



have been made with regard to the identity of the accused. Mr. Jurgens said at first it was another person who had sold the diamond to him, and it was only after the chief detective had treated the old man in, let us call it, a less polite manner, that he mentioned the name of the accused. The witness Abrahamson believed he received a visit from the accused on the same day the diamond was stolen. It appeared, however, that the lady whom he supposed was his client was dressed in clothes which she only became possessed of later in the day. We have Miss Frick's sworn evidence to the effect that she herself wore the braided costume between five and six o'clock, and only made a present of these clothes to the accused at about six o'clock.

"It is, as I have already said, not my object to accuse any other person, and I will give up the inquiry as to whether it was Miss Frick herself who visited the pawnbroker that day; my object is only to show that if Mr. Jurgens has mistaken another woman for my client, Evelina Reinson, it is not at any rate the first time that day that she was the object of a mistaken identity.

"What I have now adduced ought in itself to be sufficient to change the opinion of the jury, if they have hitherto considered my client to be guilty. But I am in the fortunate position of being able to prove that what has hitherto appeared to be the most weighty evidence against my client, is, on the contrary, the clearest proof of her innocence. I refer here to the circumstance that the witness, Mr. Howell, has declared that he, at the time when the theft must have been committed, had seen the accused in front of the eupboard where the diamond was kept, and that he had even photographed her in this position. The photograph, in which all will recognize my client is now here in court. When I say that I can prove that this circumstantial evidence is false, I mean that here, also, we have a case of mistaken identity, and I can prove that the person who is photographed here (he took the photograph in his hand) is not, and cannot be, the accused. The proof is a simple one, although I must confess that only an accident has enabled me to produce it. (The young counsel here pulled out a large magnifying glass from his pocket, and handed it, together with the photograph, to the judge.) Will the court, and the gentlemen of the jury, and I would ask my colleague, the public prosecutor, to do the same, look at the photograph through the magnifying glass? You will then, gentlemen, see that the person who has been photographed wears a ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

"Will you next examine the hand of the accused? When she was a little girl she broke the ring finger of her left hand in a fall. The bone did not set properly, so that there is now a protuberance, which prevents her from wearing a ring on that finger."

The counsel then raised the young girl's hand so that all could see it, to which she quietly submitted, but without lifting her eyes from the floor and without a change of expression on her waxen face.

"All will be able to convince themselves of the truth of this. I do not think that any declaration from a medical authority is necessary. And, gentlemen, let the magnifying glass show you yet another thing. You will at once see on the left of the lady's head an object on the shelf above. It is the little ivory elephant with the clock, of which mention has already been made in the course of evidence. The glass, gentlemen, will enable you not only to see the clock in the forehead of the elephant, but also to plainly discover the position of the hands. What time do the hands show? They show the time to be twenty minutes to six.

"Where was my client at that time? On this point we have full information from the evidence before us. She had not returned by this time. She only came in through the garden gate at five minutes to six. And she could not, under any circumstance, be dressed at twenty minutes to six in the jacket which she only received from Miss Frick at six o'clock, or shortly afterwards."

"Gentlemen, when you have assured yourselves as to the correctness of what I have told you, you will perhaps remember what the witness, Mr. Rodin, the able photographer, said in court: 'The photograph cannot lie!'

"With the permission of the court, I will postpone any further remarks till the jury have convinced themselves that everything is as I have stated."

For the first minute or so neither the judge's voice nor his hammer was of any avail; he had to submit to the loud applause which the public bestowed upon the young counsel, who bowed and smiled like an actor who is called be-

fore the curtain.

But the space of a newspaper is limited, and I must conclude my report as quickly as possible.

The examination of the photograph took some time, as the judge and the jury had personally to assure themselves as to what the photograph could tell. To all appearances, they seemed to be satisfied with their investigations under the magnifying glass.

Mr. Rodin and another well-known photographer, both of whom had been summoned as experts, declared with the greatest confidence that the evidence of the photograph could be relied upon, and when the medical witness declared that no ring of the usual dimension could be worn on the finger of the accused, the affair was settled.

The jury disappeared, only to return at once, and the voice of the foreman rang out clearly when he pronounced the words "Not guilty" to the question, "Guilty or not guilty?"

Thus ends the account of the proceedings in one of our modern judicial dramas. No one can doubt that we

shall hear of an epilogue which will probably result in a tragedy.

Last night we received information that as soon as the proceedings in court were over, Miss Sigrid Frick was arrested, and charged with the theft of her uncle's diamond.

CHAPTER III.  
IN THE DARK.

I PUT the newspaper cutting on the table, and looked at my listeners. Clara sat with her chin resting on her folded hands, and her elbows on the table, staring straight in front of her. Monk, who had again retired to the darkest corner of the room, now came forward. He was very pale, but his voice was calm as he said:

"Now I will continue. You must pardon me, if the rest of my story seems dry and businesslike, but it is the only way I can persuade myself to speak of it at all. There is, however, not much more to tell."

"Yes, but tell me, Monk—was Sigrid—Miss Frick, I should say—"

It was Clara who spoke. She got up eagerly and went across to Monk.

"No, excuse me, Mrs. Viller, allow me to continue—in any case for a little while. You have promised to hear me, in order, if possible, to advise and help me, so you must bear with my whim and not interrupt me just now. Later I will answer anything that you want to ask me.

Well, there are several things that happened in court, which the reporter did not mention; though I do not think that his report, together with what I have told you, has left you in the dark with regard to anything that could be of any help in the clearing up of the mystery in which the diamond robbery at old Frick's ended.

There is only one thing which I must mention, since the reporter of the *Morning News* did not include it. When the judge summed up, he took the opportunity to censure the conduct of the police in the case. He referred, he said, to the detective's conduct with regard to Lawyer Jurgens. He was certainly convinced that it had never been his intention to exercise pressure on the old man, but that he had in a passion laid hands on him, a circumstance which, at the turn events had taken in the case, appeared in a very unfavorable light. The detective had also committed another error in not mentioning the incident when he gave evidence in court. The judge felt himself obliged to declare that this conduct might have aided the condemnation of an innocent person.

Any one can understand in what a painful situation I found myself. The worst of it was, that I was obliged to admit that the judge was right—painfully right. Also, the way in which I had conducted the case had contributed, to a great extent, in throwing a terrible suspicion upon the one who was the dearest to me in the world. So far, I did not as yet foresee the result of the turn which the affair had taken, and which in itself was so surprising that one hardly had time to reflect before the judgment was given.

I went home immediately, and tried to think over my position; but even then I saw only darkness around me. So I pulled myself together and went to the chief superintendent's office. He still sat there, although it was rather late in the evening. He was very serious.

"I have already been informed of what has taken place in court," he said; "and it pains me greatly to hear what has happened. My purpose in speaking of this is to spare you giving any account of it. Wait! I have one thing to tell you before you answer—one thing which you ought to know as soon as possible. I have given orders for the arrest of Miss Frick."

I had expected that some such thing must happen, and I succeeded in assuming an indifference which was anything but what I felt.

"I knew this must happen, sir," I answered, "and I have no doubt what I ought to do; I have come to ask you to accept my resignation in the police service. My written application I have not as yet made out, but you shall have it to-morrow. I ask you to consider it as already in your hands."

The superintendent looked at me in a friendly way, pressed my hand, and said:

"I am sorry, more sorry than you can imagine, but I neither can, nor will, ask you to take back your resignation. What you have now said was just what I was prepared to hear from you."

"Have you heard, sir, everything that took place in the court to-day?"

"Yes, I have obtained a verbatim report from the officer who was present the whole time."

"And what is your opinion?"

"My opinion? I understand you do not refer any longer to yourself; you are thinking of the young girl whom I have been obliged to arrest—well, what shall I say to you? If I say that no one but Miss Frick could have taken the diamond, then you will be angry with me; and if I say the contrary, you will think I am speaking against my conviction—isn't that so?"

He was right, and I remained silent.

As I moved to go, the superintendent took my hand again.

"You have met with a great misfortune, Monk—a little carelessness on your part, a bagatelle which, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, would have resulted in nothing, has, by force of circumstances, driven you from a post which you have filled with much energy and ability. And, if I am not mistaken, a greater misfortune has befallen, or, in any case, is likely to befall, one whom you hold dear. With regard to the first, you are a man of energy, and it is hardly necessary to ask you not to lose courage; you have done nothing wrong, and the world is wide and generally repays one for one's labor.

As for the latter, I have also some advice. Wait patiently! I read plainly in your face what you intend doing—you will use all your strength and energy in trying to prove this lady's innocence, against whom everything now seems to tell, and it is far from my intention to dissuade you in this—perhaps you will succeed. This much, experience has taught me—that nothing is impossible. But should you not succeed—and who can tell?—do not make the mistake of ruining your life for the sake of a woman—kinder to yourself and to her to break and have done with it at once, before it shall be too late. Remember, too, that what is, is inevitable, and that one cannot build a house of bricks which are already crumbled to dust; break with it, the earlier the better—before it is too late—and do not attempt to produce the impossible from a thing which has already proved to be dust. If I can ever help you, now or later, then come to me without hesitation."

These were my superior's friendly and fatherly words. In the years which have passed by I have only spoken with him once since then upon this matter.

I was at that time twenty-seven years old, and when the next day dawned, my courage and energy had returned.

The superintendent was right when he had read in my face the determination to leave no stone unturned in order to prove the innocence of my fiancée—for she was still my fiancée. But I was not to proceed far in the matter before I discovered that my position at the head of a large detective department of the police—made my work both difficult and unremunerative. It seemed as if an inexorable fate had decided that the drama, as it had begun, should be played out to the end, and that no human intervention would be tolerated.

"Didn't you see Sigrid at once?" asks Clara, suddenly.

"No; it was impossible; I'll tell you just how matters stood; the very next day all the papers in the town began to speak of the conduct of the police, as it was called. Some even hinted that I should be prosecuted, as my concealment of the truth had almost led to an innocent person being convicted. This, however, soon passed over, as my resignation was accepted without delay. But the result was that in many places I was received with distrust and that the superintendent, with whom I had corresponded about the matter, dared on no account to give me permission to see the young girl who was under arrest.

I have here some notes from my diary, following from that time on; let me read them to you. It is not my habit to keep a diary; that kind of self-confession has never been to my taste, but at that time I did it from purely professional reasons—in order to have notes to help me in my work.

Monk pulled out a small thick notebook and began to turn over the leaves.

"Oh, no, don't," said Clara, at the sight of it; "put away the book. I would rather you told it to us instead."

Monk could not help smiling. "I shall not use the book for long, Mrs. Viller; but I think it is best to get to the end of the story—the sooner the better. And it will save me much time if I may be allowed to read a few pages." So Clara gave her permission and Monk read:

"June 23.—Not possible to obtain permission to see Sigrid.—Tried, therefore, to see old Frick. Ill could not see me. I don't believe much in that illness. In the afternoon we had to see Evelina's counsel, and asked him about the letter which had been delivered to him in court at the time when he asked for postponement. He refused again to give me any information about the letter or its contents; he was bound to secrecy, he said. I think very much hangs on this letter; some one must have given the lawyer weapons to use, not only in defence of Evelina, but against Sigrid. Who can it be? What can the motive be, and what is the object?"

I then spoke to the court attendant. He had received the letter from a commissionaire, with injunctions to deliver it to the counsel for the defence, without delay. I shall try to find the commissionaire, but that will perhaps take some days—in the meantime, time flies.

June 25.—Now I have spent two days in looking for the commissionaire. I began with No. 1, and only when I got up to 87 did I find the right man. He had had the letter from a little newspaper boy outside the grand café. At last I got hold of the little newspaper boy. He had received it from a "gentleman," but whether the gentleman was old or young, fair or dark, he could not remember—in fact, nothing—and there I stand!

I tried again to see old Frick. He

said he was not at home, but in the afternoon he sent me the following letter:

HONORED SIR—I had better at once inform you that I do not consider we two can any longer have any pleasure in each other's acquaintance. Neither Einar nor Sigrid Frick will ever again set foot in my house, and your name will never be mentioned here.

Your part, Mr. Monk, in the latter month's events, I am not so sure about, and I do not intend to trouble myself about it any further.

It is sufficient for me to know that you have assisted in the attempt to conceal the criminal conduct of my brother's children. That there may be circumstances which render your conduct excusable, I know well enough; but at any rate, I do not see why we should meet or see each other again.

Yours truly,  
BARTHOLOMEW FRICK.

Monk looked up from his notes. "Since then I have never spoken to old Frick."

"But you surely tried to get some explanation from him?"

"I tried, yes; but it was easier said

(To be Continued.)

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