pay an annual tax of \$5 and one that doctors and dentists who perform operations of any kind upon the human body shall not wear any hair on their faces.  
Senator Robertson of Holt county, Neb., who ten years ago tried unsuccessfully to have the national guard abolished, has a bill which "sentences" every member of the national guard to twenty days' service for the state in road and bridge work.  
Churchgoers in Texas must leave their firearms outside when going to worship if a bill which Representative Miller has introduced in the legislature becomes a law.  
Commercial job work is all right.