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CHAPTER V.

CHAPTER V.

THE MOST INFORTANT CHAPTER IN THE
BOOK. CLARA ACTS THE DETECTIVE.

"It's time to get up, sir. Missus said
as 'ow I must get you up by half-past
nine."

I looked up in astonishment. In the doorway stood our red-faced country servant girl nodding good-humoredly

servant girl nodding good-humoredly at me.

"Where is your mistress gone?"

"Missus went out at half-past eight, and said as 'ow I must wake you up and have the breakfast ready by ten o'clock."

There was no mistaking this order, so I hurfied up, a little ashamed at having slept so long.

No sooner was I dressed, than there was a ring at the front doorbell, and in stepped Monk with a very serious face. He was not one of those who are much affected by one or even two nights of sleeplessness, but to-day he looked unusually tired and weary.

"I'm afraid you haven't had a good night. It was dreadfully late when we left you; we shouldn't have kept you up so long!"

"It was rather I who kept both of you

up so long!"

"It was rather I who kept both of you up so late. But where is your wife gone?"

gone?"
"Clara went out at half-past eight, the girl says; but she is sure to be home soon." Why do you ask?"
"She telephoned to me a quarter of an hour ago. She told me to come here at once, as she had something of importance to tell me."
"She must have telephoned from some place in town," I answered, somewhat surprised.

"She must have telephoned from some place in town," I answered, somewhat surprised.

"Your wife made some very sensible remarks about the photograph, yesterday," said Monk, hesitatingly. "Has she said anything more on the subject?"

"Hullo, Monk," I answered, laughing; "so you've come to consult Clara Viller, the private detective!"

Monk hadn't time to answer, for in came the very person we spoke of. Her cheeks were rosy with the sharp morning air. In her hand she carried an untidy, badly packed, brown paper parcel. "Flease excuse me, Mr. Monk, for keeping you waiting; but I was obliged to cell in at the charcuteric establishment to get something tasty for Frederick's breakfast. Such a gourmand as he is! For you, I have got something eise. But take a seat at the table and have a cup of coffee; I will just run and slip off my things—I shan't be gone a minute."

sin off my things—I shart be gone a minute,"

She vanished from the room just as suddenly as she had appeared.

Monk and I sat down at the breakfast table, and Clara soon joined us. Both she and I did good justice to the viands, but Monk only played with his knife and fork.

When we were finished, Clara asked me for the key to the safe in my office. She returned with the photograph and the magnifying class, and laid them beside Monk on the table.

Monk aid I looked at her in astonishment. She also placed the brown paper parcel near.

to-day," continued Clara. "I pretended that a rich English lady was collecting curiosities from celebrated trials. As it was fortunately rather far on in

the quarter, I could see that Mrs. Reierson was apparently in great need of money. She was even sober."

Monk sat with the hat in his hand, staring at it; I went up to him.

"The feather is sewn fast," he muttered, "and there are no signs that it has ever been fixed on the other side."

"But what if she had put on the hat the wrong way?"

"But what it soe had put on the same the wrong way?"

Clara laughed heartily.
"Here, you shall see for yourselves!"
She snatched the hat out of Monk's hand and set it on her own head.

hand and set it on her own head.

I collapsed.

The feather slanted backward as it did in the photograph when the hat was put on properly. But if it was turned back to front, as Clara now had it, it slanted forward in a ridiculous manner.

There could be no mistake—the photograph had been tampered with!

"Are you both convinced?" exclaimed Clara.

Clara.
"Yes," I answered, "it is all fraud

and trickery."

"Tais is a very strange affair," said Monk, and began again to examine the hat which Clara had put in front of

him.

In the meantime I took the photo-

him.

In the meantime I took the photograph and the magnifying glass and began again to examily it. Perhaps there's something else to discover, I thought to myself.

Suddenly I laid down the magnifying glass and leant back in my chair, roaring with laughter. The other two thought, no doubt, that I had gone mad. "That's a bit too much!" I exclaimed. "The person who has got up this photograph must have been audacity or ignorance personified; just imagine that such a thing as this hasn't been found out before! Look at Venus de Milo! ha, ha, ha, ..., ha! Do you know the Venus de Milo! Monk?"

"Do you mean the little copy in ivory which stands in Frick's museum, and which has come out in the photograph you have there?" Monk's voice was gentle enough; but I saw by his face that he was full of excitement and expectation.

"I et me seed!" Cher susted format.

that he was full of excitement and expectation.

"Let me see!" Chara rushed forward and suatched the photograph and the magnifying glass out of my hand.

"What is the matter, then, with this Venus? As far as I can see by the photograph the little ivory copy must be quite a work of art, but I can't see anything remarkable about it."

"No, because she has got no hat or clothes on her. But look here—" I turned round to Monk—"how many arms has Venus de Milo?"

"Only half an arm on the right side,

No, because she has got no hat or clothes on her. But look here—" I turned round to Monk—"how many arms has Venus de Milo?"

"Only half an arm on the right side, and none on the left."

"But this one has half an arm on the left side and nothing on the right. I can't understand it," remarked Clara. She had kept hold of the picture, but now passed it on to Monk, and looked at me sceptically.

"There, you can see!" I said triumphantly. "When a woman has fixed a feather on the wrong side of her hat, you can detect it at once; but when a woman has her only arm placed on the left side, instead of the right, then you don't notice it. But what is the matter with Monk?"

He had been looking at the picture for a moment through the magnifying glass, when he suddenly let both fall and jumped up from his seat. He placed one hand over his eyes, and kept it there for some time. Then he let it fall and stared into space, muttering: "What a fool and an idiot I have been! I pretend to be a detective! I am blind—completely blind! I tried to judge others, and yet have not been able to see before my own nose! I am not worth the dust I eat!"

"Hold hard!" I shouted, laughing, "you don't seem to eat much dust; you live plainly, we may say, but well. I suppose you mean the dust beneath your feet."

To my astonishment, Monk still remained standing and staring into space, while he repeated:—

"The dust beneath my feet."

I often thina of that scene, and how strangely we may act when the brain is really at work. Monk afterward told me that he hadn't the faintest idea what words he had uttered at the time, but that during the few seconds which elapsed, the whole story of the affair which had taken up so many years of his life again passed through his brain—not in its old guise, but in quite a new Yorn; in a new light, which helped him to see clearly through the veil of mystery which had litherto enveloped the thing.

But suffice it to say that Monk soon became himself again, or, better still, an annorowed editing of the degrees and and an

hat, although it should appear on the left, and the Venus de Milo has an arm on the side where there should be none—but no arm where there ought to

be one. If, then, the person in the pho-

be one. If, then, the person in the photograph in the same way has also her left arm where her right should be, and vice versa, then the great point raised by the prosecution falls to the ground. Isn't that so? It is her right-hand finger which bears the ring."

"Yes, you are right; but the time? The clock in the elephant's forehead?"

Instead of answering, Monk went over to a little alarm clock which stood on the writing table.

He first set to work to move the hands, carefully shielding the dial from us; then he signed to us to follow him, and he led the way over to a long mirror at the other end of the room. He placed Clara and me in front of the mirror, he himself standing behind us, holding up the clock.

"Look in the mirror now, and tell me what the time is."

holding up the clock.

"Look in the mirror now, and tell me what the time is."

"Twenty-one minutes to six," answered Clar and I at the same moment.

"Now turn round and look at the clock—well, what do you say now? It is twenty-one minutes past six, isn't it?"

It was now Clara's and my turn to make our deductions. "You mean, then, that the picture is altogether a fraud? It is just as if everything had been turned about, so that left becomes right and right becomes wrong."

"I mean," answered Monk, briskly, "that the photograph itself is all right, and the person who is in the photograph is Evelina Reierson. At the moment when she was photographed, she wore a feather on the left side of her hat, in her left hand she held the diamond, and on the right hand she wore a ring. The time was twenty-one minutes past six."

The time was twenty-one minutes past six."

"But how—?"

"I'll soon tell you. The whole secret lies in the fact that the photograph was taken from a reflection in a mirror!"

"In a mirror!"

"Yes, in a mirror."

"You are right! That explains all!"

"Yes, all; and even a little more which, perhaps, you have not thought of. Thank heaven the scales have fallen from my eyes, and I can see once more!"

more!"
"This is no time for Biblical language, my dear Mohk; let us hear what you mean by 'even a little more."
"You are right! Well, we have got so far that we know the picture has been taken in a mirror; but in what mirror?"
"Well, that is for you to find out.

so far that we know the picture has been taken in a mirror; but in what mirror?"

"Well, that is for you to find out; both Class and I have done our duty."

"You cerainly have; and I shall manage the rest—at least I hope so. On the wall just opposite the cupboard in the museum—the one which appears here in the photograph—there is, right enough, a mirror, a tolerably large one, and it is in that mirror that the photograph was taken."

"But then, the person who took it must have stood right beside Evelina, and he could not very well have avoided being included in the photograph." It was Clara who made this remark. "You are quite right, Mrs. Viller; but he stood so much to one side that he did not come within the frame of the mirror. To prevent the frame from showing in the photograph, he has clipped it on both sides. That is why the picture is so narrow."

"This is all very well," I felt compelled to remark, "but there is one thing which upsets the whole of your fine theory. Is it at all likely that Evelina would allow any one to stand beside her and photograph her in the mirror, while she was about to steal a diamond, or, more correctly, would she choose the moment to steal the diamond while she was being photographed?"

"Yes, it was just that point which I found to be the most difficult a little

and deally as the half appeared. See that a specific work and I sat down at the Newton of See and See

must get old Frick's permission to visit the room, as you call it. I fancy that is where we shall find the key to the mystery. But how shall we be able to

mystery. But how shall we be able to see him? He won't receive me, and I am afraid he will have heard of our friendship, and so refuse to see you, Frederick."

"I shall manage to see old Frick," said Clara, "and get you admitted, as well. But I am ashamed of you, Monk! Have you quite forgotten Sigrid?"

"Forgotten Sigrid!" answered Monk, blushing like a peony.

"Yes, forgotten her, I say. What was the exact time by the clock when the photograph was taken in the mirror?"

"It must have been twenty minutes past six."

"And the whole of the time between six and seven Sigrid sat with her uncle, drinking tea with him. Wasn't that so?"

"Yes."

"These her increases it orward whethe.

"Yes."
"Then her innocence is proved, whether the Englishman had been inside old Frick's fire-proof room, or not. Why don't you telegraph to Sigrid at once? Why haven't you done so half an hour ago? Rather than marry a detective, I would see myself—"
Monk tried to answer this terrible volley, but was scornfully sent about his business.
So it was arranged that Clara should go to old Frick, and as soon as Monk and I had telegraphed to New York, we were to go to Villa Ballarat and wait outside till Clara gave a signal that the siege was raised.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VI.
OLD FRICK AGAIN.

As Monk had told us, old Frick had been for many years lame; and a prisoner to his invalid chair.

Imagine, then, Monk's and my surprise when we, on entering Villa Ballarat, after having been sent for from our post outside, found the master of the house standing in the middle of the room, and Clara sitting smiling in a chair.

chair.

It is not necessary to describe the meeting between him and Clara, although my wife, at the time, gave a full account of it.

Suffice it to say that she boldly entered the lion's den and, without much ceremony, began upbraiding old Frick with his hard treatment of his brother's

tered the lion's den and, without much ceremony, began upbraiding old Frick with his hard treatment of his brother's children.

"If your nephew has erred," she said, "he was young at the time, and in bad company—that I can vouch for." She was, thinking, no doubt, of Mr. Howell. "As far as your niece is concerned, you have judged her, as the whole world has judged her, on suspicion, without taking into consideration her character."

Old Frick had got red in the face at these words, and his arms and legs had begun twitching violently.

Clara was a little afraid the old man would have a fit, but remembering the old saying, "Joy does not kill," she continued, quite undisturbed: "Something has, however, happened, which you have not deserved, Mr. Frick. Monk and two friends, my husband and myself, have discovered, as we shall prove, that she has had nothing whatever to do with the disappearance of the diamond; it is the scoundrel Mr. Howell who is at the bottom of it all. In fact, in a short time you may have your niece back again, and for the remainder of your life you'll have an opportunity of making amends for your mistake."

There is no doubt Clara was most successful in her appeal; for instead of old Frick having a fit, he suddenly rose from his chair, stumbled across to Clara, and in a trembling voice asked her for a fuller explanation. The excitement had cured his lameness; and though he never entirely regained the full use of his legs, yet from that moment he was, at any rate, able to move about by himself.

I shall not dwell on the meeting between old Frick and Monk and myself. Many minutes had not elapsed before we seemed to have known each other for many years. He had gained a respect for Clara which, I think, will last to the end of his life.

Only the most necessary explanations were given,—happily Monk was a man who expressed himself briefly and clear.



For Over

any more time.

"Have you missed anything from the fire-proof room, Mr. Frick?" he asked.
"The Englishman must have had some

Exact Copy of Wrapper

reason for providing himself with a key

"No," answered old Frick, after having considered a moment. "I keep nothing in here but documents and papers, which only concern me. Money I always kept in the iron safe in the office."

"There are two iron safes here," said

"There are two iron safes here," said Monle.

"Yes," answered old Frick, "in the larger safe I keep family papers, etc., which are of no value to any one. In the small one over there—which is of course nothing but an iron box, but is provided with an unusually ingenious lock—I keep my will, and a list of what I possess."

lock—I keep my will, and a list of what I possess."

The large safe was opened, and a lamp was brought in from the museum. The safe, with its contents, was carefully examined, but nothing unusual could be discovered.

"Now comes the turn of the box," said Monk. "Will you help me to bring it out into the museum, Frederick?"

Although the whole thing was not more than sixteen or twenty inches square, it was so massive that we had to use all our strength to move it out into the daylight.

It was a handsome steel box, the four sides and the lid being ornamented with chased arabesques.

(To be Continued.)

Health Notes

The greatest care should be taken of the teeth. Equal parts of eastle soap, powdered orris root and precipi-tated chalk make a good and inexpen-

we tooth powder.

Nail biting can be cured by will power stone in older people, as it comes from nervousness. With chilmen dip the ends of the fingers in whine or a little extract of quastic. Extreme temperatures should be avoided in the bith. The extremely cold bath often is a shock to the system. Sixty degrees Paintenact is a good temperature for the bith, both. good temperature for the bath, both summer and winter. You can make a shade for the gas

in a sickroom by using an ordinary asbestos stove mat with a ring in R. Twist a piece of wire around the burn-

twist a piece of wire around the barness, leaving the upper end free and bend into a hoop shade; then hang the mat to this.

But slowly and taste your food well, and it will slide down and give more hourishment than food eaten quickly.

More est when thed or overexhaused but lie down even if only for a ed, but lie down, even if only for a few minutes, before dining.

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cannot reach the seat of the disease. Catarrh is a blood or constitutional disease, and inorder to cure it you must take internal remedies. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken interchased arabesques.

Old Frick brought out a key of unusual shape.

"Wait a bit, Mr. Frick," said Monk, holding up his arm; "when was the last time this box was opened?"

"Six years ago," said Frick, slowly, "when I altered my will—God be praised that I can alter it yet once again!"

"Did Mr. Howell know anything about the will?"

"Yes, of course. I made him my heir to all which does not go to charities, and legacies, and suchlike. It is about £30,000. At first I had divided it equally between Sigrid, Einar, and him, but then—then—well I don't think it necessary to explain the rest; but then came this business, and I struck Sigrid's and Einar's names out."

"And he knew where you kept it?"

"Yes; a day or two before he left, I read it to him, here in the museum, and put it in the box, while he was looking."

Monk was all the time examining the box most carefully, and some time passed before he spoke.

(To be Continued.) chased arabesques.

Old Frick brought out a key of un- nally and acts directly on the blood

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