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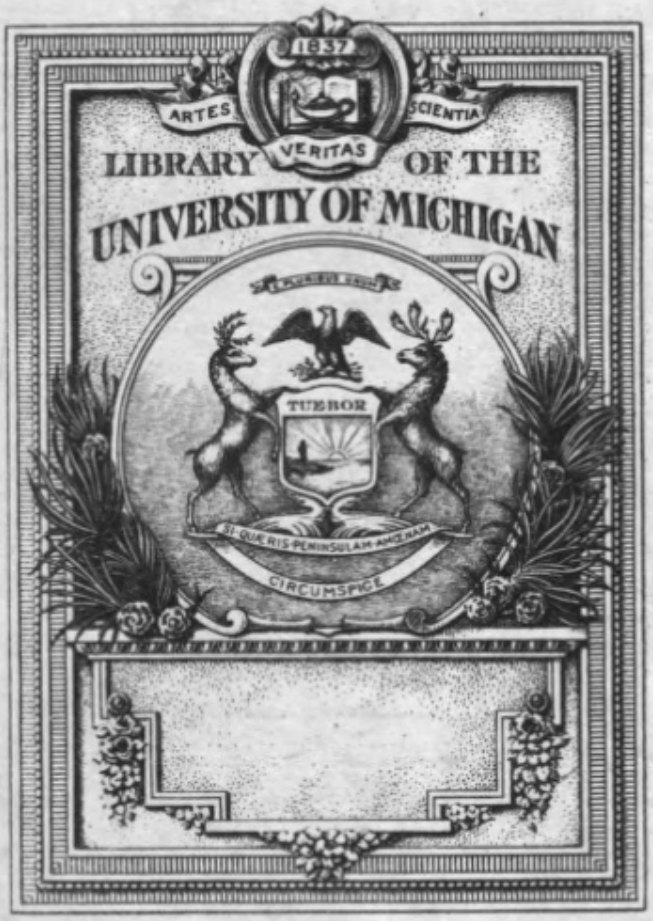

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"I do not know him," Axton's eyes glanced furtively about. "I have never seen him before. This is not Lawler." *See page 316*

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THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF LUTHER TRANT

BY

EDWIN BALMER WILLIAM MacHARG

ILLUSTRATED BY

WILLIAM OBERHARDT

BOSTON
SMALL, MAYNARD & COMPANY
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"I do not know him," Axton's eyes glanced furtively about. "I have never seen him before. This is not Lawler." *See page 316* . . . . . *Frontispiece*

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FOREWORD

Except for its characters and plot, this book is not a work of the imagination.

The methods which the fictitious *Trant* — one time assistant in a psychological laboratory, now turned detective — here uses to solve the mysteries which present themselves to him, are real methods; the tests he employs are real tests.

Though little known to the general public, they are precisely such as are being used daily in the psychological laboratories of the great universities — both in America and Europe — by means of which modern men of science are at last disclosing and defining the workings of that oldest of world-mysteries — the human mind.

The facts which *Trant* uses are in no way debatable facts; nor do they rest on evidence of untrained, imaginative observers. Innumerable experiments in our university laboratories have established beyond question that, for instance, the resistance of the human body to a weak electric current varies when the subject is frightened or undergoes emotion; and the consequent variation in the strength of the current, depending directly upon the amount of emotional disturbance, can be registered by the galvanometer for all to see. The hand resting upon an automatograph *will* travel toward an object which excites emotion,

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however capable its possessor may be of restraining all other evidence of what he feels.

If these facts are not used as yet except in the academic experiments of the psychological laboratories and the very real and useful purpose to which they have been put in the diagnosis of insanities, it is not because they are incapable of wider use. The results of the " new psychology " are coming every day closer to an exact interpretation. The hour is close at hand when they will be used not merely in the determination of guilt and innocence, but to establish in the courts the credibility of witnesses and the impartiality of jurors, and by employers to ascertain the fitness and particular abilities of their employees.

Luther Trant, therefore, nowhere in this book needs to invent or devise an experiment or an instrument for any of the results he here attains; he has merely to adapt a part of the tried and accepted experiments of modern, scientific psychology. He himself is a character of fiction; but his methods are matters of fact.

THE AUTHORS.

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THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF LUTHER TRANT

I

THE MAN IN THE ROOM

"Amazing, Trant."

"More than merely amazing! Face the fact, Dr. Reiland, and it is astounding, incredible, disgraceful, that after five thousand years of civilization, our police and court procedures recognize no higher knowledge of men than the first Pharaoh put into practice in Egypt before the pyramids!"

Young Luther Trant ground his heel impatiently into the hoar frost on the campus walk. His queerly mismated eyes — one more gray than blue, the other more blue than gray — flashed at his older companion earnestly. Then, with the same rebellious impatience, he caught step once more with Reiland, as he went on in his intentness:

"You saw the paper this morning, Dr. Reiland? 'A man's body found in Jackson Park'; six suspects seen near the spot have been arrested. 'The Schlaack's abduction or murder'; three men under arrest for that since last Wednesday. 'The Lawton trial progressing'; with the likelihood that young

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Lawton will be declared innocent; eighteen months he has been in confinement — eighteen months of indelible association with criminals! And then the big one: 'Sixteen men held as suspected of complicity in the murder of Bronson, the prosecuting attorney.' Did you ever hear of such a carnival of arrest? And put beside that the fact that for ninety-three out of every one hundred homicides no one is ever punished!"

The old professor turned his ruddy face, glowing with the frosty, early-morning air, patiently and questioningly toward his young companion. For some time Dr. Reiland had noted uneasily the growing restlessness of his brilliant but hotheaded young aid, without being able to tell what it portended.

"Well, Trant," he asked now, "what is it?"

"Just that, professor! Five thousand years of being civilized," Trant burst on, "and we still have the 'third degree'! We still confront a suspect with his crime, hoping he will 'flush' or 'lose color,' 'gasp' or 'stammer.' And if in the face of this crude test we find him prepared or hardened so that he can prevent the blood from suffusing his face, or too noticeably leaving it; if he inflates his lungs properly and controls his tongue when he speaks, we are ready to call him innocent. Is it not so, sir?"

"Yes," the old man nodded, patiently. "It is so, I fear. What then, Trant?"

"What, Dr. Reiland? Why, you and I and every psychologist in every psychological laboratory in this country and abroad have been playing with the answer for years! For years we have been measuring

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the effect of every thought, impulse and act in the human being. Daily I have been proving, as mere laboratory experiments to astonish a row of staring sophomores, that which — applied in courts and jails — would conclusively prove a man innocent in five minutes, or condemn him as a criminal on the evidence of his own uncontrollable reactions. And more than that, Dr. Reiland! Teach any detective what you have taught to me, and if he has half the persistence in looking for the marks of crime on *men* that he had in tracing its marks on *things*, he can clear up half the cases that fill the jail in three days."

"And the other half within the week, I suppose, Trant?"

The older man smiled at the other's enthusiasm.

For five years Reiland had seen his young companion almost daily; first as a freshman in the elementary psychology class — a red-haired, energetic country-boy, ill at ease among even the slight restrictions of this fresh-water university. The boy's eager, active mind had attracted his attention in the beginning; as he watched him change into a man, Trant's almost startling powers of analysis and comprehension had aroused the old professor's admiration. The compact, muscular body, which endured without fatigue the great demands Trant made upon it and brought him fresh to recitations from two hours sleep after a night of work; and the tireless eagerness which drove him at a gallop through courses where others plodded, had led Reiland to appoint Trant his assistant just before his graduation. But this energy told Reiland, too, that he could not hope to hold Trant long

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to the narrow activities of a university; and it was with marked uneasiness that the old professor glanced sideways now while he waited for the younger man to finish what he was saying.

"Dr. Reiland," Trant went on more soberly, "you have taught me the use of the cardiograph, by which the effect upon the heart of every act and passion can be read as a physician reads the pulse chart of his patient, the pneumograph, which traces the minutest meaning of the breathing; the galvanometer, that wonderful instrument which, though a man hold every feature and muscle passionless as death, will betray him through the sweat glands in the palms of his hands. You have taught me — as a scientific experiment — how a man not seen to stammer or hesitate, in perfect control of his speech and faculties, must surely show through his thought associations, which he cannot know he is betraying, the marks that any important act and every crime must make indelibly upon his mind —"

"Associations?" Dr. Reiland interrupted him less patiently. "That is merely the method of the German doctors — Freud's method — used by Jung in Zurich to diagnose the causes of adolescent insanity."

"Precisely." Trant's eyes flashed, as he faced the old professor. "Merely the method of the German doctors! The method of Freud and Jung! Do you think that I, with that method, would not have known eighteen months ago that Lawton was innocent? Do you suppose that I could not pick out among those sixteen men the Bronson murderer? If ever such

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a problem comes to me I shall not take eighteen months to solve it. I will not take a week."

In spite of himself Dr. Reiland's lips curled at this arrogant assertion. "It may be so," he said. "I have seen, Trant, how the work of the German, Swiss and American investigators, and the delicate experiments in the psychological laboratory which make visible and record the secrets of men's minds, have fired your imagination. It may be that the murderer would be as little, or even less, able to conceal his guilt than the sophomores we test are to hide their knowledge of the sentences we have had previously read to them. But I myself am too old a man to try such new things; and you will not meet here any such problems," he motioned to the quiet campus with its skeleton trees and white-frosted grass plots. "But why," he demanded suddenly in a startled tone, "is a delicate girl like Margaret Lawrie running across the campus at seven o'clock on this chilly morning without either hat or jacket?"

The girl who was speeding toward them along an intersecting walk, had plainly caught up as she left her home the first thing handy — a shawl — which she clutched about her shoulders. On her forehead, very white under the mass of her dark hair, in her wide gray eyes and in the tense lines of her straight mouth and rounded chin, Trant read at once the nervous anxiety of a highly-strung woman.

"Professor Reiland," she demanded, in a quick voice, "do you know where my father is?"

"My dear Margaret," the old man took her hand,

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which trembled violently, "you must not excite yourself this way."

"You do not know!" the girl cried excitedly. "I see it in your face. Dr. Reiland, father did not come home last night! He sent no word."

Reiland's face went blank. No one knew better than he how great was the break in Dr. Lawrie's habits that this fact implied, for the man was his dearest friend. Dr. Lawrie had been treasurer of the university twenty years, and in that time only three events — his marriage, the birth of his daughter, and his wife's death — had been allowed to interfere with the stern and rigorous routine into which he had welded his lonely life. So Reiland paled, and drew the trembling girl toward him.

"When did you see him last, Miss Lawrie?" Trant asked gently.

"Dr. Reiland, last night he went to his university office to work," she replied, as though the older man had spoken. "Sunday night. It was very unusual. All day he had acted so strangely. He looked so tired, and he has not come back. I am on my way there now to see — if — I can find him."

"We will go with you," Trant said quickly, as the girl helplessly broke off. "Harrison, if he is there so early, can tell us what has called your father away. There is not one chance in a thousand, Miss Lawrie, that anything has happened to him."

"Trant is right, my dear." Reiland had recovered himself, and looked up at University Hall in front of them with its fifty windows on the east glimmering like great eyes in the early morning sun. Only, on

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three of these eyes the lids were closed — the shutters of the treasurer's office, all saw plainly, were fastened. Trant could not remember that ever before he had seen shutters closed on University Hall. They had stood open until, on many, the hinges had rusted solid. He glanced at Dr. Reiland, who shuddered, but straightened again, stiffly.

"There must be a gas leak," Trant commented, sniffing, as they entered the empty building. But the white-faced man and girl beside him paid no heed, as they sped down the corridor.

At the door of Dr. Lawrie's office — the third of the doors with high, ground-glass transoms which opened on both sides into the corridor — the smell of gas grew stronger. Trant stooped to the keyhole and found it plugged with paper. He caught the transom bar, set his foot upon the knob and, drawing himself up, pushed against the transom. It resisted; but he pounded it in, and, as its glass panes fell tinkling, the fumes of illuminating gas burst out and choked him.

"A foot," he called down to his trembling companions, as he peered into the darkened room. "Some one on the lounge!"

Dropping down, he hurried to a recitation room across the corridor and dragged out a heavy table. Together they drove a corner of this against the lock; it broke, and as the door whirled back on its hinges the fumes of gas poured forth, stifling them and driving them back. Trant rushed in, threw up the three windows, one after the other, and beat open the shutters. As the gray autumn light flooded the

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room, a shriek from the girl and a choking exclamation from Reiland greeted the figure stretched motionless upon the couch. Trant leaped upon the flat-topped desk under the gas fixtures in the center of the room and turned off the four jets from which the gas was pouring. Darting across the hall, he opened the windows of the room opposite.

As the strong morning breeze eddied through the building, clearing the gas before it, while Reiland with tears streaming from his eyes knelt by the body of his lifelong friend, it lifted from a metal tray upon the desk scores of fragments of charred paper which scattered over the room, over the floor and furniture, over even the couch where the still figure lay, with its white face drawn and contorted.

Reiland arose and touched his old friend's hand, his voice breaking. "He has been dead for hours. Oh, Lawrie!"

He caught to him the trembling, horrified girl, and she burst into sobs against his shoulder. Then, while the two men stood beside the dead body of him in whose charge had been all finances of this great institution, their eyes met, and in those of Trant was a silent question. Reddening and paling by turns, Reiland answered it, "No, Trant, nothing lies behind this death. Whether it was of purpose or by accident, no secret, no disgrace, drove him to it. That I know."

The young man's oddly mismated eyes glowed into his, questioningly. "We must get President Joslyn," Reiland said. "And Margaret," he lifted the girl's head from his shoulder, while she shuddered and clung

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to him, "you must go home. Do you feel able to go home alone, dearie? Everything that is necessary here shall be done."

She gathered herself together, choked and nodded. Reiland led her to the door, and she hurried away, sobbing.

While Trant was at the telephone Dr. Reiland swept the fragments of glass across the sill, and closed the door and windows.

Already feet were sounding in the corridors; and the rooms about were fast filling before Trant made out the president's thin figure bending against the wind as he hurried across the campus.

Dr. Joslyn's swift glance as Trant opened the door to him — a glance which, in spite of the student pallor of his high-boned face, marked the man of action — considered and comprehended all.

"So it has come to this," he said, sadly. "But — who laid Lawrie there?" he asked sharply after an instant.

"He laid himself there," Reiland softly replied. "It was there we found him."

Trant put his finger on a scratch on the wall paper made by the sharp corner of the davenport lounge; the corner was still white with plaster. Plainly, the lounge had been violently pushed out of its position, scratching the paper.

Dr. Joslyn's eyes passed on about the room, passed by Reiland's appeal, met Trant's direct look and followed it to the smaller desk beside the dead treasurer's. He opened the door to his own office.

"When Mr. Harrison comes," he commanded,

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speaking of Dr. Lawrie's secretary and assistant, "tell him I wish to see him. The treasurer's office will not be opened this morning."

"Harrison is late," he commented, as he returned to the others. "He usually is here by seven-thirty. We must notify Branower also." He picked up the telephone and called Branower, the president of the board of trustees, asking him merely to come to the treasurer's office at once.

"Now give me the particulars," the president said, turning to Trant.

"They are all before you," Trant replied briefly. "The room was filled with gas. These four outlets of the fixture were turned full on. And besides," he touched now with his fingers four tips with composition ends to regulate the flow, which lay upon the table, "these tips had been removed, probably with these pincers that lie beside them. Where the nippers came from I do not know."

"They belong here," Joslyn answered, absently. "Lawrie had the tinkering habit." He opened a lower desk drawer, filled with tools and nails and screws, and dropped the nippers into it.

"The door was locked inside?" inquired the president.

"Yes, it is a spring lock," Trant answered.

"And he had been burning papers." The president pointed quietly to the metal tray.

Dr. Reiland winced.

"Some one had been burning papers," Trant softly interpolated.

"Some one?" The president looked up sharply.

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"These ashes were all in the tray, I think," Trant contented himself with answering. "They scattered when I opened the windows."

Joslyn lifted a stiletto letter-opener from the desk and tried to separate, so as to read, the carbonized ashes left in the tray. They fell into a thousand pieces; and as he gave up the hopeless attempt to decipher the writing on them, suddenly the young assistant bent before the couch, slipped his hand under the body, and drew out a crumpled paper. It was a recently canceled note for twenty thousand dollars drawn on the University regularly and signed by Dr. Lawrie, as treasurer. But as the young psychologist started to study it more closely, President Joslyn's hand closed over it and took it from Trant's grasp. The president himself merely glanced at it; then, with whitening face, folded it carefully and put it in his pocket.

"What is the matter, Joslyn?" Dr. Reiland started up.

"A note," the president answered shortly. He took a turn or two nervously up and down the room, paused and stared down at the face of the man upon the couch; then turned almost pityingly to the old professor.

"Reiland," he said compassionately, "I must tell you that this shocking affair is not the surprise to me that it seems to have been to you. I have known for two weeks, and Branower has known for nearly as long — for I took him into my confidence — that there were irregularities in the treasurer's office. I questioned Lawrie about it when I first stumbled upon the

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evidence. To my surprise, Lawrie — one of my oldest personal friends and certainly the man of all men in whose perfect honesty I trusted most implicitly — refused to reply to my questions. He would neither admit nor deny the truth of my accusations; and he begged me almost tearfully to say nothing about the matter until the meeting of the trustees to-morrow night. I understood from him that at, or before, the trustees' meeting he would have an explanation to make to me; I did not dream, Reiland, that he would make instead this"— he motioned to the figure on the couch, "this confession! This note," he nervously unfolded the paper again, "is drawn for twenty thousand dollars. I recall the circumstances of it clearly, Reiland; and I remember that it was authorized by the trustees for two thousand dollars, not twenty."

"But it has been canceled. See, he paid it! And these," the old professor pointed in protest to the ashes in the tray, "if these, too, were notes — raised, as you clearly accuse — he must have paid them. They were returned."

"Paid? Yes!" Dr. Joslyn's voice rang accusingly. "Paid from the university funds! The examination which I made personally of his books, unknown to Lawrie — for I could not confess at first to my old friend the suspicions I held against him — showed that he had methodically entered the notes at the amounts we authorized, and later entered them again at their face amounts as he paid them. The total discrepancy exceeds one hundred thousand dollars!"

"Hush!" Reiland was upon him. "Hush."

The morning was advancing. The halls resounded

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with the tread of students passing to recitation rooms.

Trant's eyes had registered all the room, and now measured Joslyn and Dr. Reiland. They had ceased to be trusted men and friends of his as, with the quick analysis that the old professor had so admired in his young assistant, he incorporated them in his problem.

"Who filled this out?" Trant had taken the paper from the hand of the president and asked this question suddenly.

"Harrison. It was the custom. The signature is Lawrie's, and the note is regular. Oh, there can be no doubt, Reiland!"

"No, no!" the old man objected. "James Lawrie was not a thief!"

"How else can it be? The tips taken from the fixture, the keyhole plugged with paper, the shutters — never closed before for ten years — fastened within, the door locked! Burned notes, the single one left signed in his own hand! And all this on the very day before his books must have been presented to the trustees! You must face it, Reiland — you, who have been closer to Lawrie than any other man — face it as I do! Lawrie is a suicide — a hundred thousand dollars short in his accounts!"

"I have been close to him," the old man answered bravely. "You and I, Joslyn, were almost his only friends. Lawrie's life has been open as the day; and we at least should know that there can have been no disgraceful reason for his death.

"Luther," the old professor turned, stretching out his hands pleadingly to his young assistant, as he saw

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that the face of the president did not soften, "Do you, too, believe this? It is not so! Oh, my boy, just before this terrible thing, you were telling me of the new training which could be used to clear the innocent and prove the guilty. I thought it braggadocio. I scoffed at your ideas. But if your words were truth, now prove them. Take this shame from this innocent man."

The young man sprang to his friend as he tottered. "Dr. Reiland, I *shall* clear him!" he promised wildly. "I shall prove, I swear, not only that Dr. Lawrie was not a thief, but — he was not even a suicide!"

"What madness is this, Trant," the president demanded impatiently, "when the facts are so plain before us?"

"So plain, Dr. Joslyn? Yes," the young man rejoined, "very plain indeed — the fact that *before* the papers were burned, *before* the gas was turned on or the tips taken from the fixture, *before* that door was slammed and the spring lock fastened it from the outside — Dr. Lawrie was dead and was laid upon that lounge!"

"What? What — what, Trant?" Reiland and the president exclaimed together. But the young man addressed himself only to the president.

"You yourself, sir, before we told you how we found him, saw that Dr. Lawrie had not himself lain down, but had been laid upon the lounge. He is not light; some one almost dropped him there, since the edge of the lounge cut the plaster on the wall. The single note not burned lay under his body, where it could

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scarcely have escaped if the notes were burned first; where it would most surely have been overlooked if the body already lay there. Gas would not be pouring out during the burning, so the tips were probably taken off later. It must have struck you how theatric all this is, that some one has thought of its effect, that some one has arranged this room, and, leaving Lawrie dead, has gone away, closing the spring lock —"

"Luther!" Dr. Reiland had risen, his hands stretched out before him. "You are charging murder!"

"Wait!" Dr. Joslyn was standing by the window, and his eyes had caught the swift approach of a limousine automobile which, with its plate glass shimmering in the sun, was taking the broad sweep into the driveway. As it slowed before the entrance, the president swung back to those in the room.

"We two," he said, "were Lawrie's nearest friends —he had but one other. Branower is coming now. Go down and prepare him, Trant. His wife is with him. She must not come up."

Trant hurried down without comment. Through the window of the car he could see the profile of a woman, and beyond it the broad, powerful face of a man, with sandy beard parted and brushed after a foreign fashion. Branower had succeeded his father as president of the board of trustees of the university. At least half a dozen of the surrounding buildings had been erected by the elder Branower, and practically his entire fortune had been bequeathed to the university.

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"Well, Trant, what is it?" the trustee asked. He had opened the door of the limousine and was preparing to descend.

"Mr. Branower," Trant replied, "Dr. Lawrie was found this morning dead in his office."

"Dead? This morning?" A muddy grayness appeared under the flush of Branower's cheeks. "Why! I was coming to see him — even before I heard from Joslyn. What was the cause?".

"The room was filled with gas."

"Asphyxiation!"

"An accident?" the woman asked, leaning forward. Even as she whitened with the horror of this news, Trant found himself wondering at her beauty. Every feature was so perfect, so flawless, and her manner so sweet and full of charm that, at this first close sight of her, Trant found himself excusing and approving Branower's marriage. She was an unknown American girl, whom Branower had met in Paris and had brought back to reign socially over this proud university suburb where his father's friends and associates had had to accept her and — criticise.

"Dr. Lawrie asphyxiated," she repeated, "accidentally, Mr. Trant?"

"We — hope so, Mrs. Branower."

"There is no clew to the perpetrator?"

"Why, if it was an accident, Mrs. Branower, there was no perpetrator."

"Cora!" Branower ejaculated.

"How silly of me!" She flushed prettily. "But Dr. Lawrie's lovely daughter; what a shock to her!"

Branower touched Trant upon the arm. After his

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first personal shock, he had become at once a trustee — the trustee of the university whose treasurer lay dead in his office just as his accounts were to be submitted to the board. He dismissed his wife hurriedly. "Now, Trant, let us go up."

President Joslyn met Branower's grasp mechanically and acquainted the president of the trustees, almost curtly, with the facts as he had found them.

Then the eyes of the two men met significantly.

"It seems, Joslyn," Branower used almost the same words that Joslyn had used just before his arrival, "like a — confession! It is suicide?" the president of the trustees was revolting at the charge.

"I can see no other solution," the president replied, "though Mr. Trant —"

"And I might have saved this, at least!" The trustee's face had grown white as he looked down at the man on the couch. "Oh, Lawrie, why did I put you off to the last moment?"

He turned, fumbling in his pocket for a letter. "He sent this Saturday," he confessed, pitifully. "I should have come to him at once, but I could not suspect this."

Joslyn read the letter through with a look of increased conviction. It was in the clear hand of the dead treasurer. "This settles all," he said, decidedly, and he re-read it aloud:

DEAR BRANOWER: I pray you, as you have pity for a man with sixty years of probity behind him facing dishonor and disgrace, to come to me at the earliest possible hour. Do not, I pray, delay later than Monday, I implore you.

JAMES LAWRIE.

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Dr. Reiland buried his face in his hands, and Joslyn turned to Trant. On the young man's face was a look of deep perplexity.

"When did you get that, Mr. Branower?" Trant asked, finally.

"He wrote it Saturday morning. It was delivered to my house Saturday afternoon. But I was motoring with my wife. I did not get it until I returned late Sunday afternoon."

"Then you could not have come much sooner."

"No; yet I might have done something if I had suspected that behind this letter was hidden his determination to commit suicide."

"Not suicide, Mr. Branower!" Trant interrupted curtly.

"What?"

"Look at his face. It is white and drawn. If asphyxiated, it would be blue, swollen. Before the gas was turned on he was dead — struck dead —"

"Struck dead? By whom?"

"By the man in this room last night! By the man who burned those notes, plugged the keyhole, turned on the gas, arranged the rest of these theatricals, and went away to leave Dr. Lawrie a thief and a suicide to — protect himself! Two men had access to the university funds, handled these notes! One lies before us; and the man in this room last night, I should say, was the other —" he glanced at the clock —"the man who at the hour of nine has not yet appeared at his office!"

"Harrison?" cried Joslyn and Reiland together.

"Yes, Harrison," Trant answered, stoutly. "I cer-

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tainly prefer him for the man in the room last night."

"Harrison?" Branower repeated, contemptuously. "Impossible."

"How impossible?" Trant asked, defiantly.

"Because Harrison, Mr. Trant," the president of the trustees rejoined, "was struck senseless at Elgin in an automobile accident Saturday noon. He has been in the Elgin hospital, scarcely conscious, ever since."

"How did you learn that, Mr. Branower?"

"I have helped many young men to positions here. Harrison was one. Because of that, I suppose, he filled in my name on the 'whom to notify' line of a personal identification card he carried. The hospital doctors notified me just as I was leaving home in my car. I saw him at the Elgin hospital that afternoon."

Young Trant stared into the steady eyes of the president of the trustees. "Then Harrison could not have been the man in the room last night. Do you realize what that implies?" he asked, whitening. "I preferred, I said, to fix him as Harrison. That would keep both Dr. Lawrie from being the thief and any close personal intimate of his from being the man who struck him dead here last night. But with Harrison not here, the treasurer himself must have known all the particulars of this crime," he struck the canceled note in his hand, "and been concealing it for — that close friend of his who came here with him. You see how very terribly it simplifies our problem? It was some one close enough to Lawrie to cause him to conceal the thing as long as he could, and some one intimate

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enough to know of the treasurer's tinkering habits, so that, even in great haste, he could think at once of the gas nippers in Lawrie's private tool drawer. Gentlemen," the young assistant tensely added, "I must ask you which of you three was the one in this room with Dr. Lawrie last night?"

"What!" The word in three different cadences burst from their lips — amazement, anger, threat.

He lifted a shaking hand to stop them.

"I realize," he went on more quickly, "that, after having suggested one charge and having it shown false, I am now making a far more serious one, which, if I cannot prove it, must cost me my position here. But I make it now again, directly. One of you three was in this room with Dr. Lawrie last night. Which one? I could tell within the hour if I could take you successively to the psychological laboratory and submit you to a test. But, perhaps I need not. Even without that, I hope soon to be able to tell the other two, for which of you Dr. Lawrie concerned himself with this crime, and who it was that in return struck him dead Sunday night and left him to bear a double disgrace as a suicide."

The young psychologist stood an instant gazing into their startled faces, half frightened at his own temerity in charging thus the three most respected men in the university; then, as President Joslyn eyed him sternly, he caught again the enthusiasm of his reasoning, and flushed and paled.

"One of you, at least, knows that I speak the truth," he said, determinedly; and without a back-

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ward look he burst from the room and, running down the steps, left the campus.

It was five o'clock that afternoon, when Trant rang the bell at Dr. Joslyn's door. He saw that Mr. Branower and Dr. Reiland had been taken into the president's private study before him; and that the manner of all three was less stern toward him than he had expected.

"Dr. Reiland and Mr. Branower have come to hear the coroner's report to me," Joslyn explained. "The physicians say Lawrie did not die from asphyxiation. An autopsy to-morrow will show the cause of his death. But, at least, Trant — you made accusations this morning which can have no foundation in truth, but in part of what you said you must have been correct; for obviously some other person was in the room."

"But not Harrison," Trant replied. "I have just come from Elgin, where, though I was not allowed to speak with him, I saw him in the hospital."

"You doubted he was there?" Branower asked.

"I wanted to make sure, Mr. Branower. And I have traced the notes, too," the young man continued. "All were made out as usual, signed regularly by Dr. Lawrie and paid by him personally, upon maturity, from the university reserve. So I have made only more certain that the man in the room must have been one of Dr. Lawrie's closest friends. I came back and saw Margaret Lawrie."

Reiland's eyes filled with tears. "This terrible thing, with her unfortunate presence with us at the

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finding of her father's body, has prostrated poor Margaret," he said.

"I found it so," Trant rejoined. "Her memory is temporarily destroyed. I could make her comprehend little. Yet she knows only of her father's death; nothing at all has been said to her of the suspicions against him. Does his death alone seem cause enough for her prostration? More likely, I think, it points to some guilty knowledge of her father's trouble and whom he was protecting. If so, her very condition makes it impossible for her to conceal those guilty associations under examination."

"Guilty associations?" Dr. Reiland rose nervously. "Do you mean, Trant, that you think Margaret knows anything of the loss of this money? Oh, no, no; it is impossible!"

"It would at any rate account for her prostration," the assistant repeated quietly, "and I have determined to make a test of her for association with her father's guilt. I will use in this case, Dr. Reiland, only the simple association of words — Freud's method."

"How? What do you mean?" Branower and Joslyn exclaimed.

"It is a method for getting at the concealed causes of mental disturbance. It is especially useful in diagnosing cases of insanity or mental breakdown from insufficiently known causes.

"We have a machine, the chronoscope," Trant continued, as the others waited, interrogatively, "which registers the time to a thousandth part of a second, if necessary. The German physicians merely speak a series of words which may arouse in the patient ideas

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that are at the bottom of his insanity. Those words which are connected with the trouble cause deeper feeling in the subject and are marked by longer intervals of time before the word in reply can be spoken. The nature of the word spoken by the patient often clears the causes for his mental agitation or prostration.

"In this case, if Margaret Lawrie had reason to believe that any one of you were closely associated with her father's trouble, the speaking of that one's name or the mentioning of anything connected with that one, must betray an easily registered and decidedly measurable disturbance."

"I have heard of this," Joslyn commented.

"Excellent," the president of the trustees agreed, "if Margaret's physician does not object."

"I have already spoken with him," Trant replied. "Can I expect you all at Dr. Lawrie's to-morrow morning when I test Margaret to discover the identity of the intimate friend who caused the crime charged to her father?"

Dr. Lawrie's three dearest friends nodded in turn.

Trant came early the next morning to the dead treasurer's house to set up the chronoscope in the spare bedroom next to Margaret Lawrie's.

The instrument he had decided to use was the pendulum chronoscope, as adapted by Professor Fitz of Harvard University. It somewhat resembled a brass dumb-bell very delicately poised upon an axle so that the lower part, which was heavier, could swing slowly back and forth like a pendulum. A light, sharp pointer paralleled this pendulum. The weight, when

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started, swung to and fro in the arc of a circle; the pointer swung beside it. But the pointer, after starting to swing, could be instantaneously stopped by an electro-magnet. This magnet was connected with a battery and wires led from it to the two instruments used in the test. The first pair of wires connected with two bits of steel which Trant, in conducting the test, would hold between his lips. The least motion of his lips to enunciate a word would break the electric circuit and start swinging the pendulum and the pointer beside it. The second pair of wires led to a sort of telephone receiver. When Margaret would reply into this, it would close the circuit and instantaneously the electro-magnet clamped and held the pointer. A scale along which the pointer traveled gave, down to thousandths of a second, the time between the speaking of the suggesting word and the first associated word replied.

Trant had this instrument set up and tested before he had to turn and admit Dr. Reiland. Mr. Branower and President Joslyn soon joined them, and a moment after a nurse entered supporting Margaret Lawrie. Dr. Reiland himself scarcely recognized her as the same girl who had come running across the campus to them only the morning before. Her whole life had been centered on the father so suddenly taken away.

Trant nodded to the nurse, who withdrew. He looked to Dr. Reiland.

"Please be sure that she understands," he said, softly. The older man bent over the girl, who had been placed upon the bed.

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"Margaret," he said tenderly, "we know you cannot speak well this morning, my dear, and that you cannot think very clearly. We shall not ask you to do much. Mr. Trant is merely going to say some words to you slowly, one word at a time; and we want you to answer — you need only speak very gently — anything at all, any word at all, my dear, which you think of first. I will hold this little horn over you to speak into. Do you understand, my dear?"

The big eyes closed in assent. The others drew nervously nearer. Reiland took the receiving drum at the end of the second set of wires and held it before the girl's lips. Trant picked up the mouth metals attached to the starting wires.

"We may as well begin at once," Trant said, as he seated himself beside the table which held the chronoscope and took a pencil to write upon a pad of paper the words he suggested, the words associated and the time elapsing. Then he put his mouthpiece between his lips.

"Dress!" he enunciated clearly. The pendulum, released by the magnet, started to swing. The pointer swung beside it in an arc along the scale. "Skirt!" Miss Lawrie answered, feebly, into the drum at her lips. The current caught the pointer instantaneously, and Trant noted the result thus:

Dress — 2.7 seconds — skirt.

"Dog!" Trant spoke, and started the pointer again. "Cat!" the girl answered and stopped it. Trant wrote:

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Dog — 2.6 seconds — cat.

A faint smile appeared on the faces of Mr. Branower and Dr. Joslyn, but Reiland knew that his young assistant was merely establishing the normal time of Margaret's associations through words without probable connection with any disturbance in her mind.

"Home," Trant said; and it was five and two-tenths seconds before he could write "father." Reiland moved, sympathetically, but the other men still watched without seeing any significance in the time extension. Trant waited a moment. "'Money!" he said, suddenly. Dr. Reiland watched the swinging pointer tremblingly. But "purse" from Margaret stopped it before it had registered more than her established normal time for innocent associations.

Money — 2.7 seconds — purse.

"Note!" Trant said, suddenly; and "letter" he wrote again in two and six-tenths seconds.

Dr. Joslyn moved impatiently; and Trant brusquely pulled his chair nearer the table. The chair legs rasped on the hard-wood floor. Margaret shivered and, when Trant tried her with the next words, she merely repeated them. President Joslyn moved again.

"Cannot you proceed, Trant?" he asked.

"Not unless we can make her understand again, sir," the young man answered. "But I think, Dr. Joslyn, if you would show her what we mean — not merely try to explain again — we might go on. I mean, when I say the next word, will you take the

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"Dress!" he enunciated clearly. "Skirt!" Miss Lawrie answered feebly

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mouthpiece from Dr. Reiland and speak into it some different one?"

"Very well," the president agreed, impatiently, "if you think it will do any good."

"Thank you!" Trant replaced his mouthpieces. "October!" He named the month just ended. The pointer started. "Recitations!" the president of the university answered in one and nine-tenths seconds.

"Thank you. Now for Miss Lawrie, Dr. Reiland!"

"Steal!" he tried; and the girl associated "iron" in two and seven-tenths seconds.

"Good!" Trant exclaimed. "If you will show her again, I think we can go ahead. Fourteenth!" he said to the president. Joslyn replied "fifteenth" in precisely two seconds and passed the drum back. All watched Miss Lawrie. But again Trant rasped carelessly his chair upon the floor and the girl merely repeated the next words. Reiland was unable to make her understand. Joslyn tried to help. Branower shook his head skeptically. But Trant turned to him.

"Mr. Branower, you can help me, I believe, if you will take Dr. Joslyn's place. I beg your pardon, Dr. Joslyn, but I am sure your nervousness prevents you from helping now."

Branower hesitated a moment, skeptically; then, smiling, acquiesced and took up the drum. Trant replaced his mouthpieces.

"Blow!" he said. "Wind!" Branower answered, quietly. Trant mechanically noted the time, two seconds, for all were intent upon the next trial with the girl.

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"Books!" Trant said. "Library!" said the girl, now able to associate the different words and in her minimum time of two and a half seconds.

"I think we are going again," said Trant. "If you will keep on, Mr. Branower. Strike!" he exclaimed, to start the pointer. "Labor trouble," Branower returned in just under two seconds; and again he guided the girl. For "conceal" she answered "hide". at once. Then Trant tested rapidly this series:

Margaret, conceal — 2.6 — hide.
Branower, figure — 2.1 — shape.
Margaret, thief — 2.8 — silver.
Branower, twenty-fifth — 4.5 — twenty-sixth.

"Joslyn!" Trant tried an intelligible test word suddenly. He had just suggested "thief" to the girl; now he named her father's friend, the president of the university. But "friend" she was able to associate in two and six-tenths seconds. Trant sank back and wrote this series without comment:

Margaret, Joslyn — 2.6 — friend.
Branower, wife — 4.4 — Cora.
Margaret, secret — 2.7 — Alice.

Trant glanced up, surprised, considered a moment, but then bowed to Mr. Branower to guide the girl again, saying "wound," to which he wrote the reply "no," after four and six-tenths seconds. Immedi-

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ately Trant made the second direct and intelligible test.

"Branower!" he shot, suggestively, to the girl; but "friend" she was again able to associate at once. As the moment before the president of the trustees had glanced at Joslyn, now the president of the University nodded to Branower. Trant continued his list rapidly:

Margaret, Branower — 2.7 — friend.
Branower, letter-opener — 4.9 — desk.

"Father!" Trant tried next. But from this there came no association, as the emotion was too deep. Trant, recognizing this, nodded to Mr. Branower to start the next test, and wrote:

Margaret, father — no association.
Branower, Harrison — 5.3 — Cleveland.
Margaret, university — 2.5 — study.
Branower, married — 2.1 — wife.
Margaret, expose — 2.6 — camera.
Branower, brother — 4.9 — sister.
Margaret, sink — 2.7 — kitchen.
Branower, collapse — 4.8 — balloon.

"Reiland!" Trant said to the girl at last. It was as if he had put off the trial for his own old friend as long as he could. Yet if anyone had been watching him, they would have noted now the quick flash of his mismated eyes. But all eyes were upon the swinging

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pointer of the chronoscope which, at the mention of her father's best and oldest friend in that way, Margaret was unable to stop. One full second it swung, two, three, four, five, six —

The young assistant in psychology picked up his papers and arose. He went to the door and called in the nurse from the next room. "That is all, gentlemen," he said. "Shall we go down to the study?"

"Well, Trant?" President Joslyn demanded impatiently, as the four filed into the room below, which had been Dr. Lawrie's. "You act as if you had discovered some clew. What is it?"

Trant was closing the door carefully, when a surprised exclamation made him turn.

"Cora!" Mr. Branower exclaimed; "you here? Oh! You came to see poor Margaret!"

"I couldn't stay home thinking of you torturing her so this morning!" The beautiful woman swept their faces with a glance of anxious inquiry.

"I told Cora last night something about our test, Joslyn," Branower explained, leading his wife toward the door. "You can go up to Margaret now, my dear."

She seemed to resist. Trant fixed his eyes upon her, speculatively.

"I see no reason for sending Mrs. Branower away if she wishes to stay and hear with us the results of our test which Dr. Reiland is about to give us." Trant turned to the old professor and handed him the sheets upon which he had written his record.

"Now, Dr. Reiland, please! Will you explain to us what these tell you?"

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Dr. Joslyn's hands clenched and Branower drew toward his wife as Reiland took the papers and examined them earnestly. But the old professor raised a puzzled face.

"Luther," he appealed, "to me these show nothing! Margaret's normal association-time for innocent words, as you established at the start, is about two and one-half seconds. She did not exceed that in any of the words with guilty associations which you put to her. From these results, I should say, it is scientifically impossible that she even knows her father is accused. Her replies indicate nothing unless — unless," he paused, painfully, "because she could associate nothing with my name you consider that implies —"

"That you are so close to her that at your name, as at the name of her father, the emotion was very deep, Dr. Reiland," the young man interrupted. "But do not look only at Margaret's associations! Tell us, instead, what Dr. Joslyn's and Mr. Branower's show!"

"Dr. Joslyn's and Mr. Branower's?"

"Yes! For they show, do they not — unconsciously, but scientifically and quite irrefutably — that Dr. Joslyn could not possibly have been concerned in any way with those notes, part of which were due and paid upon the fourteenth of October; but that Mr. Branower has a far from innocent association with them, and with the twenty-fifth of the month, on which the rest were paid!"

He swung toward the trustee. "So, Mr. Branower, you were the man in the room Sunday night! *You*, to save the rascal Harrison, your wife's brother

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and the real thief, struck Dr. Lawrie dead in his office, burned the raised notes, turned on the gas and left him to seem a suicide and a thief!"

For the second time within twenty-four hours, Trant held Dr. Reiland and the president of the university astounded before him. But Branower gave an ugly laugh.

"If you could not spare me, you might at least have spared my wife this last raving accusation! Come, Cora!" he commanded.

"I thought you might control yourself, Mr. Branower," Trant returned. "And when I saw your wife wished to stay I thought I might keep her to convince even President Joslyn. You see?" he quietly indicated Mrs. Branower as she fell, white and shaking, into a chair. "Do not think that I would have told it in this way if these facts were new to her. I was sure the only surprise to her would be that we knew them."

Branower bent to his wife; but she straightened and recovered.

"Mr. Branower," Trant continued then, "if you will excuse chance errors, I will make a fuller statement.

"I should say, first, that since you kept his relationship a secret, this Harrison, your wife's brother, was a rascal before he came here. Still you procured him his position in the treasurer's office, where he soon began to steal. It was very easy. Dr. Lawrie merely signed notes; Harrison made them out. He could make them out in erasable ink and raise them after they were signed, or in any other simple way. Suf-

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fice it that he did raise them and stole one hundred thousand dollars. When the notes were presented for payment, the matter was laid before you. You must have promised Dr. Lawrie to make up the loss, for he paid the notes and entered the payment in his books. Then the time came when the books must be presented for audit. Lawrie wrote that last appeal to you to put off the settlement no longer. But before the letter was delivered you and Mrs. Branower had hurried off to Elgin to see this Harrison, who was hurt. You got back Sunday evening and read Dr. Lawrie's note. You went to him; and, unable to make payment, there in his office you struck him dead —"

But Branower was upon him with a harsh cry.

"You devil! You — devil! But you lie! I did not kill him!"

"With a blow? Oh, no! You raised no hand against him. But his heart was weak. At your refusal to carry out your promise, which meant his ruin, he collapsed before you — dead. Do you wish to continue the statement now yourself?"

The wife gathered herself. "It is not so! No!" she forbade, "no!" But Branower turned on President Joslyn a haggard face.

"Is this true?" the president demanded sternly. Branower buried his face in his hands.

"I will tell you all," he said thickly. "Harrison, as this fellow found out somehow, is my wife's brother. He has always been reckless, wild; but she — Cora, do not stop me now — loved him and clung to him as — as a sister sometimes clings to such a brother. They were alone in the world, Joslyn. She married me only

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on condition that I save and protect him. He demanded a position here. I hesitated. His life had been one long scandal; but never before had he been dishonest with money. Finally I made it a condition to keep his relationship secret, and sent for him. I myself first discovered he had raised the notes, weeks before you came to me with the evidence you had discovered that something was wrong in the treasurer's office. As soon as I found it out, I went to Lawrie. He agreed to keep Harrison about the office until I could remove him quietly. He paid the notes from the university reserve, just raised, upon my promise to make it up. David had lost all speculating in stocks. I could not pay this tremendous amount in cash at once; but the books were to be audited. Lawrie, who had expected immediate repayment from me, would not even once present a false statement. In our argument his heart gave out — I did not know it was weak — and he collapsed in his chair — dead."

Dr. Reiland groaned, wringing his hands.

"Oh, Professor Reiland!" Mrs. Branower cried now. "He has not told everything. I — I had followed him!"

"You followed him?" Trant cried. "Ah, of course!"

"I thought — I told him," the wife burst on, "this had happened by Providence to save David!"

"Then it was you who suggested to him to leave the stiletto letter opener in Lawrie's hand as an evidence of suicide!"

Branower and his wife both stared at Trant in fresh terror.

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"But you, Mr. Branower," Trant went on, "not being a woman with a precious brother to save, could not think of making a wound. You thought of the gas. Of course! But it was inexcusable in me not to test for Mrs. Branower's presence. It was her odd mental association of a perpetrator with the news of the suspected suicide that first aroused my suspicions."

He turned as though the matter were finished; but met Dr. Joslyn's perplexed eyes. The end attained was plain; but to the president of the university the road by which they had come was dark as ever. Branower had taken his wife into another room. He returned.

"Dr. Joslyn," said Trant, "it is scientifically impossible — as any psychologist will tell you — for a person who associates the first suggested idea in two and one-half seconds, like Margaret, to substitute another without almost doubling the time interval.

"Observe Margaret's replies. 'Iron' followed 'steal' as quickly as 'cat' followed 'dog.' 'Silver,' the thing a woman first thinks of in connection with burglary, was the first association she had with 'thief.' No possible guilty thought there. No guilty secret connected with her father prevented her from associating, in her regular time, some girl's secret with Alice Seaton next door. I saw her innocence at once and continued questioning her merely to avoid a more formal examination of the others. I rasped my chair over the floor to disturb her nerves, therefore, and got you into the test.

"The first two tests of you, Dr. Joslyn, showed that you had no association with the notes. The date half

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of them came due meant nothing to you. 'October' suggested only recitations and 'fourteenth' permitted you to associate simply the succeeding day in an entirely unsuspicious time. I substituted Mr. Branower. I had explained this system as getting results from persons with poor mental resistance. I had not mentioned it as even surer of results when the person tested is in full control of his faculties, even suspicious and trying to prevent betraying himself. Mr. Branower clearly thought he could guard himself from giving me anything. Now notice his replies.

"The twenty-fifth, the day most of the notes were due, meant so much that it took double the time, before he could drive out his first suspicious association, merely to say 'twenty-sixth.' I told you I suspected his wife was at least cognizant of something wrong. It took him twice the necessary time to say 'Cora' after 'wife' was mentioned. He gave the first association, but the chronoscope registered mercilessly that he had to think it over. 'Wound' then brought the remarkable association 'no' at the end of four and six-tenths seconds. There was no wound; but something had made it so that he had to think it over to see if it was suspicious. When I first saw that dagger letter opener on Dr. Lawrie's desk, I thought that if a man were trying to make it seem suicide, he must at least have thought of using the dagger before the gas. Now note the next test, 'Harrison.' Any innocent man, not overdoing it, would have answered at once the name of the Harrison immediately in all our minds. Mr. Branower thought of him first, of course, and

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could have answered in two seconds. To drive out that and think of President Harrison so as to give a seemingly 'innocent' association, 'Cleveland,' took him over five seconds. I then went for the hold of this Harrison, probably, upon Mrs. Branower. I tried for it twice. The second trial, 'brother,' made him think again for five seconds, practically, before he could decide that sister was not a guilty word to give. As the first words 'blow' only brought 'wind' in two seconds and 'strike' suggested 'labor' at once, I knew he could not have struck Dr. Lawrie a blow; and my last words showed, indeed, that Lawrie probably collapsed before him. And I was done."

Dr. Joslyn was pacing the room with rapid steps. "It is plain. Branower, you offer nothing in your defense?"

"There is nothing."

"There is much. The university owes a great debt to your father. The autopsy will show conclusively that Dr. Lawrie died of heart failure. The other facts are private with ourselves. You can restore this money. Its absence I will reveal only to the trustees. I shall present to them at the same time your resignation from the board."

He turned to Trant. "But this secrecy, young man, will deprive you of the reputation you might have gained through the really remarkable method you used through this investigation."

"It makes no difference," Trant answered, "if you will give me a short leave from the university. As I mentioned to Dr. Reiland yesterday, the prosecuting at-

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torney of Chicago was murdered two weeks ago. Sixteen men — one of them surely guilty — are held; but the criminal cannot be picked among them. I wish to try the scientific psychology again. If I succeed, I shall resign and keep after crime — in the new way!"

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II

THE FAST WATCH

Police Captain Crowley — red-headed, alert, brave — stamped into the North Side police station an hour later than usual and in a very bad temper. He glared defiantly at the row of patrolmen, reporters, and busybodies, elbowed aside his desk sergeant without a word, and slammed into his private office. The customary pile of morning papers, flaying him in stinging front-page columns, covered his desk. He glanced them over, grunting; then swept them to the floor and let himself drop heavily into his chair.

"He's *got* to be guilty!" The big fist struck the table top desperately. "It's got to be," the hoarse voice iterated determinedly —"*him!*" He had checked the last word as the door swung open, only to utter it more forcibly as he recognized the desk sergeant.

"Kanlan, eh, Ed?" the desk sergeant ventured. "You have him at Harrison Street station again the boys tell me."

"Yes, we have him."

"You got nothing out of him yet?"

"No, nothing — yet!"

"But you think it's him?"

"Who said anything about thinking?" Crowley glanced to see that the door was shut. "I said it's

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got to be him! And — it's got to, whether or no, ain't it?"

A month before, Randolph Bronson — the city prosecuting attorney for whose unpunished murder Crowley was under fire — had dared to try to break up and send to the penitentiary the sixteen men who formed the most notorious and dangerous gambling "ring" in the city. It grew certain that some of the sixteen would stick at nothing to put the prosecutor out of the way. The chief of police particularly charged Crowley, therefore, to see to Bronson's safety in the North Side precinct, where the young attorney boarded. But Crowley had failed; for within twelve days of the warning, early one morning, Bronson had been found dead a block from his boarding house — murdered. Crowley had been unable to fix a clew upon a single one of the sixteen. He had confidently arrested them all at once, but after his stiffest "third degree" had to release them. Now, in desperation, he had rearrested Kanlan.

"Sure," said the desk sergeant, "Kanlan or some one's got to be guilty soon — whether or no. But if you ain't got the goods on Kanlan yet, maybe you'd want to talk to a lad that's waiting in front."

"Who is he? What does he know?"

"Trant's his name — from the university, he says. And he says he can pick our man."

"What is he — student?"

"He says some sort of perfesser."

"Professor!" Crowley half turned away.

"Not that kind, Ed." The desk sergeant bent one arm and tapped his biceps. "He's got plenty of this;

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and he's got hair, too "— the sergeant glanced at Crowley's red head —" as red as any, Cap."

" Send him in."

Crowley looked up quickly at Trant when he entered. He saw a young man with hair indeed as thick and red as his own; and with a figure, for his more medium height, quite as muscular as any police officer's. He saw that the young man's blue-gray eyes were not exact mates — that the right was quite noticeably more blue than the other, and under it was a small, pink scar which reddened conspicuously with the slightest flush of the face.

" Luther Trant, Captain Crowley," Trant introduced himself. " For two years I have been conducting experiments in the psychological laboratory of the university —"

" Psycho — Lord! Another clairvoyant!"

" If the man who killed Bronson is one of the sixteen men you suspect, and you will let me examine them, properly, I can pick the murderer at once."

" Examine them properly! Saints in Heaven, son! Say! that gang needed a stiff drink all round when we were through examining them; and never a word or a move gave a man away!"

" Those men — of course not!" Trant returned hotly. " For they can hold their tongues and their faces, and you looked at nothing else! But while you were examining them, if I, or any other trained psychologist, had had a galvanometer contact against the palms of their hands, or —"

" A palmist, Lord preserve us!" Crowley cried.

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"Say! don't ever think we needed you. We got our man yesterday — Kanlan — and we'll have a confession out of him by night. Sergeant!" he called, as the door opened to admit a man, "do you know what you let in — a palmist!" But it was not the sergeant who entered. "A-ah! Inspector Walker!"

"Morning, Crowley," Trant heard the quiet response behind him as he turned. A giant in the uniform of an inspector of police almost filled the doorway.

"Come with me, young man," he said. "Miss Allison was passing with me outside here and we heard some of what you've been saying. We'd like to hear more."

Trant looked up at the intelligent face and followed. A young woman was waiting outside the door. As the inspector pointed Trant toward a quiet room in the rear of the building, she followed. Inspector Walker fastened the door behind them. The girl had seated herself beside the table in the center, and as she turned to Trant she raised her veil above her brown, curling hair, and pinned it over her hat. He recognized her at once as the girl to whom Bronson had become engaged barely a week before he had been killed. On her had fallen all the horrors as well as the grief of Bronson's murder, and Trant did not wonder that the shadow of that event was visible in her sweet face. But he read there also another look — a look of apprehension and defiance.

"I was coming in with Inspector Walker to see Captain Crowley," the girl explained to Trant, "when I overheard you telling him that you think this — Kan-

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lan — couldn't have killed Mr. Bronson. I hope this is so."

Trant looked to Walker. "Miss Allison's father was Judge Allison, the truest man who ever sat on the bench in this city," Walker responded. "His daughter knows she must not try to prevent us from punishing a man who murders; but neither of us wants to believe Kanlan is the man — for good reasons. Now, what was that you were telling Crowley?"

"I was trying to tell Captain Crowley of a simple test which must prove Kanlan's guilt or innocence at once, and, if necessary, then find the guilty man. I have been conducting experiments to register and measure the effects and reactions of emotions. A person under the influence of fear or the stress of guilt must always betray signs. A hardened man can control all the signs for which the police ordinarily look; he can control his features, prevent his face flushing noticeably. But no man, however hardened or trained to control himself, can prevent many minute changes which by scientific means are measurable and betray him hopelessly. No man, however on his guard — to take the simplest test — can control the sweat glands in the palms of his hands, which always moisten under emotion."

"A scared man sweats; that's so," Walker assented.

"So psychologists have devised a simple way of registering the emotions shown through the glands in the palms of the hand," Trant continued, "by means of the galvanometer. I have one in the box I left with the desk sergeant. It is merely a device for meas-

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uring the varying strength of an ordinary electric current. The man tested holds in each hand a contact metal wired to the battery. When he grasps them a weak and imperceptible current passes through his body or — if his hands are very dry — perhaps no current at all. He is then examined and confronted with circumstances or objects connected with the crime. If he is innocent, the objects have no significance in his mind, and cause no emotion. His face betrays none; neither can his hands. But if he is guilty, though he still manages to control his face, he cannot prevent the moisture from flowing from the glands in his palms. Understand me; I do not mean an amount of moisture noticeable to the eye, but it is *enough to make an electric contact through the metals which he holds — enough to register very plainly upon the galvanometer, whose moving needle, traveling in the scale, betrays him pitilessly!*"

The inspector shook his head skeptically.

"I recognize that this is new to you," said Trant. "But I am telling you no theory. Using the galvanometer properly, we can this morning determine — scientifically and irrefutably — whether or not Kanlan killed Mr. Bronson, and later, if it is not he, which of the others is the assassin. May I try it?"

Miss Allison, more white than before, had risen, and laid her hand upon Trant's sleeve.

"Oh, try it, Mr. Trant!" she cried. "Try — try anything which can stop them from showing through this gambler, Kanlan, and Mrs. Hawtin that Mr. Bronson —" She broke off, and turned to the inspector. Walker was looking Trant over again. The psychol-

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"Oh, try it, Mr. Trant!" she cried. "Try — try anything"

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ogist faced the police officer eagerly. "I can't believe it's Kanlan," said Walker.

Until now Trant had been impressed chiefly by the huge bulk of the inspector, but as Walker spoke of the gambler whom Crowley, to save his own face, was trying to "railroad" to execution, Trant saw in the inspector something approaching sentimentality. For he was that common anomaly of the police department, an officer born and bred among the criminals he is set to watch.

"I'll take you to Kanlan," the inspector granted at last. "As things are going with him, you can't hurt, and maybe you can help. Everyone knows Kanlan would have put out Bronson; but not — I am certain — that way. I was born in the basement opposite Kanlan's. If Mr. Bronson had been attacked in broad day, with a detective on each side of him and all of them had been beaten up or killed, I'd have been the first to step over to Kanlan and say, 'Jake, you're wanted.' But Bronson was not caught that way. The man that killed him waited till the house was quiet, until Crowley's guards were asleep, and then somehow or other — how is a bigger mystery than the murder itself — got him out alone in the street at two o'clock in the morning, and struck him dead from a dark doorway.

"But I'm not taking you to Kanlan only to help save him from Crowley." Walker straightened suddenly as his eyes met the girl's. "It's to help Miss Allison, too. For the only clew Crowley or anyone else has to the man who murdered Bronson is in connection with the means of getting Bronson out of the

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house that way. Crowley has discovered that a Mrs. Hawtin, whom Kanlan can control through her gambling debts to him, is living a few doors beyond the place where Bronson's body was found. Crowley claims he can show Mrs. Hawtin was a friend of Bronson's, and —" The inspector hesitated, glancing at the girl.

"Captain Crowley's case," said Miss Allison, finishing, "is based on the charge that after Randolph — Mr. Bronson — had returned to his rooms from seeing me that evening, he went out again two hours later to answer a summons from this — this Mrs. Hawtin. So long as Captain Crowley can convict some one for this crime, they seem to care nothing how they slander and blacken the name of the man who is killed — as little as they care for those left who — love him."

"I see," said Trant. His eyes rested a moment upon the inspector, then again upon the girl. It surprised him to feel, as his eyes met hers that short moment, how suddenly this problem, which he had set himself to solve, had changed from a scientific examination and selection of a guilty man to the saving — though through the same science — of the reputation of a man no longer able to defend himself, and the honor of a woman devoted to that man's memory.

"But before I can examine Kanlan, or help you in any other way, Miss Allison," he explained gently, "I must be sure of my facts. It is not too much to ask you to go over them with me? No, Inspector Walker," he anticipated the big police officer's objection as Walker started to speak, "if I am to help Miss Allison, I cannot spare her now."

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"Please do not, Mr. Trant," the girl begged bravely.

"Thank you. Mr. Bronson, I believe, was still boarding on Superior Street at a bachelor's boarding house?"

"Yes," the girl replied. "It is kept by Mrs. Mitchell, a very respectable widow with a little boy. Randolph had boarded with her for six years. She had once been in great trouble and he was kind to her. He often spoke of how she gave him motherly care."

"Motherly?" Trant asked. "How old is she?"

"Twenty-seven or eight, I should think."

"Thank you. How long had you known Mr. Bronson, Miss Allison?"

"A little over two years."

"Yes; and intimately, how long?"

"Almost from the first."

"But you were not engaged to him until just the week before his death?"

"Yes; our engagement was not made known till just two days before his — death."

"Inspector Walker, how long before Mr. Bronson was killed was any of the 'ring' likely to put him out of their way?"

"For two weeks at least."

"It fits Crowley's case, of course, as well as — any other," said Trant, thoughtfully, "that two days after the announcement of his engagement was the first time anyone could actually catch him alone. But it is worth noting, inspector. Mr. Bronson called upon you that evening, Miss Allison? Everything was as usual between you?"

"Entirely, Mr. Trant. Of course we both recog-

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nized the constant danger he was in. I knew how and why he had to be guarded. His regular man, from the city detail, had been with him all day downtown; and Captain Crowley's man came with him to our house. Mr. Bronson went back to his boarding house with him precisely at half past ten."

"He reached the boarding house," Inspector Walker took up the account, "a little before eleven and went at once to his room. At twelve-thirty the last boarder came in. Crowley's man immediately chained the front door and made all fast. He went to the kitchen to get something to eat, he says, and may have fallen asleep, though he denies it. However, until after Bronson's body was found, we have made certain, there was no alarm inside or out."

"There is no doubt that Mr. Bronson was in the house when it was locked up?"

"None. The last boarder, as he went to his room, saw Bronson sitting at his table going over some papers. He was still dressed but said he was going to bed immediately. An hour and a half later — with no clew as to how he went out, with no discoverable reason for his going out except that given by Crowley — a patrolman found Bronson's body on the sidewalk a block east of his boarding house. He had been struck in the forehead and killed instantly by a man who must have waited för him in the vestibule of a little electro-plating shop."

"*Must* have, inspector?" Trant questioned.

"Yes; he chose this shop doorway because it was the darkest place in the block."

"At what time was that — exactly?" Trant inter-

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rupted. "The papers say the attack was made ten minutes after two o'clock — that the watch in his pocket was broken and stopped by his fall at exactly ten minutes after two. Is that correct?"

"Yes," the inspector replied. "The watch stopped at 2.10; but, in spite of that, the exact time of the murder must have been nearer two than ten minutes later, for Mr. Bronson's watch was fast."

"What?" Trant cried. "You say his watch was fast? I had not heard of that!"

"It was noticed two days ago," the inspector explained, "that the record shows that the patrolman who found Bronson's body rang up from the nearest patrol box at five minutes after two. If the attack was made just before, the watch must have been at least ten minutes fast, so we have the time, after all, only approximately."

"I see." Trant turned to the girl. "It is strange, Miss Allison, that a man like Mr. Bronson carried an incorrect watch."

"He did not. It was always right."

"Was it right that evening?"

"Why, yes. I remember that he compared his time with our clock before leaving."

Trant leaped up, excitedly. "What? What? But still," he calmed himself, "whether at two or ten minutes after two, the main question is the same. You, too, Miss Allison, can you give no possible reason why Mr. Bronson might have gone out?"

"I have tried a thousand times in these terrible two weeks to think of some reason, but I cannot. Our house is in a different direction than that he took.

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The car line to the city is another way. He knew no one in that direction — except Mrs. Hawtin."

"You knew that he knew her?"

"Of course, Mr. Trant! He had convicted her once for shoplifting, but, like everyone whom his place had made him punish, he watched her afterwards, and, when she tried to be honest, he helped her as he had helped a hundred like her — men and women — though his enemies tried to discredit and disgrace him by accusing him of untrue motives. Oh, Mr. Trant, you do not know — you cannot understand — what shadows and pitfalls surround a man in the position Mr. Bronson held. That is why, though for two years we had known and loved each other, he waited so long before asking me to marry him. I am thankful that he spoke in time to give me the right to defend him now before the world! They took his life; they shall not take his good name! No! No! They shall not! Help me, Mr. Trant, if you can — help me!"

"Inspector Walker!" said Trant tensely, "I understand that all of the sixteen men of the ring claimed alibis. Was Kanlan's one of the best or the worst?"

The inspector hesitated. "One of the worst," he replied, unwillingly. "I am sorry to say, the very worst."

To his surprise, Trant's eyes blazed triumphantly. "Miss Allison," said he, quietly and decidedly, "I had not expected till I had tested Kanlan to be able to assure you that he is not guilty. But now I think I am safe in promising it — provided you are sure that Mr. Bronson's watch was right when he left you that night. And, Inspector Walker, if you are also certain that

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the murderer waited in the vestibule of that electro-plating shop, it will be soon, indeed, that we can give Crowley a better — or rather a worse — man to send to trial in Kanlan's place."

Again Trant was conscious that the giant inspector was estimating not the incomprehensible statement he had made, but Trant himself. And again Walker seemed satisfied.

"When can I go with you to Harrison Street to prove this, inspector?"

"I shall see Miss Allison home, and meet you at Harrison Street in an hour."

"You will let me know the result of the test at once, Mr. Trant?"

"At once, Miss Allison." Trant took his hat and dashed from the station.

Harrison Street police station, Chicago, is headquarters of the first police division in the third city of the world. But neither London nor New York, the two larger cities, nor Paris, whose population of two million and a half Chicago is now passing, possesses a police division more complex, diverse, and puzzling in the cosmopolitan diversity of the persons arrested than this first of Chicago.

But from all the dozen diversities brought to the Harrison Street station daily, for two weeks none had challenged in interest the case against Jake Kanlan, the racing man and gambler, rearrested and held for the murder of Bronson. Trant appreciated this as, with his galvanometer and batteries in a suit case, he pushed his way among patrolmen, detectives, reporters,

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and the curious into the station. But at once he caught sight of the giant inspector, Walker.

"You're late." Walker led him into a side room. "I've been putting in the time telling Sweeny here," Walker introduced him to one of the two men within, "and Captain Crowley, how you mean to work your scheme. We've been waiting for you an hour!"

"I'm sorry," Trant apologized. "I have been going over the files of the papers just before and after the murder. And I must admit, Captain Crowley," Trant conceded, "that Kanlan had as strong a reason as any for wanting Bronson out of the way. But I found one remarkably significant thing. You have seen it?" He pulled a folded newspaper from his pocket and handed it to them. "I mean this paragraph at the bottom of the front page."

The captain read it eagerly, then leaned back and laughed. "Sure, I saw it," he derided. "It's that old Johanson fake, Sweeny — and he thought it was a clew!" The inspector took the paper.

"Threatener of Bronson Breaks Jail" was the heading, and under it was this short paragraph:

> James Johanson, the notorious Stockyards murderer, whom City Attorney Bronson sent up for life three years ago, escaped from the penitentiary early this morning and is thought by the officials to be making his way to this city. His trial will be remembered for the dramatic and spectacular denunciation of the Prosecuting Attorney by the convicted man upon his condemnation, and his threat to free himself and "do for" Bronson.

"You see the date of the paper?" said Trant. "It is the five o'clock edition of the evening before Bron-

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son was murdered! Johanson is reported escaped and at once Bronson is killed."

Crowley snickered patronizingly. "So you thought, before your palmistry, you could string us with that?" he jeered. "You might better have kept us waiting a little longer, young man, and you'd have found out that Johanson couldn't have done it, for he never escaped. It was a slip of a sneak thief, Johnson, that escaped, and he was on his way back to Joliet before night. The *News* got the name wrong, that's all, son."

"I was quite able to find that out, too, before coming here, Captain Crowley," Trant said quietly, "both that Johanson never escaped and that all evening papers except the *News* had the name correctly. Even the *News* corrected its account in its later edition. And I did not say that Johanson himself had anything to do with it. But either you must claim it a strange coincidence that, within eight hours after a report was current in the city that Johanson had broken out and was coming to murder Bronson, Bronson was actually murdered, or else you must admit the practical certainty that the man waiting to murder Bronson saw this account, and, not knowing it was incorrect, chose that night to kill the attorney, so as to lay it to Johanson." He picked up his suit case. "But come, let us test Kanlan."

"I haven't told Jake what you're going to do to him," Walker volunteered, as he led the three to the cells below. Sweeny, at Crowley's nod, had brought with him a satchel from the upper office.

Trant had trained himself to avoid definite expecta-

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tion; yet as he faced the man within he felt a momentary surprise. For at first he could see in Kanlan only a portly, quiet man, carelessly dressed in clothes a knowing tailor had cut. But as his eyes saw clearer he perceived that the portliness was not of flesh but of huge muscles, thinly coated with fat, that the plump, olive-skinned cheeks concealed a square, fighting jaw, and that his quiet was the loll of the successful, city-bred animal, bound by no laws but his own — but an animal powerful enough to prefer to fight fair. His heavy lids lifted to watch listlessly as Trant opened his suit case and took out the instruments for the test.

The galvanometer consisted merely of a little dial with a needle arranged to register on a scale an electric current down to hundredths of a milliampère. Trant attached two wires to the binding posts of the instrument, the circuit including a single cell battery. Each wire connected with a simple steel cylinder electrode. With one held in each hand, and the palms of the hands slightly dampened to perfect the contact, a light current passed through the body and swung the delicate needle over the scale to register the change in the current. Walker, and even Captain Crowley, saw more clearly now how, if it was a fact that moisture must come from the glands in the palm of the hand under emotion, the changes in the amount of the current passing through the person holding the electrodes must register upon the dial, and the subject be unable to conceal his emotional change when confronted with guilty objects. Kanlan, comprehending nothing, but assured

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by Walker's nod that the test was fair, put out his hands for the electrodes.

"You're wrong, friend," he said, quietly. "I don't know your game. But I ain't afraid, if it's on the square. Of course, I ain't sorry he's dead, but — I didn't do it!"

Trant glanced quickly at the dial. A current, so very slight that he knew it must be entirely imperceptible to Kanlan, registered upon the scale; and having registered it, the needle remained steady.

"Watch it!" he commanded; then checked himself. "No; wait." He felt in his pocket. Removing the newspaper which he had there, still folded at the account of the escape of the convict Johanson, he looked about for some place to put it, and then laid it upon Kanlan's knee. He took a little phial from his pocket, uncorked it as if to oil the mechanism about the galvanometer, but spilled it on the floor. The stifling, sickening odor of banana oil pervaded the cell; and as Kanlan smiled at his clumsiness, Trant took his watch from his pocket and — with the gamester still watching him curiously — slowly set it forward an hour. The needle of the galvanometer dial, in plain view of all, waited steady in its place. The young psychologist glanced at it satisfiedly.

"Well, what's the matter with the show?" Crowley jeered, impatiently. "Commence."

"Commence, Captain Crowley?" Trant raised himself triumphantly. "I have finished it." They stared at him as though distrusting his sanity. "You have seen for yourself the needle stand steady in place,"

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Trant continued. "Inspector Walker"—he turned to the friendly superior officer as he recognized the hopelessness of explaining to Crowley—"I understood, of course, when I asked you to bring me here that, even if my test should prove conclusive to me, yet I could scarcely hope to have the police yet accept it. I shall let Miss Allison know that Kanlan can have had no possible connection with the crime against Mr. Bronson; but I understand that I can clear Kanlan in the eyes of the police only by giving Captain Crowley," Trant bowed to that astounded officer, "the real murderer in his place."

"You say you have made the test, Trant?" Walker challenged, in stupefaction. But before Trant could answer, Crowley pushed him aside, roughly, and stooped to the satchel which Sweeny had brought.

"Of course he hasn't, Walker!" he answered, disgustedly. "He don't dare to, and is throwing a bluff. But I'll show him, with his own machine, too, if there's anything to it at all!" The captain stooped and, pulling from the opened valise a photograph of the spot where the murder was committed, he dashed it before Kanlan's face. Instantly, as both the captain and inspector turned to Trant's galvanometer needle, the little instrument showed a reaction. Up it crept, higher and higher, over the scale of the dial, as the sweat, surprised by the guilty picture from the gambler's hands, made the contact with the electrodes in his palms and the current flowed through his body.

"See! So it wasn't all a lie!" Crowley pointed triumphantly to the instrument. He stooped again to the satchel and put a photograph of the body of the

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murdered attorney before the suspect's eyes. The stolid Kanlan still held the muscles of his face firm and no flush betrayed him; but again, as Crowley, Sweeny, and Walker excitedly stared at the galvanometer needle it jumped and registered the stronger current. Crowley, with a victorious grunt, lifted the blood-stained coat of the murdered attorney and rubbed the sleeve against Kanlan's cheek. At this, and again and again with each presentation of objects connected with the crime, the merciless little galvanometer showed an ever-increasing reaction. Trant shrugged his shoulders.

"Jake, we got the goods on you now!" Crowley took the gambler's chin roughly between his tough fists and pushed back his head until the uneasy eyes met his own. "You'd best confess. You killed him!"

"I did not!" Kanlan choked.

"You're a liar! You killed him. I knew it, anyway. If you were a nigger you'd have been lynched before this!"

For the first time since Crowley took the test into his own hands, Trant, watching the galvanometer needle, started in surprise. He gazed suddenly at Kanlan's olive face, surmounted by his curly black hair, and smiled. The needle had jumped up higher again, completing Crowley's triumph. They filed out of the cell, and back to the little office.

"So I proved him on your own machine," Crowley rejoiced openly, "you four-flushing patent palmist!"

"You've proved, Captain Crowley," Trant returned quietly, "what I already knew, that in your previous

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examinations with Kanlan, and probably with the rest also, you have ruined the value of those things you have there for any proper test, by exhibiting them with threats again and again. That was why I had to make the test I did. I tell you once more that Kanlan is not the murderer of Bronson. And I am glad to be able to tell Miss Allison the same thing, as I promised her, at the very earliest moment." He picked up the telephone receiver and gave the Allisons' number. But suddenly the receiver was wrenched from his hand.

"Not yet," Inspector Walker commanded. "You'll tell Miss Allison nothing until we know more about this case."

"I don't ask you to release Kanlan yet, inspector," Trant said quietly. Crowley laughed offensively. "That is, not until I have proved for you the proper man in his place." He drew a paper from his pocket. "I cannot surely name him yet; but picking the most likely of them from what I read, I advise you to rearrest Caylis."

Crowley, throwing himself into a chair, burst into loud laughter. "He chose Caylis, Sweeny, did you hear that?" Crowley gasped. "That's in the same class as the rest of your performance, young fellow. Say, I'm sorry not to be able to oblige you," he went on, derisively, "but, you see, Caylis was the only one of the whole sixteen who *couldn't* have killed Bronson; for he was with me — talking to me — in the station, from half past one that morning, half an hour before the murder, till half past two, a half hour after!"

Trant sprang to his feet excitedly. "He was?"

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he cried. "Why didn't you tell me that before? Inspector Walker, I said a moment ago that I could not be sure which of the other fifteen killed Bronson; but now I say arrest Caylis — Caylis is the murderer!"

Captain Crowley and Sweeny stared at him again, as if believing him demented.

"I would try to explain, Inspector Walker," said Trant, "but believe me, I mean no offense when I say that I think it would be absolutely useless now. But —" he hesitated, as the inspector turned coldly away. "Inspector Walker, you said this morning you knew Kanlan from his birth. How much negro blood is there in him?"

"How did you know that?" cried Walker, staring at Trant in amazement. "He's always passed for white. He's one eighth nigger. But not three people know it. Who told you?"

"The galvanometer," Trant replied, quietly, "the same way it told me that he was innocent and Crowley's test useless. Now, will you rearrest Caylis at once and hold him till I can get the galvanometer on him?"

"I will, young fellow!" Walker promised, still staring at him. "If only for that nigger blood."

But Crowley had one more shot to make. "Say, you," he interrupted, "you threw a bluff about an hour back that the man who killed Bronson got the idea from the *News*. Sweeny, here, has been having these fellows shadowed since weeks before the murder. Sweeny knows what papers they read." He turned to the detective. "Sweeny, what paper did Kanlan always read?"

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"The *News*."

"And Caylis — what did he *never* read?"

"The *News*," the detective answered.

"Well, what have you for that now, son?" Crowley swung back.

"Only thanks, Captain Crowley, for that additional help. Inspector Walker, I am willing to rest my case against Caylis upon the fact that he was with Crowley at two o'clock. That alone is enough to hang him, and not as an accessory, but as the principal who himself struck the blow. But as there obviously was an accessory — and what Crowley has just said makes it more certain — perhaps I had better make as sure of that accessory, and also get a better answer for the real mystery, which is why and how Bronson left his house and went in that direction at that time in the morning, before I give Miss Allison the news for which she is waiting."

He took his hat and left them staring after him.

An hour later Trant jumped from a North Side car and hurried down Superior Street. Two blocks east of the car line he recognized from the familiar pictures in the newspapers the frescoed and once fashionable front of the Mitchell boarding house, where Bronson had lived. He was seeing it for the first time, but with barely more than a curious glance, he went on toward the place, a block east, where the attorney's body had been found. He noted carefully the character of the buildings on both sides of the street.

There was a grocery between two old mansions;

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beyond the next house a cigar store; then another boarding house, and the electroplater's shop before which the body was found. The little shop, smelling strongly of the oils and acids used in the electroplater's trade, was of one story. Trant noted the convenient vestibule flush with the walk, and the position of the street lamp which would throw its light on anyone approaching, while concealing with a dark shadow one waiting in the vestibule.

The physical arrangement was all as he had seen it a score of times in the newspapers; but as he stared about, the true key to the mystery of Bronson's death came to him magnified a hundred times in its intensity. Who waited there in that vestibule and struck the blow which slew Bronson, he had felt from the first would be at once answerable under scientific investigation. But the other question, how could the murderer wait so confidently there, knowing that Bronson would come out of his house alone at that time of the night and pass that way, was less simple of solution.

He glanced beyond the shop to the house where, Inspector Walker had told him, the questionable Mrs. Hawtin lived. Beyond that he saw a sign — that of a Dr. O'Connor. He swung about and returned to the house where Bronson had boarded.

"Tell Mrs. Mitchell that Mr. Trant, who is working with Inspector Walker, wishes to speak with her," he said to the maid, and he had a moment to estimate the parlor before the mistress of the house entered.

A white-faced, brown-eyed little boy of seven, with pallid cheeks and golden hair, had fled between the

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portières as Trant entered. The room was not at all typical of the boarding house. Its ornament and its arrangement showed the imprint of a decided, if not cultivated, feminine personality. The walls lacked the usual faded family portraits, and there was an entire absence of ancient knickknacks to give evidence of a past gentility. So he was not surprised when the mistress of this house entered, pretty after a spectacular fashion, impressing him with a quiet reserve of passion and power.

"I am always ready to see anyone who comes to help poor Mr. Bronson," she said.

The little boy, who had fled at Trant's approach, ran to her. But even as she sat with her arms about the child, Trant tried in vain to cloak her with that atmosphere of motherliness of which Miss Allison had spoken.

"I heard so, Mrs. Mitchell," said Trant. "But as you have had to tell the painful details so many times to the police and the reporters, I shall not ask you for them again."

"Do you mean," she looked up quickly, "that you bring me news instead of coming to ask it?"

"No, I want your help, but only in one particular. You must have known Mr. Bronson's habits and needs more intimately than any other person. Recently you may have thought of some possible reason for his going out in that manner and at that time, other than that held by the police."

"Oh, I wish I could, Mr. Trant!" the woman cried. "But I cannot!"

"I saw the sign of a doctor — Doctor O'Connor —

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just beyond the place where he was killed. Do you think it possible that he was going to Doctor O'Connor's, or have you never thought of that?"

"I thought of that, Mr. Trant," the woman returned, a little defiantly. "I tried to hope, at first, that that might be the reason for his going out. But, as I had to tell the detectives who asked me of that some time ago, I know that Mr. Bronson so intensely disliked Doctor O'Connor that he could not have been going to him, no matter how urgent the need. Besides, Doctor Carmeachal, who always attended him, lives around this corner, the other way." She indicated the direction of the car line.

"I see," Trant acknowledged, thoughtfully. "Yet, if Mr. Bronson disliked Doctor O'Connor, he must have met him. Was it here?" He leaned over and took the hand of the pallid little boy. "Perhaps Doctor O'Connor comes to see your son?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Trant!" the child put in eagerly. "Doctor O'Connor always comes to see me. I like Doctor O'Connor."

"Still, I agree with you, Mrs. Mitchell," Trant raised his eyes calmly to meet the woman's suddenly agitated ones, "that Mr. Bronson could scarcely have been going to consult Doctor O'Connor for himself in such a fashion and at — half past one."

"At two, Mr. Trant," the woman corrected.

"Ten minutes after, to be exact, if you mean when the watch was stopped!" The woman arose suddenly, with a motion sinuous as that of a startled tiger. It was as though in the quiet parlor a note of passion and alarm had been struck. Trant bowed quietly as

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she rang for the maid to show him out. But when he was alone with the maid in the hall his eyes flashed suddenly.

"Tell me," he demanded, swiftly, "the night Mr. Bronson was killed, was there anything the matter with the telephone?"

The girl hesitated and stared at him queerly. "Why, yes, sir," she said. "A man had to come next day to fix it."

"The break was on the inside — I mean, the man worked in the house?"

"Why — yes, sir." The maid had opened the door. Trant stopped with a smothered exclamation and picked up a newspaper just delivered. He spread it open and saw that it was the five o'clock edition of the *News*.

"This is Mrs. Mitchell's paper," he demanded, "the one she always reads?"

"Why, yes, sir," the girl answered again.

Trant paused to consider. "Tell Mrs. Mitchell everything I asked you," he decided finally, and hurried down the steps and back to the police station.

In the room where the desk sergeant told him Inspector Walker was awaiting him Trant found both Crowley and Sweeny with the big officer, and a fourth man, a stranger to him. The stranger was slight and dark. He had a weak, vain face, but one of startling beauty, with great, lazy brown eyes, filled with child-like innocence. He twisted his mustache and measured Trant curiously, as the blunt, red-headed young man entered.

"So this is the fellow," he asked Crowley, deri-

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sively, "that made you think I sent a double to talk with you while I went out to do Bronson?"

"Will you have Caylis taken out of the room for a few moments, inspector?" Trant requested, in reply. The inspector motioned to Sweeny, who led out the prisoner.

"Where's your accessory?" asked Crowley, grinning.

"I'll tell you presently," Trant put him off. "I want to test Caylis without his knowing anything unusual is being tried. Captain Crowley, can we have the brass-knobbed chair from your office?"

"What for?" Crowley demanded.

"I will show you when I have it."

At Walker's nod Crowley brought in the chair. It was a deep, high-backed, wooden chair, with high arms; and on each arm was a brass knob, so placed that a person sitting in the chair would almost inevitably place his palms over them. As the captain brought in the chair, Trant opened his suit case and took out his galvanometer, batteries and wires. Cutting off the cylinder electrodes which Kanlan had held in his hands during the test of that morning, Trant ran the wires under each arm of the chair and made a contact with each brass knob. He connected them with the battery, which he hid under the chair, and with the galvanometer dial, which he placed behind the chair upon a table, concealing it behind his hat.

He seated himself in the chair and grasped the knobs in his palms. With his hands dry no perceptible current passed through his body from knob to knob to register upon the dial.

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"Scare me!" he suddenly commanded the inspector.

"What?" Walker bent his brows.

"Scare me, and watch the needle."

Walker, half comprehending, fumbled in the drawer of a desk, straightened suddenly, a cocked revolver in his hand, and snapped it at Trant's head. At once the needle of the galvanometer leaped across the scale, and Crowley and Walker both stared.

"Thank you, inspector," said Trant as he rose from the chair. "It works very well; you see, my palms couldn't help sweating when you snapped the gun at me before I appreciated that it wasn't loaded. Now, we'll test Caylis as we did Kanlan."

The inspector went to the door, took Caylis from Sweeny, and led him to the chair.

"Sit down," he said. "Mr. Trant wants to talk to you."

The childlike, brown eyes, covertly alert and watchful, followed Trant, and Caylis nervously grasped the two inviting knobs on the arms of his chair. Walker and Crowley, standing where they could watch both Trant and the galvanometer dial, saw that the needle stood where it had stood for Trant before Walker put the revolver to his head.

Trant quietly took from his pocket the newspaper containing the false account of Johanson's escape, and, looking about as though for a place to put it — as he had done in his trial of Kanlan — laid it, with the Johanson paragraph uppermost, in Caylis's lap. Walker smothered an exclamation; Crowley looked up startled. The needle — which had remained so

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still when the paper was laid upon Kanlan's knee — had jumped across the scale.

Caylis gave no sign; his hands still grasped the brass knobs nervously; his face was quiet and calm. Trant took from his pocket the little phial refilled with banana oil and emptied its contents on the floor as he had done that morning. Again Walker and Crowley, with startled eyes, watched the needle move. Trant took his watch from his pocket, and, as in the morning, before Caylis's face he set it an hour ahead.

"What are all these tricks?" said Caylis, contemptuously.

But Walker and Crowley, with flushed faces bent above the moving needle, paid no heed. Trant posted himself between Caylis and the door.

"You see now," Trant cried, triumphantly, to the police officers, "the difference between showing the false account of the escape of Johanson to an innocent man, and showing it to the man whom it sent out to do murder. You see the difference between loosing the stench of banana oil before a man who associates nothing with it, and before the criminal who waited in the vestibule of the electro-plater's shop and can never in his life smell banana oil again without its bringing upon him the fear of the murderer. You see the difference, too, Captain Crowley, between setting a watch forward in front of a man to whom it can suggest nothing criminal, and setting it an hour ahead in front of the man who, after he had murdered Bronson — not at two, but a little after one — stooped to the body and set the watch at least an hour fast, then rushed in to talk coolly with you, in order to establish an in-

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contestable alibi for the time he had so fixed for the murder!"

Police Captain Crowley, livid with the first flash of fear that the murderer had made of him a tool, swung threateningly toward Caylis. For a moment, as though stiffened by the strain of following the accusation, Caylis had sat apparently paralyzed. Now in the sudden change from his absolute security to complete despair, he faced Crowley, white as paper; then, as his heart began to pound again, his skin turned to purple. His handsome, vain face changed to the face of a demon; his childlike eyes flared; he sprang toward Trant. But when he had drawn the two police officers together to stop his rush, he turned and leaped for a window. Before he could dash it open, Walker's powerful hand clutched him back.

"This, I think," Trant gasped, and controlled himself, as he surveyed the now weak and nerveless prisoner, "should convince even Captain Crowley. But it was not needed, Caylis. From the time Mrs. Mitchell showed you the report of Johanson's escape in the *News* and you thought you could kill Bronson safely, and you got her to send him out to you, until you had struck him down, set his watch forward and rushed to Crowley for your alibi, my case was complete."

"She — she"— Caylis's hands clenched — "peached on me — but you — got her?" he shouted vengefully.

Walker and Crowley turned to Trant in amazement.

"Mrs. Mitchell?" they demanded.

"Yes — your wife, Caylis?" Trant pressed.

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"Yes, my wife, and *mine*," the man hissed defiantly, "eight years ago back in St. Louis till, till this cursed Bronson broke up the gang and sent me over the road for three years, and she got to thinking he must be stuck on her and might marry her, because he helped her, until — until she found out!"

"Ah; I thought she had been your wife when I saw you, after the boy; but, of course —" Trant checked himself as he heard a knock on the door.

"Miss Allison is in her carriage outside sir," the officer who had knocked saluted Inspector Walker. "She has come to see you, sir. She says you sent no word." Walker looked from the cringing Caylis to Trant.

"We do not need Caylis any longer, inspector," said Trant. "I can tell Miss Allison all the facts now, if you wish to have her hear them."

The door, which shut behind Crowley and his prisoner, reopened almost immediately to admit the inspector, and Miss Allison. With her fair, sweet face flushed with the hope which had taken the place of the white fear and defiance of the morning, Trant barely knew her.

"The inspector tells me, Mr. Trant," she stretched out both her hands to him, "that you have good news for me — that Kanlan was not guilty — and so Randolph was not going out as — as they said he was when they killed him."

"No; he was not!" Trant returned, triumphantly. "He was going instead on an errand of mercy, Miss Allison, to summon a doctor for a little child whom he had been told was suddenly and dangerously ill.

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The telephone in the house had been broken, so at the sudden summons he dashed out, without remembering his danger. I am glad to be able to tell you of that fine, brave thing when I must tell you, also, the terrible truth that the woman whom he had helped and protected was the one who, in a fit of jealousy, when she found he had merely meant to be kind to her, sent him out to his death."

"Mrs. Mitchell?" the girl cried in horror. "Oh, not Mrs. Mitchell!"

"Yes, Mrs. Mitchell, for whom he had done so much and whose past he protected, in the noblest way, even from you. But as she was the wife of the criminal we have just caught, I am glad to believe this man played upon her old passions, so that for a while he held his old sway over her and she did his bidding without counting the consequences.

"I told you this morning, Inspector Walker, that I could not explain to you my conclusions in the test of Kanlan. But I owe you now a full explanation. You will recall that I commented upon the fact that the crime which was puzzling you was committed within so short a time after the knowledge of Mr. Bronson's engagement became known, that I divined a possible connection. But that, at best, was only indirect. The first direct thing which struck me was the circumstance that the man waited in the vestibule of the electro-plater's shop. I was certain that the very pungent fruit-ether odor of banana oil — the thinning material used by electro-platers in preparing their lacquers — must be forever intimately connected with

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the crime in the mind of the man who waited in that vestibule. To no one else could that odor connect itself with crime. So I knew that if I could test all sixteen men it would be child's play to pick the murderer. But such a test was cumbersome. And the next circumstance you gave me made it unnecessary. I mean the fact of the 'fast watch' which, Miss Allison was able to tell me, could not have been fast at all. I saw that the watch must therefore have been set forward at least ten minutes, probably much longer. Who, between half past ten and two, could have done this, and for what reason? The one convincing possibility was that the assassin had set it forward, trusting it would not be found till morning, and his only object could have been to establish for himself an alibi — for two o'clock.

"I surprised you, therefore, by assuring you, even before I saw Kanlan, that he was innocent, because Kanlan had no alibi whatever. I proved his innocence to my own satisfaction by exhibiting before him without exciting any emotional reaction at all, the report in the *News* which, I felt fairly sure, must have had something to do with the crime; by loosing the smell of banana oil, and setting forward a watch in his presence. The objects which Crowley used had been so thoroughly connected with the crime in Kanlan's mind that — though he is innocent — they caused reactions to which I paid no attention, except the one reaction which, at Crowley's threat, told me of Kanlan's negro blood. As for the rest, they merely scared Kanlan as your pistol scared me, and as they,

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would have scared any innocent man under the same conditions. My own tests could cause reactions only in the guilty man.

"That man, I think you understand now," Trant continued rapidly, "I was practically sure of when Crowley told me of Caylis's alibi. You have just seen the effect upon him of the same tests I tried on Kanlan, and the conclusive evidence the galvanometer gave. The fact that Caylis himself never read the *News* only contributed to my certainty that another person was concerned, a person who could have either decoyed or sent Mr. Bronson out. So I went to the place, found the doctor's sign just beyond, discovered that that doctor treated, not Bronson, but the little Mitchell boy, that the telephone had been broken inside the house that evening to furnish an excuse for sending Bronson out, and that Mrs. Mitchell reads the *News*."

"The Mitchell woman sent him out, of course," Walker checked him almost irritably. "Six blocks away — Crowley ought to have her by now."

Miss Allison gathered herself together and arose. She clutched the inspector's sleeve. "Inspector Walker, must you —" she faltered.

"None of us is called upon to say how she shall be punished, Miss Allison," Trant said, compassionately. "We must trust all to the twelve men who shall try these two." But to her eyes, searching his, Trant seemed to be awaiting something. Suddenly the telephone rang. Walker took up the receiver. "It's Crowley," he cried. "He says Mrs. Mitchell skipped

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—cleared. You could have taken her," he accused Trant, "but you let her go!"

Trant stood watching the face of Miss Allison, unmoved. The desk sergeant burst in upon them.

"Mrs. Mitchell's outside, inspector! She said she's come to give herself up!"

"You counted upon that, I suppose," Walker turned again upon Trant. "But don't do it again," he warned, "for the sake of what's before you!"

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X III

THE RED DRESS

"Another morning; and nothing! Three days gone and no word, no sign from her; or any mark of weakening!"

The powerful man at the window clenched his hands. Then he swung about to face his confidential secretary and stared at her uncertainly. It was the tenth time that morning, and the fiftieth time in the three days just gone, that Walter Eldredge, the young president of the great Chicago drygoods house of Eldredge and Company, had paused, incapable of continuing business.

"Never mind that letter, Miss Webster," he commanded. "But tell me again — are you sure that no one has come to see me, and there has been no message, about my wife — I mean about Edward — about Edward?"

"No; no one, I am sure, Mr. Eldredge!"

"Send Mr. Murray to me!" he said.

"Raymond, something more effective must be done!" he cried, as his brother-in-law appeared in the doorway. "It is impossible for matters to remain longer in this condition!" His face grew gray. "I am going to put it into the hands of the police!"

"The police!" cried Murray. "After the way the papers treated you and Isabel when you married?

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You and Isabel in the papers again, and the police making it a public scandal! Surely there's still some private way! Why not this fellow Trant. You must have followed in the papers the way he got immediate action in the Bronson murder mystery, after the police force was at fault for two weeks. He's our man for this sort of thing, Walter! Where can we get his address?"

"Try the University Club," said Eldredge.

Murray lifted the desk phone. "He's a member; he's there. What shall I tell him," Eldredge himself took up the conversation.

"Yes! Mr. Trant? Mr. Trant, this is Walter Eldredge, of Eldredge and Company. Yes; there is a private matter — something has happened in my family; I cannot tell you over the phone. If you could come to me here. . . . Yes! It is criminal." His voice broke. "For God's sake come and help me!"

Ten minutes later a boy showed Trant into the young president's private room. If the psychologist had never seen Walter Eldredge's portrait in the papers he could have seen at a glance that he was a man trained to concentrate his attention on large matters; and he as quickly recognized that the pale, high-bred, but weak features of Eldredge's companion belonged to a dependent, subordinate to the other.

Eldredge had sprung nervously to his feet and Trant was conscious that he was estimating him with the acuteness of one accustomed to judge another quickly and to act upon his judgment. Yet it was Murray who spoke first.

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"Mr. Eldredge wished to apply to the police this morning, Mr. Trant," he explained, patronizingly, "in a matter of the most delicate nature; but I — I am Raymond Murray, Mr. Eldredge's brother-in-law — persuaded him to send for you. I did this, trusting quite as much to your delicacy in guarding Mr. Eldredge from public scandal as to your ability to help us directly. We understand that you are not a regular private detective."

"I am a psychologist, Mr. Eldredge," Trant replied to the older man, stifling his irritation at Murray's manner. "I have merely made some practical applications of simple psychological experiments, which should have been put into police procedure years ago. Whether I am able to assist you or not, you may be sure that I will keep your confidence."

"Then this is the case, Trant." Murray came to the point quickly. "My nephew, Edward Eldredge, Walter's older son, was kidnaped three days ago."

"What?" Trant turned from one to the other in evident astonishment.

"Since the Whitman case in Ohio," continued Murray, "and the Bradley kidnaping in St. Louis last week — where they got the description of the woman but have caught no one yet — the papers predicted an epidemic of child stealing. And it has begun in Chicago with the stealing of Walter's son!"

"That didn't surprise me — that the boy may be missing," Trant rejoined. "But it surprised me, Mr. Eldredge, that no one has heard of it! Why did you not at once give it the greatest publicity? Why have

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you not called in the police? What made you wait three days before calling in even me?"

"Because the family," Murray replied, "have known from the first that it was Mrs. Eldredge who had the child abducted."

"*Mrs. Eldredge?*" Trant cried incredulously. "Your wife, sir?" he appealed to the older man.

"Yes, Mr. Trant," Eldredge answered, miserably.

"Then why have you sent for me at all?"

"Because in three days we have gained nothing from her," the brother-in-law replied before Eldredge could answer. "And, from the accounts of your ability, we thought you could, in some way, learn from her where the child is concealed."

The young president of Eldredge and Company was twisting under the torture of these preliminaries. But Trant turned curiously to Murray. "Mrs. Eldredge is not your sister?"

"No; not the present Mrs. Eldredge. My sister, Walter's first wife, died six years ago, when Edward was born. She gave her life for the boy whom the second Mrs. Eldredge —" he remembered himself as Eldredge moved quickly.

"Isabel, my second wife, Mr. Trant," Eldredge burst out in the bitterness of having to explain to a stranger his most intimate emotion, "as I thought all the world knew, was my private secretary — my stenographer — in this office. We were married a little over two years ago. If you remember the way the papers treated her then, you will understand what it would mean if this matter became public! The

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boy —" he hesitated. "I suppose I must make the circumstances plain to you. Seven years ago I married Edith Murray, Raymond's sister. A year later she died. About the same time my father died, and I had to take up the business. Mrs. Murray, who was in the house at the time of Edith's death, was good enough to stay and take charge of my child and my household."

"And Mr. Murray? He stayed too?"

"Raymond was in college. Afterwards he came to my house, naturally. Two years ago I married my second wife. At Mrs. Eldredge's wish, as much as my own, the Murrays remained with us. My wife appreciated even better than I that her training had scarcely fitted her to take up at once her social duties: the newspapers had prejudiced society against her, so Mrs. Murray remained to introduce her socially."

"I see — for over two years. But meanwhile Mrs. Eldredge had taken charge of the child?"

"My wife was — not at ease with the boy." Eldredge winced at the direct question. "Edward liked her, but — I found her a hundred times crying over her incompetence with children, and she was contented to let Mrs. Murray continue to look after him. But after her own son was born —"

"Ah!" said Trant, expectantly.

"I shall conceal nothing. After her own son was born, I am obliged to admit that Mrs. Eldredge's attitude changed. She became insistent to have charge of Edward, and his grandmother, Mrs. Murray, still hesitated to trust Isabel. But finally I agreed to give my wife charge of everything and complete control

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over Edward. If all went well, Mrs. Murray was to reopen her old home and leave us, when — it was Tuesday afternoon, three days ago, Mr. Trant — my wife took Edward, with her maid, out in the motor. It was the boy's sixth birthday. It was almost the first time in his life he had left the house to go any distance without his grandmother. My wife did not bring him back.

"Why she never brought him back — what happened to the boy, Mr. Trant," Eldredge stooped to a private drawer for papers, "I wish you to determine for yourself from the evidence here. As soon as I saw how personal a matter it was, I had my secretary, Miss Webster, take down the evidence of the four people who saw the child taken away: my chauffeur, Mrs. Eldredge's maid, Miss Hendricks and Mrs. Eldredge. The chauffeur, Morris, has been in my employ for five years. I am confident that he is truthful. Moreover, he distinctly prefers Mrs. Eldredge over everyone else. The maid, Lucy Carew, has been also singularly devoted to my wife. She, too, is truthful.

"The testimony of the third person — Miss Hendricks — is far the most damaging against my wife. Miss Hendricks makes a direct and inevasive charge; it is practical proof. For I must tell you truthfully, Mr. Trant, that Miss Hendricks is far the best educated and capable witness of all. She saw the whole affair much nearer than any of the others. She is a person of irreproachable character, a rich old maid, living with her married sister on the street corner where the kidnaping occurred. Moreover, her testimony, though more elaborate, is substantiated in every

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important particular by both Morris and Lucy Carew."

Eldredge handed over the first pages.

"Against these, Mr. Trant, is this statement of — my wife's. My home faces the park, and is the second house from the street corner. There is, however, no driveway entrance into the park at this intersecting street. There are entrances a long block and a half away in one direction and more than two blocks in the other. But the winding drive inside the park approaches the front of the house within four hundred feet, and is separated from it by the park greensward."

"I understand." Trant took the pages of evidence eagerly. Eldredge went to the window and stood knotting the curtain cord in suspense. But Murray crossed his legs, and, lighting a cigarette, watched Trant attentively. Trant read the testimony of the chauffeur, which was dated by Eldredge as taken Tuesday afternoon at five o'clock. It read thus:

Mrs. Eldredge herself called to me about one o'clock to have the motor ready at half-past two. Mrs. Eldredge and her maid and Master Edward came down and got in. We went through the park, then down the Lake Shore Drive almost to the river and turned back. Mrs. Eldredge told me to return more slowly; we were almost forty minutes returning where we had been less than twenty coming down. Reaching the park, she wanted to go slower yet. She was very nervous and undecided. She stopped the machine three or four times while she pointed out things to Master Edward. She kept me winding in and out the different roads. Suddenly she asked me the time, and I told her it was just four; and she told me to go home at once. But on the curved park road in front of the house and about

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four hundred feet away from it, I "killed" my engine. I was some minutes starting it. Mrs. Eldredge kept asking how soon we could go on; but I could not tell her. After she had asked me three or four times, she opened the door and let Master Edward down. I thought he was coming around to watch me — a number of other boys had been standing about me just before. But she sent him across the park lawn toward the house. I was busy with my engine. Half a minute later the maid screamed. She jumped down and grabbed me. A woman was making off with Master Edward, running with him up the cross street toward the car line. Master Edward was crying and fighting. Just then my engines started. The maid and I jumped into the machine and went around by the park driveway as fast as we could to the place where the woman had picked up Master Edward. This did not take more than two minutes, but the woman and Master Edward had disappeared. Mrs. Eldredge pointed out a boy to me who was running up the street, but when we got to him it was not Master Edward. We went all over the neighborhood at high speed, but we did not find him. I think we might have found him if Mrs. Eldredge had not first sent us after the other boy. I did not see the woman who carried off Master Edward very plainly. She was small.

Eldredge swung about and fixed on the young psychologist a look of anxious inquiry. But without comment, Trant picked up the testimony of the maid. It read:

Mrs. Eldredge told me after luncheon that we were going out in the automobile with Master Edward. Master Edward did not want to go, because it was his birthday and he had received presents from his grandmother with which he wanted to play. Mrs. Eldredge — who was excited — made him come. We went through the park and down the Lake Shore Drive and came back again. It seemed to me that

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Mrs. Eldredge was getting more excited, but I thought that it was because this was the first time she had been out with Master Edward. But when we had got back almost to the house the automobile broke down, and she became more excited still. Finally she said to Master Edward that he would better get out and run home, and she helped him out of the car and he started. We could see him all the way, and could see right up to the front steps of the house. But before he got there a woman came running around the corner and started to run away with him. He screamed, and I screamed, too, and took hold of Mrs. Eldredge's arm and pointed. But Mrs. Eldredge just sat still and watched. Then I jumped up, and Mrs. Eldredge, who was shaking all over, put out her hand. But I got past her and jumped out of the automobile. I screamed again, and grabbed the chauffeur, and pointed. Just then the engine started. We both got back into the automobile and went around by the driveway in the park. All this happened as fast as you can think, but we did not see either Master Edward or the woman. Mrs. Eldredge did not cry or take on at all. I am sure she did not scream when the woman picked up Master Edward, but she kept on being very much excited. I saw the woman who carried Master Edward off very plainly. She was a small blond, and wore a hat with violet-colored flowers in it and a violet-colored tailor-made dress. She looked like a lady.

Trant laid the maid's testimony aside and looked up quickly.

"There is one extremely important thing, Mr. Eldredge," he said. "Were the witnesses examined separately? — that is, none of them heard the testimony given by any other?"

"None of them, Mr. Trant."

Then Trant picked up the testimony of Miss Hendricks, which read as follows:

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It so happened that I was looking out of the library window — though I do not often look out at the window for fear people will think I am watching them — when I saw the automobile containing Mrs. Eldredge, Edward, the maid, and the chauffeur stop at the edge of the park driveway opposite the Eldredge home. The chauffeur descended and began doing something to the front of the car. But Mrs. Eldredge looked eagerly around in all directions, and finally toward the street corner on which our house stands; and almost immediately I noticed a woman hurrying down the cross street toward the corner. She had evidently just descended from a street car, for she came from the direction of the car line; *and her haste made me understand at once that she was late for some appointment.* As soon as Mrs. Eldredge caught sight of the woman she lifted Edward from the automobile to the ground, and pushed him in the woman's direction. She sent him across the grass toward her. At first, however, the woman did not catch sight of Edward. Then she saw the automobile, raised her hand and made a signal. *The signal was returned by Mrs. Eldredge,* who pointed to the child. Immediately the woman ran forward, pulled Edward along in spite of his struggles, and ran toward the car line. It all happened very quickly. I am confident the kidnaping was prearranged between Mrs. Eldredge and the woman. I saw the woman plainly. She was small and dark. Her face was marked by smallpox and she looked like an Italian She wore a flat hat with white feathers, a gray coat, and a black skirt.

"You say you can have no doubt of Miss Hendricks' veracity?" asked Trant.

Eldredge shook his head, miserably. "I have known Miss Hendricks for a number of years, and I should as soon accuse myself of falsehood. She came running over to the house as soon as this had happened, and it was from her account that I first learned,

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through Mrs. Murray, that something had occurred."

Trant's glance fell to the remaining sheets in his hand, the testimony of Mrs. Eldredge; and the psychologist's slightly mismated eyes — blue and gray — flashed suddenly as he read the following:

I had gone with Edward for a ride in the park to celebrate his birthday. It was the first time we had been out together. We stopped to look at the flowers and the animals. My husband had not told me that he expected to be home from the store early, but Edward reminded me that on his birthday his father always came home in the middle of the afternoon and brought him presents. The time passed quickly, and I was surprised when I learned that it was already four o'clock. I was greatly troubled to think that Edward's father might be awaiting him, and we hurried back as rapidly as possible. We had almost reached the house when the engine of the automobile stopped. It took a very long time to fix it, and Edward was all the time growing more excited and impatient to see his father. It was only a short distance across the park to the house, which we could see plainly. Finally I lifted Edward out of the machine and told him to run across the grass to the house. He did so, but he went very slowly. I motioned to him to hurry. Then suddenly I saw the woman coming toward Edward, and the minute I saw her I was frightened. She came toward him slowly, stopped, and talked with him for quite a long time. She spoke loudly — I could hear her voice but I could not make out what she said. Then she took his hand — it must have been ten minutes after she had first spoken to him. He struggled with her, but she pulled him after her. She went rather slowly. But it took a very long time, perhaps fifteen minutes, for the motor to go around by the drive; and when we got to the spot Edward and the woman had disappeared. We looked everywhere, but could not find any trace of them, and she would have had time to go a considerable distance —

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Trant looked up suddenly at Eldredge who had left his position by the window and over Trant's shoulder was reading the testimony. His face was gray.

"I asked Mrs. Eldredge," the husband said, pitifully, "why, if she suspected the woman from the first, and so much time elapsed, she did not try to prevent the kidnaping, and — she would not answer me!"

Trant nodded, and read the final paragraph of Mrs. Eldredge's testimony:

> **The woman who took Edward was unusually large — a very big woman, not stout, but tall and big. She was very dark, with black hair, and she wore a red dress and a hat with red flowers in it.**

The psychologist laid down the papers and looked from one to the other of his companions reflectively. "What had happened that afternoon before Mrs. Eldredge and the boy went motoring?" he asked abruptly.

"Nothing out of the ordinary, Mr. Trant," said Eldredge. "Why do you ask that?"

Trant's fingertip followed on the table the last words of the evidence. "And what woman does Mrs. Eldredge know that answers that description — 'unusually large, not stout, but tall and big, very dark, with black hair?'"

"No one," said Eldredge.

"No one except," young Murray laughed frankly, "my mother. Trant," he said, contemptuously, "don't start any false leads of that sort! My mother was with Walter at the time the kidnaping took place!"

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"Mrs. Murray was with me," Eldredge assented, "from four till five o'clock that afternoon. She has nothing to do with the matter. But, Trant, if you see in this mass of accusation one ray of hope that Mrs. Eldredge is not guilty, for God's sake give it to me, for I need it!"

The psychologist ran his fingers through his red hair and arose, strongly affected by the appeal of the white-lipped man who faced him. "I can give you more than a ray of hope, Mr. Eldredge," he said. "I am almost certain that Mrs. Eldredge not only did not cause your son's disappearance, but that she knows absolutely nothing about the matter. And I am nearly, though not quite, so sure that this is not a case of kidnaping at all!"

"What, Trant? Man, you can't tell me that from that evidence?"

"I do, Mr. Eldredge!" Trant returned a little defiantly. "Just from this evidence!"

"But, Trant," the husband cried, trying to grasp the hope this stranger gave him against all his better reason, "if you can think that, why did she describe everything — the time, the circumstance, the size and appearance of the woman and even the color of her dress — so differently from all the rest? Why did she *lie* when she told me this, Mr. Trant?"

"I do not think she lied, Mr. Eldredge."

"Then the rest lied and it *is* a conspiracy of the witnesses against her?"

"No; no one lied, I think. And there was no conspiracy. That is my inference from the testimony

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and the one other fact we have — that there had been no demand for ransom."

Eldredge stared at him almost wildly. His brother-in-law moved up beside him.

"Then where is my son, and who has taken him?"

"I cannot say yet," Trant answered. There was a knock on the door.

"You asked to have everything personal brought to you at once, Mr. Eldredge," said Miss Webster, holding out a note. "This just came in the ten o'clock delivery." Eldredge snatched it from her — a soiled, creased envelope bearing a postmark of the Lake View substation just west of his home. It was addressed in a scrawling, illiterate hand, and conspicuously marked personal. He tore it open, caught the import of it almost at a glance; then with a smothered cry threw it on the desk in front of Murray, who read it aloud.

Yure son E. is safe, and we have him where he is not in dangir. Your wife has not payed us the money she promised us for taking him away, and we do not consider we are bound any longer by our bargain with her. If you will put the money she promised (one hund. dollars) on the seat behind Lincoln's statue in the Park tonight at ten thurty (be exact) you will get yure son E. back. Look out for trouble to the boy if you notify the police.

N. B.—If you try to make any investigation about this case our above promiss will not be kept.

"Well, Trant, what do you say now?" asked Murray.

"That it was the only thing needed," Trant an-

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swered, triumphantly, "to complete my case. Now, I am sure I need only go to your house to make a short examination of Mrs. Eldredge and the case against her!"

He swung about suddenly at a stifled exclamation behind him, and found himself looking into the white face of the private secretary; but she turned at once and left the office. Trant swung back to Murray. "No, thank you," he said, refusing the proffer of the paper. "I read from the marks made upon minds by a crime, not from scrawls and thumbprints upon paper. And my means of reading those marks are fortunately in my possession this morning. No, I do not mean that I have other evidence upon this case than that you have just given me, Mr. Eldredge," Trant explained. "I refer to my psychological apparatus which, the express company notified me, arrived from New York this morning. If you will let me have my appliance delivered direct to your house it will save much time."

"I will order it myself!" Eldredge took up the telephone and quickly arranged the delivery.

"Thank you," Trant acknowledged. "And if you will also see that I have a photograph, a souvenir postal, or some sort of a picture of every possible locality within a few blocks of your house you will probably help in my examination greatly. Also," he checked himself and stood thoughtfully a moment, "will you have these words"—he wrote "Armenia, invitation, inviolate, sedate" and "pioseer" upon a paper—"carefully lettered for me and brought to your house?"

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"What?" Eldredge stared at the list in astonishment. He looked up at Trant's direct, intelligent features and checked himself. "Is there not some mistake in that last word, Mr. Trant? 'Pioseer' is not a word at all."

"I don't wish it to be," Trant replied. His glance fell suddenly on a gaudily lithographed card — an advertisement showing the interior of a room. He took it from the desk.

"This will be very helpful, Mr. Eldredge," he said. "If you will have this brought with the other cards I think that will be all. At three o'clock, then, at your house?"

He left them, looking at each other in perplexity. He stopped a moment at a newspaper office, and then returned to the University Club thoughtfully. By the authority of all precedent procedure of the world, he recognized how hopelessly the case stood against the stepmother of the missing child. But by the authority of the new science — the new knowledge of humanity — which he was laboring to establish, he felt certain he could save her.

Yet he fully appreciated that he could accomplish nothing until his experimental instruments were delivered. He must be content to wait until he could test his belief in Mrs. Eldredge's innocence for himself, and at the same time convince Eldredge conclusively. So he played billiards, and lunched, and was waiting for the hour he had set with Eldredge, when he was summoned to the telephone. A man who said he was Mrs. Eldredge's chauffeur, informed him that

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Mrs. Eldredge was in the motor before the club and she wished to speak with him at once.

Trant immediately went down to the motor.

The single woman in the curtained limousine had drawn back into the farthest corner to avoid the glances of passersby. But as Trant came toward the car she leaned forward and searched his face anxiously.

She was a wonderfully beautiful woman, though her frail face bore evidences of long continued anxiety and of present excitement. Her hair was unusually rich in color; the dilated, defiant eyes were deep and flawless; the pale cheeks were clear and soft, and the trembling lips were curved and perfect. Trant, before a word had been exchanged between them, recognized the ineffable appeal of her personality.

"I must speak with you, Mr. Trant," she said, as the chauffeur at her nod, opened the door of the car. "I cannot leave the motor. You must get in."

Trant stepped quietly into the limousine, filled with the soft perfume of her presence. The chauffeur closed the door behind him, and at once started the car.

"My husband has consulted you, Mr. Trant, regarding the — the trouble that has come upon us, the — the disappearance of his son, Edward," she asked.

"Why do you not say at once, Mrs. Eldredge, that you know he has consulted me and asked me to come and examine you this afternoon? You must have learned it through his secretary."

The woman hesitated. "It is true," she said nervously. "Miss Webster telephoned me. I see that you have not forgotten that I was once my husband's

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stenographer, and — I still have friends in his office."

"Then there is something you want to tell me that you cannot tell in the presence of the others?"

The woman turned, her large eyes meeting his with an almost frightened expression, but she recovered herself immediately. "No, Mr. Trant; it is because I know that he — my husband — that no one is making any search, or trying to recover Edward — except through watching me."

"That is true, Mrs. Eldredge," the psychologist helped her.

"You must not do that too, Mr. Trant!" she leaned toward him appealingly. "You must search for the boy — my husband's boy! You must not waste time in questioning me, or in trying me with your new methods! That is why I came to see you — to tell you, on my word of honor, that I know nothing of it!"

"I should feel more certain if you would be frank with me," Trant returned, "and tell me what happened on that afternoon before the child disappeared."

"We went motoring," the woman replied.

"Before you went motoring, Mrs. Eldredge," the psychologist pressed, "what happened?"

She shrank suddenly, and turned upon him eyes filled with unconquerable terror. He waited, but she did not answer.

"Did not some one tell you," the psychologist took a shot half in the dark, "or accuse you that you were taking the child out in order to get rid of him?"

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The woman fell back upon the cushions, chalk-white and shuddering.

"You have answered me," Trant said quietly. He glanced at her pityingly, and as she shrank from him, he tingled with an unbidden sympathy for this beautiful woman. "But in spite of the fact that you never brought the boy back," Trant cried impetuously, "and in spite of — or rather because of all that is so dark against you, believe me that I expect to clear you before them all!" He glanced at his watch. "I am glad that you have been taking me toward your home, for it is almost time for my appointment with your husband."

The car was running on the street bounding the park on the west. It stopped suddenly before a great stone house, the second from the intersecting street.

Eldredge was running down the steps, and in a moment young Murray came after him. The husband opened the door of the limousine and helped his wife tenderly up the steps. Murray and Trant followed him together. Eldredge's second wife — though she could comprehend nothing of what lay behind Trant's assurance of help for her — met her husband's look with eyes that had suddenly grown bright. Murray stared from the woman to Trant with disapproval. He nodded to the psychologist to follow him into Eldredge's study on one side; but there he waited for his brother-in-law to return to voice his reproach.

"What have you been saying to her, Trant?" Eldredge demanded sternly as he entered and shut the door.

"Only what I told you this morning," the psy-

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chologist answered —" that I believe her innocent. And after seeing what relief it brought her, I can not be sorry!"

" You can't?" Eldredge rebuked. " I can! When I called you in you had the right to tell me whatever you thought, however wild and without ground it was. It could not hurt me much. But now you have encouraged my wife still to hold out against us — still to defy us and to deny that she knows anything when — when, since we saw you, the case has become only more conclusive against her. We have just discovered a most startling confirmation of Miss Hendrick's evidence. Raymond, show him!" he gestured in sorry triumph.

Young Murray opened the library desk and pulled out a piece of newspaper, which he put in Trant's hand. He pointed to the heading. " You see, Trant, it is the account of the kidnaping in St. Louis which occurred just before Edward was stolen."

All witnesses describe the kidnaper as a short, dark woman, marked with smallpox. She wore a gray coat and black skirt, a hat with white feathers, and appeared to be an Italian.

" I knew that. It exactly corresponds with the woman described by Miss Hendricks," Trant rejoined.

" I was aware of it this morning. But I can only repeat that the case has turned more and more conclusively in favor of Mrs. Eldredge."

" Why, even before we recognized the woman described by Miss Hendricks the evidence was conclusive against Isabel!" Murray shot back. " Listen!

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She was nervously excited all that day; when the woman snatched Edward, Isabel did nothing. She denies she signaled the woman, but Miss Hendricks saw the signal. Isabel says the automobile took fifteen minutes making the circuit in the park, which is ridiculous! But she wants to give an idea in every case exactly contrary to what really occurred, and the other witnesses are agreed that the run was very quick. And most of all, she tried to throw us off in her description of the woman. The other three are agreed that she was short and slight. Isabel declares she was large and tall. The testimony of the chauffeur and the maid agrees with Miss Hendricks' in every particular — except that the maid says the woman was dressed in violet. In that one particular she is probably mistaken, for Miss Hendricks' description is most minute. Certainly the woman was not, as Isabel has again and again repeated in her efforts to throw us off the track, and in the face of all other evidence, clothed in a red dress!"

"Very well summarized!" said Trant. "Analyzed and summarized just as evidence has been ten million times in a hundred thousand law courts since the taking of evidence began. You could convict Mrs. Eldredge on that evidence. Juries have convicted thousands of other innocent people on evidence less trustworthy. The numerous convictions of innocent persons are as black a shame to-day as burnings and torturings were in the Middle Ages; as tests by fire and water, or as executions for witchcraft. Courts take evidence to-day exactly as it was taken when Joseph was a prisoner in Egypt. They hang and imprison

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on grounds of 'precedent' and 'common sense.' They accept the word of a witness where its truth seems likely, and refuse it where it seems otherwise. And, having determined the preponderance of evidence, they sometimes say, as you have just said of Lucy Carew, 'though correct in everything else, in this one particular fact our truthful witness is mistaken.' There is no room for mistakes, Mr. Eldredge, in scientific psychology. Instead of analyzing evidence by the haphazard methods of the courts, we can analyze it scientifically, exactly, incontrovertibly — we can select infallibly the true from the false. And that is what I mean to do now," he added, " if my apparatus, for which you telephoned this morning, has come."

" The boxes are in the rear hall," Eldredge replied. " I have obtained over a hundred views of the locality, and the cards you requested me to secure are here too."

" Good! Then you will get together the witnesses? The maid and the chauffeur I need to see only for a moment. I will question them while you are sending for Miss Hendricks."

Eldredge rang for the butler. " Bring in those boxes which have just come for Mr. Trant," he commanded. " Send this note to Miss Hendricks "— he wrote a few lines swiftly —" and tell Lucy and Morris to come here at once."

He watched Trant curiously while he bent to his boxes and began taking out his apparatus. Trant first unpacked a varnished wooden box with a small drop window in one end. Opposite the window was a rack upon which cards or pictures could be placed.

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They could then be seen only through the drop-window. This window worked like the shutter of a camera, and was so controlled that it could be set to remain open for a fixed time, in seconds or parts of a second, after which it closed automatically. As Trant set this up and tested the shutter, the maid and chauffeur came to the door of the library. Trant admitted the girl and shut the door.

"On Tuesday afternoon," he said to her, kindly, "was Mrs. Eldredge excited — very much excited — *before* you came to the place where the machine broke down, and before she saw the woman who took Edward away?"

"Yes, sir," the girl answered. "She was more excited than I'd seen her ever before, all the afternoon, from the time we started."

The young psychologist then admitted the chauffeur, and repeated his question.

"She was most nervous, yes, sir; and excited, sir, from the very first," the chauffeur answered.

"That is all," said Trant, suddenly dismissing both, then turning without expression to Eldredge. "If Miss Hendricks is here I will examine her at once."

Eldredge went out, and returned with the little old maid. Miss Hendricks had a high-bred, refined and delicate face; and a sweet, though rather loquacious, manner. She acknowledged the introduction to Trant with old-fashioned formality.

"Please sit down, Miss Hendricks," said Trant, motioning her to a chair facing the drop-window of the exposure box. "This little window will open and stand open an instant. I want you to look in and read

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the word that you will see." He dropped a card quickly into the rack.

"Do not be surprised," he begged, as she looked at the drop-window curiously, "if this examination seems puerile to you. It is not really so; but only unfamiliar in this country, yet. The Germans have carried psychological work further than any one in this nation, though the United States is now awakening to its importance." While speaking, he had lifted the shutter and kept it raised a moment.

"It must be very interesting," Miss Hendricks commented. "That word was 'America,' Mr. Trant."

Trant changed the card quickly. "And I'm glad to say, Miss Hendricks," he continued, while the maiden lady watched for the next word, interested, "that Americans are taking it up intelligently, not servilely copying the Germans!"

"That word was 'imitation,' Mr. Trant!" said Miss Hendricks.

"So now much is being done," Trant continued, again shifting the card, "in the fifty psychological laboratories of this country through painstaking experiments and researches."

"And that word was 'investigate!'" said Miss Hendricks, as the shutter lifted and dropped again.

"That was quite satisfactory, Miss Hendricks," Trant acknowledged. "Now look at this please." Trant swiftly substituted the lithograph he had picked up at Eldredge's office. "What was that, Miss Hendricks?"

"It was a colored picture of a room with several people in it."

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"Did you see the boy in the picture, Miss Hendricks?"

"Why — yes, of course, Mr. Trant," the woman answered, after a little hesitation.

"Good. Did you also see his book?"

"Yes; I saw that he was reading."

"Can you describe him?"

"Yes; he was about fifteen years old, in a dark suit with a brown tie, black-haired, slender, and he sat in a corner with a book on his knee."

"That was indeed most satisfactory! Thank you, Miss Hendricks." Trant congratulated and dismissed her. "Now your wife, if you please, Mr. Eldredge."

Eldredge was curiously turning over the cards which Trant had been exhibiting, and stared at the young psychologist in bewilderment. But at Trant's words he went for his wife. She came down at once with Mrs. Murray. Though she had been described to him, it was the first time Trant had seen the grandmother of the missing boy; and, as she entered, a movement of admiration escaped him. She was taller even than her son — who was the tallest man in the room — and she had retained surprisingly much of the grace and beauty of youth. She was a majestic and commanding figure. After settling her charge in a chair, she turned solicitously to Trant.

"Mr. Eldredge tells me that you consider it necessary to question poor Isabel again," she said. "But, Mr. Trant, you must be careful not to subject her to any greater strain than is necessary. We all have told her that if she would be entirely frank with us we would make allowance for one whose girlhood has

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been passed in poverty which obliged her to work for a living."

Mrs. Eldredge shrank nervously and Trant turned to Murray. "Mr. Murray," he said, "I want as little distraction as possible during my examination of Mrs. Eldredge, so if you will be good enough to bring in to me from the study the automatograph — the other apparatus which I took from the box — and then wait outside till I have completed the test, it will assist me greatly. Mrs. Murray, you can help me if you remain."

Young Murray glanced at his mother and complied. The automatograph, which Trant set upon another table, was that designed by Prof. Jastrow, of the University of Wisconsin, for the study of involuntary movements. It consisted of a plate of glass in a light frame mounted on adjustable brass legs, so that it could be set exactly level. Three polished glass balls, three-quarters of an inch in diameter, rested on this plate; and on these again there rested a very light plate of glass. To the upper plate was connected a simple system of levers, which carried a needle point at their end, so holding the needle as to travel over a sheet of smoked paper.

While Trant was setting up this instrument Mrs. Eldredge's nervousness had greatly increased. And the few words which she spoke to her husband and Mrs. Murray — who alone remained in the room — showed that her mind was filled with thoughts of the missing child. Trant, observing her, seemed to change his plan suddenly and, instead of taking Mrs. Eldredge to the new instrument, he seated her in the

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chair in front of the drop-window. He explained gently to the trembling woman that he wanted her to read to him the words he exposed; and, as in the case of Miss Hendricks, he tried to put her at ease by speaking of the test itself.

"These word tests, Mrs. Eldredge, will probably seem rather pointless. For that matter all proceedings with which one is not familiar must seem pointless; even the proceedings of the national legislature in Washington seem pointless to the spectators in the gallery." At this point the shutter lifted and exposed a word. "What was the word, please, Mrs. Eldredge?"

"'Sedate,'" the woman faltered.

"But though the tests seem pointless, Mrs. Eldredge, they are not really so. To the trained investigator each test word is as full of meaning as each mark upon the trail is to the backwoodsman on the edge of civilization. Now what word was that?" he questioned quickly, as the shutter raised and lowered again.

The woman turned her dilated eyes on Trant. "That — that," she hesitated —"I could make it out only as 'p-i-o-s-e-e-r,'" she spelled, uneasily. "I do not know any such word."

"I shall not try you on words any longer, Mrs. Eldredge," Trant decided. He took his stop-watch in his hand. "But I shall ask you to tell me how much time elapses between two taps with my lead pencil on the table. Now!"

"Two minutes," the woman stammered.

Eldredge, who, observing what Trant was doing,

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had taken his own watch from his pocket and timed the brief interval, stared at Trant in astonishment. But without giving the wife time to compose herself, Trant went on quickly:

"Look again at the little window, Mrs. Eldredge. I shall expose to you a photograph; and if you are to help me recover your husband's son, I hope you can recognize it. Who was it?" the psychologist demanded as the shutter dropped.

"That was a photograph of Edward!" the woman cried. "But I never saw that picture before!" She sat back, palpitating with uneasiness.

Mrs. Murray quickly took up the picture which had just been recognized as her grandson. "That is not Edward, Mr. Trant," she said.

Trant laid a finger on his lips to silence her.

"Mrs. Murray," he said in quick appeal, "I wished, as you probably noted, to use this instrument, the automatograph, a moment ago: I will try it now. Will you be good enough to test it for me? Merely rest your fingers lightly — as lightly as you please — upon this upper glass plate." Mrs. Murray complied, willingly. "Now please hold your hand there while I lay out these about you." He swiftly distributed the photographic views of the surrounding blocks which Eldredge had collected for him.

Mrs. Murray watched him curiously as he placed about a dozen in a circle upon the table; and, almost as swiftly, swept them away and distributed others in their place. Again, after glancing at her hand to see that it was held in position, he set out a third lot, his eyes fixed, as before, on the smoked paper under the

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needle at the end of the levers. Suddenly he halted, looked keenly at the third set of cards and, without a word, left the room. In an instant he returned and after a quick, sympathetic glance at Mrs. Eldredge, turned to her husband.

"I need not examine Mrs. Eldredge further," he said. "You had better take her to her room. But before you go, he grasped the woman's cold hand encouragingly, "I want to tell you, Mrs. Eldredge, that I have every assurance of having the boy back within a very few minutes, and I have proof of your complete innocence. No, Mrs. Murray," he forbade, as the older woman started to follow the others. "Remain here." He closed the door after the other and faced her. "I have just sent your son to get Edward Eldredge from the place on Clark Street just south of Webster Avenue where you have been keeping him these three days."

"Are you a madman?" the powerful woman cried, as she tried to push by him, staring at him stonily.

"Really it is no use, madam." Trant prevented her. "Your son has been a most unworthy confederate from the first; and when I had excluded him from the room for a few moments and spoke to him of the place which you pointed out to me so definitely, it frightened him into acquiescence. I expect him back with the boy within a few minutes: and meanwhile —"

"What is that?" Eldredge had stepped inside the door.

"I was just telling Mrs. Murray," said Trant, "that

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After glancing at her hand to see that it was held in position, he set out a third lot. *See page 101*

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I had sent Raymond Murray after your son in the place where she has had him concealed."

"What — what?" the father cried, incredulously, staring into the woman's cold face.

"Oh, she has most enviable control of herself," Trant commented. "She will not believe that her son has gone for Edward until he brings him back. And I might say that Mrs. Murray probably did not make away with the boy, but merely had him kept away, after he had been taken."

Mrs. Murray had reseated herself, after her short struggle with Trant; and her face was absolutely devoid of expression. "He is a madman!" she said, calmly.

"Perhaps it will hasten matters," suggested Trant, "if I explain to you the road by which I reached this conclusion. As a number of startling cases of kidnaping have occurred recently, the very prevalent fear they have aroused has made it likely that kidnaping will be the first theory in any case even remotely resembling it. In view of this I could accept your statement of kidnaping only if the circumstances made it conclusive, which they did not. With the absence of any demand for a real ransom they made it impossible even for you to hold the idea of kidnaping, except by presuming it a plot of Mrs. Eldredge's.

"But when I began considering whether this could be her plan, as charged, I noted a singular inconsistency in the attitude of Raymond Murray. He showed obvious eagerness to disgrace Mrs. Eldredge, but for some reason — not on the surface — was most

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actively opposed to police interference and the publicity which would most thoroughly carry out his object. So I felt from the first that he, and perhaps his mother — who was established over Mrs. Eldredge in her own home, but, by your statement, was to leave if Mrs. Eldredge came into charge of things — knew something which they were concealing. This much I saw before I read a word of the evidence.

"The evidence of the maid and the chauffeur told only two things — that a small woman rushed into the park and ran off with your son; and that your wife was in an extremely agitated condition. The maid said that the woman was blond and dressed in violet; and I knew, when I had read the evidence of other witnesses, that that was undoubtedly the truth."

Eldredge, pacing the rug, stopped short and opened his lips; but checked himself.

"Without Miss Hendricks' testimony there was positively nothing against your wife in the evidence of the chauffeur and the maid. I then took up Miss Hendricks' evidence and had not read two lines before I saw that — as an accusation against your wife, Mr. Eldredge — it was worthless. Miss Hendricks is one of those most dangerous persons, absolutely truthful, and — absolutely unable to tell the truth! She showed a common, but hopeless, state of suggestibility. Her first sentence, in which she said she did not often look out of the window for fear people would think she was watching them, showed her habit of confusing what she saw with ideas that existed only in her own mind. Her testimony was a mass of unwarranted inferences. She saw a woman coming from

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the direction of the car line, so to Miss Hendricks 'it was evident that she had just descended from a car.' The woman was hurrying, so 'she was late for an appointment.' 'As soon as she caught sight of the woman' Mrs. Eldredge lifted Edward to the ground. And so on through a dozen things which showed the highest susceptibility to suggestion. You told me that before telling her story to you she had told it to Mrs. Murray. Miss Hendricks had rushed to her at once; the bias and suggestions which made her testimony apparently so damning against your wife could only have come from Mrs. Murray."

Eldredge's glance shot to his mother-in-law. But Trant ran on rapidly. "I took up your wife's evidence; and though apparently entirely at variance with the others, I saw at once that it really corroborated the testimony of the nurse and the chauffeur."

"Her evidence confirmed?" Eldredge demanded, brusquely.

"Yes," Trant replied; "to the psychologist, who understood Mrs. Eldredge's mental condition, her evidence was the same as theirs. I had already seen for myself, by the aid of what you had told me, Mrs. Eldredge's position in this household, after leaving your office to become your wife. On entering your house, she was brought face to face with a woman already in control here — a strong and dominant woman, who had immense influence over you. Everything told of a struggle between these women — slights, obstructions, merciless criticisms, of which your wife could not complain, which had brought her close to nervous prostration. You remember that im-

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mediately after reading her statement I asked you what particular thing had occurred just before she went motoring to throw her into that noticeably excitable condition described by the maid and the chauffeur. You said nothing had happened. But I was certain even then that there had been something — I know now that Mrs. Murray had put a climax to her persecution of your wife by charging that Mrs. Eldredge was taking the boy out to get rid of him — and my knowledge of psychology told me that, allowing for Mrs. Eldredge's hysterical condition, she had stated in her evidence the same things that the maid and the chauffeur had stated. It is a fact that in her condition of hyperæsthesia — a condition readily brought on not only in weak women, but sometimes in strong men, by excitement and excessive nervous strain — her senses would be highly overstimulated. Barely hearing the sound of the woman's voice, she would honestly describe her as speaking in a loud tone.

"All time intervals would also be greatly prolonged. It truly seemed to her that the child took a long time to cross the grass and that the woman talked with him several minutes, instead of seconds. The sensation of a similarly long time elapsing after the woman took the boy's hand gave her the impression of a long struggle. She would honestly believe that it took the automobile fifteen minutes to make the circuit of the park. When you asked your wife why, if so much time elapsed, she tried to do nothing, she was unable to answer; for no time was wasted at all.

"But most vital of all, I recognized her description

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of the woman as wearing a red dress as most conclusive confirmation of the maid's testimony and a final proof, not that Mrs. Eldredge was trying to mislead you, but that she was telling the truth as well as she could. For it is a common psychological fact that in a hysterical condition red is the color most commonly seen subjectively: the sensation of red not only persists in hysteria, when other color sensations disappear, but it is common to have it take the place of another color, especially violet. It was discovered and recorded over thirty years ago that, in excessive excitability known psychologically as hyperæsthesia, all colors are lifted in the spectrum scale and, to the overexcited retina, the shorter waves of violet may give the sensation of the longer ones producing red. So what to you seemed an intentional contradiction was to me the most positive and complete assurance of your wife's honesty.

"And finally, to be consistent with this condition, I knew that if her state was due to expectation of harm to herself or the child from any unusually large, dark woman, she would see the woman in her excitement, as large and dark. For it is one of the commonest facts known to the psychologist that our senses in excitement can be so influenced by our expectation of any event that we actually see things, not as they are, but as we expect them to be. So when you told me that Mrs. Murray answered the description given by Mrs. Eldredge, all threads of the skein had led to Mrs. Murray.

"Now, as it was clear to me that Mrs. Murray herself had used Miss Hendricks' easy suggestibility

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to prejudice her evidence against Mrs. Eldredge, Mrs. Murray could not herself have believed that Mrs. Eldredge had taken the boy away. So, since the Murrays were making no search, they must have soon found out where the boy was and were satisfied that he was safe and that they could produce him, after they had finished ruining Mrs. Eldredge.

"Therefore I was in a position to appreciate Mrs. Murray's ridiculous letter when it came, with its painfully misspelled demand for an absurdly small ransom that would not be refused for a moment, as the object of the letter was only to make the final move in the case against Mrs. Eldredge and enable them to return the boy. So far, it is clear?" Trant checked his rapid explanation.

Still Eldredge stared at the set, defiant features of his mother-in-law; and made no reply.

"I appreciated thoroughly that I must prove all this," Trant then shot on rapidly. "You, Mr. Eldredge, discovered that Miss Hendricks' description of the woman tallied precisely with the published description of the St. Louis kidnaper, without appreciating that the description was in her mind. With her high suggestibility she substituted it for the woman she actually saw as unconsciously — and as honestly — as she substituted Mrs. Murray's suggestions for her own observations.

"But perhaps you can appreciate it now. You saw how I showed her the word 'Armenia' and spoke of the United States to lead her mind to substitute 'America' to prove how easily her mind substituted acts, motions and everything at Mrs. Murray's sugges-

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tion. I had only to speak of 'servilely copying' to have her change 'invitation' into 'imitation.' A mere mention of researches made her think she saw 'investigate,' when the word was 'inviolate.' Finally, after showing her a picture in which there were two women and a man, but no boy, she stated, at my slight suggestion, that she saw a boy, and even described him for me and told me what he was doing. I had proved beyond cavil the utter worthlessness of evidence given by this woman, and dismissed her."

"I followed that!" Eldredge granted.

Trant continued: "So I tested your wife to show that she had not suggestibility, like Miss Hendricks — that is, she could not be made to say that she saw 'senate' instead of 'sedate' by a mere mention of the national legislature at the time the word was shown; nor would she make over 'pioseer' into 'pioneer,' under the suggestion of backwoodsman. But by getting her into an excitable condition with her mind emotionally set to expect a picture of the missing boy, her excited mind at the moment of perception altered the picture of the totally different six-year-old boy I showed her into the picture of Edward, as readily as her highly excited senses — fearing for herself and for the boy through Mrs. Murray — altered the woman she saw taking Edward into an emotional semblance of Mrs. Murray.

"I had understood it as essential to clear your wife as to find the boy — whom I appreciated could be in no danger. So I made the next test with Mrs. Murray. This, I admit, depended largely upon chance. I knew, of course, that she must know where the boy

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was and that probably her son did too. The place was also probably in the vicinity. The automatograph is a device to register the slightest and most involuntary motions. It is a basic psychological fact that there is an inevitable muscular impulse toward any object which arouses emotion. If one spreads a score of playing cards about a table and the subject has a special one in mind, his hand on the automatograph will quickly show a faint impulse toward the card, although the subject is entirely unaware of it. So I knew that if the place where the boy was kept was shown in any of the pictures, I would get a reaction from Mrs. Murray; which I did — with the result, Mr. Eldredge," Trant went to the window and watched the street, expectantly, "that Mr. Raymond Murray is now bringing your son around the corner and —"

But the father had burst from the room and toward the door. Trant heard a cry of joy and the stumble of an almost hysterical woman as Mrs. Eldredge rushed down the stairs after her husband. He turned as Mrs. Murray, taking advantage of the excitement, endeavored to push past him.

"You are leaving the house?" he asked. "But tell me first," he demanded, "how did the boy come to be taken out of the park? Had the boys whom the chauffeur said stopped around his car anything to do with it?"

"They were a class which a kindergarten teacher — a new teacher — had taken to see the animals," the woman answered, coldly.

"Ah! So one of them was left behind — the one

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whom they saw running and mistook for Edward — and the teacher, running back, took Edward by mistake. But she must have discovered her mistake when she rejoined the others."

"Only after she got on the car. There one of my former servants recognized him and took him to her home."

"And when the servant came to tell you, and you understood how Miss Hendricks' suggestibility had played into your hands, the temptation was too much for you, and you made this last desperate attempt to discredit Mrs. Eldredge. I see!" He stood back and let her by.

Raymond Murray, after bringing back the boy, had disappeared. In the hall Eldredge and his wife bent over the boy, the woman completely hysterical in the joy of the recovery, laughing and crying alternately. She caught the boy to her frantically as she stared wildly at a woman ascending the steps.

"The woman in red — the woman in red!" she cried suddenly.

Trant stepped to her side quickly. "But she doesn't look big and dark to you now, does she?" he asked. "And see, now," he said, trying to calm her, "the dress is violet again. Yes, Mr. Eldredge, this, I believe, is the woman in violet — the small blond woman who took your boy from the park by mistake — as I will explain to you. She is coming, undoubtedly, in response to an advertisement that I put in *The Journal* this noon. But we do not require her help now, for Mrs. Murray has told me all."

The maid, Lucy Carew, ran suddenly up the hall.

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"Mrs. Murray and Mr. Murray are leaving the house, Mr. Eldredge!" she cried, bewilderedly.

"Are they?" the master of the house returned. He put his arm about its mistress and together they took the boy to his room.

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IV

THE PRIVATE BANK PUZZLE

"Planning to rob us?"

"I am sure of it!"

"But I don't understand, Gordon! Who? How? What are they planning to rob?" the young acting-president of the bank demanded, sharply.

"The safe, Mr. Howell — the safe!" the old cashier repeated. "Some one inside the bank is planning to rob it!"

"How do you know?"

"I feel it; I know it. I am as certain of it as though I had overheard the plot being made! But I cannot tell you how I know. Put an extra man on guard here to-night," the old man appealed, anxiously, "for I am certain that some one in this office means to enter the safe!"

The acting-president swung his chair away from the anxious little man before him, and glanced quickly through the glass door of his private office at the dozen clerks and tellers busy in the big room who sufficed to carry on the affairs of the little bank.

It was just before noon on the last Wednesday in November, in the old-established private banking house of Henry Howell & Son, on La Salle Street; and it was the beginning of the sixth week that young Howell had been running the bank by himself. For the

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first two or three weeks, since his father's rheumatism suddenly sent him to Carlsbad, the business of the bank had seemed to go on as smoothly as usual. But for the last month, as young Howell himself could not deny, there had been a difference.

"A premonition, Gordon?" Howell's brown eyes scrutinized the cashier curiously. "I did not know your nerve had been so shaken!"

"Call it premonition if you wish," the old cashier answered, almost wildly. "But I have warned you! If anything happens now you cannot hold me to blame for it. I know the safe is going to be entered! Why else should they search my waste-basket? Why was my coat taken? Who took my pocketbook? Who just to-day tried to break into my old typewriter desk?"

"Gordon! Gordon!" The young man jumped to his feet with an expression of relief. "You need a vacation! I know better than anybody how much has happened in the last two months to shake and disturb you; but if you attach any meaning to those insignificant incidents you must be going crazy!"

The cashier tore himself from the other's grasp and left the office. Young Howell stood looking after him in perplexity an instant, then glanced at his watch and, taking up his overcoat, hastened out. He had a firm, well-built figure, a trifle stout; his expression, step, and all his bearing was usually quick, decisive, cheerful. But now as he passed into the street his step slowed and his head bent before the puzzle which his old cashier had just presented to him.

After walking a block his pace quickened, however,

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and he turned abruptly into a great office building towering sixteen stories from the street. Halting for an instant before the building directory, he took the express elevator to the twelfth floor and, at the end of the hall, halted again before an office door upon which was stenciled in clear letters:

"LUTHER TRANT, PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGIST."

At the call to come in, he opened the door and found himself facing a red-haired, broad-shouldered young man with blue-gray eyes, who had looked up from a delicate instrument which he was adjusting upon his desk. The young banker noted, half unconsciously, the apparatus of various kinds — dials, measuring machines and clocks, electrical batteries with strange meters wired to them, and the dozen delicate machines that stood on two sides of the room, for his conscious interest was centered in the quiet but alert young man that rose to meet him.

"Mr. Luther Trant?" he questioned.

"Yes."

"I am Harry Howell, the 'son' of Howell & Son," the banker introduced himself. "I heard of you, Mr. Trant, in connection with the Bronson murder; but more recently Walter Eldredge told me something of the remarkable way in which you apply scientific psychology, which has so far been recognized only in the universities, to practical problems. He made no secret to me that you saved him from wrecking the whole happiness of his home. I have come to ask you to do, perhaps, as much for me."

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The psychologist nodded.

"I do not mean, Mr. Trant," said the banker, dropping into the chair toward which Trant directed him, "that our home is in danger, as Eldredge's was. But our cashier—" The banker broke off. "Two months ago, Mr. Trant, our bank suffered its first default, under circumstances which affected the cashier very strongly. A few weeks later father had to go to Europe for his health, leaving me with old Gordon, the cashier, in charge of things. Almost immediately a series of disorders commenced, little annoyances and persecutions against the cashier. They have continued almost daily. They are so senseless, contemptible, and trivial that I have disregarded them, but they have shaken Gordon's nerve. Twenty minutes ago he came to me, trembling with anxiety, to tell me that they mean that one of the men in the office is trying to rob the safe. I feel confident that it is only Gordon's nervousness; but in the absence of my father I feel that I cannot let the matter go longer unexplained."

"What are these apparently trivial things which have been going on for the last month, Mr. Howell?" Trant asked.

"They are so insignificant that I am almost ashamed to tell you. The papers in Gordon's waste-basket have been disturbed. Some one takes his pads and blotters. His coat, which hangs on a hook in his office, disappeared and was brought back again. An old pocket-book that he keeps in his desk, which never contains anything of importance, has been taken away and brought back in the same manner. Everything dis-

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turbed has been completely valueless, the sole object being apparently to plague the man. But it has shaken Gordon amazingly, incomprehensibly. And this morning, when he found some one had been trying to break into an old typewriter desk in his office — though it was entirely empty, even the typewriter having been taken out of it two days ago — he went absolutely to pieces, and made the statement about robbing the safe which I have just repeated to you."

"That is very strange," said Trant, thoughtfully. "So these apparently senseless tricks terrorize your cashier! He was not keeping anything in the typewriter desk, was he?"

"He told me not," Howell answered. "Gordon might conceal something from me; but he would not lie."

"Tell me," Trant demanded, suddenly, "what was the defalcation in the bank, which, as you just mentioned, so greatly affected your cashier just before your father left for Europe?"

"Ten thousand dollars was taken; in plain words stolen outright by young Robert Gordon, the cashier's — William Gordon's — son."

"The cashier's son!" Trant replied with interest.

"His only son," Howell confirmed. "A boy about twenty. Gordon has a daughter older. The boy seemed a clean, straightforward fellow like his father, who has been with us forty years, twenty years our cashier; but something was different in him underneath, for the first time he had the chance he stole from the bank."

"And the particulars?" Trant requested quickly.

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"There are no especial particulars; it was a perfectly clear case against Robert," the banker replied, reluctantly. "Our bank has a South Side branch on Cottage Grove Avenue, near Fifty-first Street, for the use of storekeepers and merchants in the neighborhood. On the 29th of September they telephoned us that there was a sudden demand for currency resembling a run on the bank. Our regular messenger, with the officer who accompanies him, was out; so Gordon called his son to carry the money alone. It never occurred to either father or myself, or, of course, to Gordon, not to trust to the boy. Gordon himself got the money from the safe — twenty-four thousand dollars, fourteen thousand in small bills and ten thousand in two small packets of ten five-hundred-dollar bills apiece. He himself counted it into the bag, locked it, and sealed it in. We all told the boy that we were sending him on an emergency call and to rush above all things. Now, it takes about thirty-five minutes to reach our branch on the car; but in spite of being told to hurry, young Gordon was over an hour getting there; and when the officers of the branch opened his bag they found that both packets of five-hundred-dollar bills — ten thousand dollars — had been taken out — stolen! He had fixed up the lock, the seal of the bag, somehow, after taking the money."

"What explanation did the boy make?" Trant pressed, quickly.

"None. He evidently depended entirely upon the way he fixed up the lock and seal."

"The delay?"

"The cars, he said."

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"You said a moment ago that it was impossible that your cashier would lie to you. Is it absolutely out of the question that he held back the missing bills?"

"And ruined his own son, Mr. Trant? Impossible! But you do not have to take my opinion for that. The older Gordon returned the money — all of it — though he had to mortgage his home, which was all he had, to make up the amount. Out of regard for the father, who was heartbroken, we did not prosecute the boy. It was kept secret, even from the employees of the bank, why he was dismissed, and only the officers yet know that the money was stolen. But you can see how deeply all this must have affected Gordon, and it may be enough to account fully for his nervousness under the petty annoyances which have been going on ever since."

"Annoyances," cried Trant, "which began almost immediately after this first defalcation in forty years! That may, or may not, be coincidence. But, if it is convenient, I would like to go with you to the bank, Mr. Howell, at once!" The young psychologist leaped to his feet; the banker rose more slowly.

It was not quite one o'clock when the two young men entered the old building where Howell & Son had had their offices for thirty-six years. Trant hurried on directly up to the big banking room on the second floor. Inside the offices the psychologist's quick eyes, before they sought individuals, seemed to take stock of the furnishings and equipment of the place. The arrangement of all was staid, solid, old-fashioned. Many of the desks and chairs, and most of the other equipment, seemed to date back as far as the founding

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of the bank by the senior Howell three years after the great Chicago fire. The clerks' and tellers' cages were of the heavy, overelaborate brass scroll work of the generation before; the counters of thick, almost ponderous, mahogany, now deeply scored, but not discolored. And the massive safe, set into a rear wall, especially attracted Trant's attention. He paused before its open door and curiously inspected the complicated mechanism of revolving dials, lettered on their rims, which required to be set to a certain combination of letters in order to open it.

"This is still good enough under ordinary conditions, I dare say," he commented, as he turned the barrels experimentally; "but it is rather old, is it not?"

"It is as old as the bank and the building," Howell answered. "It is one of the Rittenhouse six-letter combination locks; and was built in, as you see, in '74 when they put up this building for us. Just about that time, I believe, the Sargent time lock was invented; but this was still new, and besides, father has always been very conservative. He lets things go on until a real need arises to change them; and in thirty-six years, as I told you at your office, nothing has happened to worry him particularly about this safe."

"I see. The combination, I suppose, is a word?"

"Yes; a word of six letters, changed every Monday."

"And given to —"

"Only to the cashier."

"Gordon, that is," Trant acknowledged, as he turned away and appeared to take his first interest in

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any of the employees of the bank, "the man alone in the cashier's room over there?" The psychologist pointed through the open door of the room at his right to the thin, strained figure bent far over his desk. He was the only one of all the men about the bank who seemed not to have noticed the stranger whom the acting-president had brought with him to inspect the safe.

"Yes; that is Gordon!" the president answered, caught forward quickly by something in the manner, or the posture, of the cashier. "But what is he doing? What is the matter with him now?" He hurried toward the old man through the open door.

Trant followed him, and they could see over the cashier's shoulder, before he was conscious of their presence, that he was arranging and fitting together small scraps of paper. Then he jerked himself up in his chair, trembling, arose, and faced them with bloodless lips and cheeks, one tremulous hand pressed guiltily upon the papers, hiding them.

"What is the matter? What are you doing, Gordon?" Howell said in surprise.

Trant reached forward swiftly, seized the cashier's thin wrist and lifted his hand forcibly from the desk. The scraps were five in number and upon them, as Gordon had arranged them, were printed in pencil merely meaningless equations. The first, which was written on two of the scraps, read:

$$43\$=80.$$

The second, torn into three pieces, was even more enigmatical, reading:

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35=8?$

But the pieces appeared to be properly put together; and Trant noted that, besides the two and three pieces fitting, all the scraps evidently belonged together, and had originally formed a part of a large sheet of paper which had been torn and thrown away.

"They are nothing — nothing, Mr. Howell!" The old man tried to wrench his hand away, staring in terror at the banker. "They are only scraps of paper which I found. Oh, Mr. Howell, I warned you this morning that the bank is in danger. I know that now better than ever! But these," he grew still whiter, "are nothing!"

Trant had to catch the cashier's hand again, as he tried to snatch up the scraps. "Who is this man, Mr. Howell?" Gordon turned indignantly to the young banker.

"My name is Trant. Mr. Howell came to me this morning to advise him as to the things which have been terrifying you here in this office. And, Mr. Gordon," said Trant, sternly, "it is perfectly useless for you to tell us that these bits of paper have no meaning, or that their meaning is unknown to you. But since you will not explain the mystery to us, I must go about the matter in some other way."

"You do not imagine, Mr. Trant," the cashier fell back into his chair as though the psychologist had struck him, "that I have any connection with the plot against the bank of which I warned Mr. Howell!"

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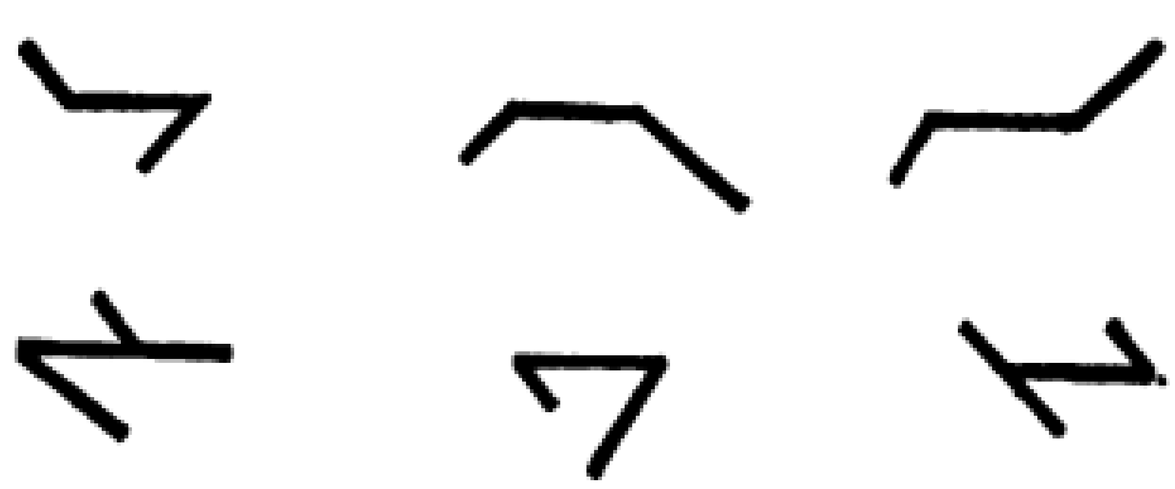
"I am quite certain," Trant answered, firmly, "that if a plot exists, you have some connection with it. Whether your connection is innocent or guilty I can determine at once by a short test, if you will submit to it."

Gordon's eyes met those of the acting-president in startled terror, but he gathered himself together and arose.

"Mr. Howell knows," he said, hollowly, "how mad an accusation you are making. But I will submit to your test, of course."

Trant took up a blank sheet of paper from the desk and drew on it two rows of geometric figures in rapid succession, like these:



He handed the sheet to the cashier, who stared at it in wondering astonishment.

"Look at these carefully, Mr. Gordon," Trant took out his watch, "and study them till I tell you to stop. Stop now!" he commanded, "and draw upon the pad on your desk as many of the figures as you can."

The cashier and the acting-president stared into Trant's face with increasing amazement; then the cashier asked to see Trant's sheets again and drew from memory, after a few seconds, two figures, thus:

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"Thank you," said Trant, tearing the sheet from the pad without giving either time to question him. He closed the office door carefully and returned with his watch in his hand.

"You can hear this tick?" He held it about eighteen inches from Gordon's ear.

"Of course," the cashier answered.

"Then move your finger, please, as long as you hear it."

The cashier began moving his finger. Trant put the watch on the desk and stepped away. For a moment the finger stopped; but when Trant spoke again the cashier nodded and moved his finger at the ticks. Almost immediately it stopped again, however; and Trant returned and took up his watch.

"I want to ask you one thing more," he said to the weary old man. "I want you to take a pencil and write upon this pad a series of numbers from one up as fast as you care to, no matter how much more rapidly I count. You are ready? Then one, two, three —" Trant counted rapidly in a clear voice up to thirty.

"1-2-3-4-10-11-12-19-20-27-28 —" the cashier wrote, and handed the pad to Trant.

"Thank you. This will be all I need, except these pieces," said Trant, as he swept up the scraps which the cashier had been piecing together.

Gordon started, but said nothing. His gray, anx-

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ious eyes followed them, as the banker preceded Trant from the cashier's room into his private office.

"What is the meaning of all this, Mr. Trant?" Howell closed the door and swung round, excitedly. "If Gordon is connected with a plot against the bank, and that in itself is unbelievable, why did he warn me the bank was in danger?"

"Mr. Gordon's connection with what is going on is perfectly innocent," Trant answered. "I have just made certain of that!" He had seated himself before Howell's desk and was spreading out the scraps of paper which he had taken from Gordon. "But tell me. Was not Gordon once a stenographer, or did he not use a typewriter at least?"

"Well, yes," Howell replied, impatiently. "Gordon was private secretary to my father twenty years ago; and, of course, used a typewriter. It was his old machine, which he always kept and still used occasionally, that was in his desk which, as I told you, was broken into this morning."

"But the desk was empty — even the machine had been taken from it!"

"Gordon took it home only a day or so ago. His daughter is taking up typewriting and wanted it to practice upon."

"In spite of the fact that it must be entirely out of date?" Trant pressed. "Probably it was the last of that pattern in this office?"

"Of course," Howell rejoined, still more impatiently. "The others were changed long ago. But what in the world has all this to do with the question whether some one is planning to rob us?"

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"It has everything to do, Mr. Howell!" Trant leaped to his feet, his eyes flashing with sudden comprehension. "For what you have just told me makes it certain that, as Gordon warned you, one of your clerks is planning to enter your safe at the first opportunity! Gordon knows as little as you or I, at this moment, which of your men it is; but he is as sure of the fact itself as I am, and he has every reason to know that there is no time to lose in detecting the plotter."

"What is that? What is that? Gordon is right?" The banker stared at Trant in confusion, then asserted, skeptically: "You cannot tell that from those papers, Mr. Trant!"

"I feel very certain of it indeed, and — just from these papers. And more than that, Mr. Howell, though I shall ask to postpone explaining this until later, I may say from this second paper here," Trant held up the series of numbers which the cashier had written, "that this indicates to me that it is entirely possible, if not actually probable, that Gordon's son did not steal the money for the loss of which he was disgraced!"

The banker strode up and down the room, excitedly. "Robert Gordon not guilty! I understood, Trant, that your methods were surprising. They are more than that; they are incomprehensible. I cannot imagine how you reach these conclusions. But," he looked into the psychologist's eyes, "I see no alternative but to put the matter completely in your hands, and for the present to do whatever you say."

"There is nothing more to be done here now," said

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Trant, gathering up the papers, "except to give me Gordon's home address."

"Five hundred and thirty-seven Leavenworth Street, on the South Side."

"I will come back to-morrow after banking hours. Meanwhile, as Gordon warned you, put an extra guard over the bank to-night. I hope to be able to tell you all that underlies this case when I have been to Gordon's home this evening, and seen his son, and"—Trant turned away—"that old typewriting machine of his."

He went out, the banker staring after him, perplexed.

Trant knew already that forty years of service for the little bank of Howell & Son had left Gordon still a poor man; and he was not surprised when, at seven o'clock that night, he turned into Leavenworth Street, to find Number 537 a typical "small, comfortable home," put up twenty years before in what had then been a new real estate subdivision and probably purchased by Gordon upon the instalment plan. Gordon's daughter, who opened the door, was a black-haired, gray-eyed girl of slender figure. She had the air of the housekeeper, careful and economical in the administration of her father's moderate and unincreasing means. But a look of more direct responsibility upon her face made Trant recollect, as he gave his name and stepped inside, that since her brother's default and her father's sacrifice to make it up, this girl herself was going out to help regain the ownership of the little home.

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"Father is upstairs lying down," she explained, solicitously, as she showed Trant into the living room. "But I can call him," she offered, reluctantly, "if it is on business of the bank."

"It is on business of the bank," Trant replied. "But there is no need to disturb your father. It was your brother I came to see."

The girl's face went crimson. "My brother is no longer connected with the bank," she managed to answer, miserably. "I do not think he would be willing — I think I could not prevail upon him to talk to anyone sent by the bank."

"That is unfortunate," said Trant, frankly, "for in that case my journey out here goes half for nothing. I was very anxious to see him. By the way, Miss Gordon, what luck are you having with your typewriting?"

The girl drew back surprised.

"Mr. Howell told me about you," Trant explained, "when he mentioned that your father had taken his old typewriter home for you to practice upon."

"Oh, yes; dear father!" exclaimed the girl. "He brought it home with him one night this week. But it is quite out of date — quite useless. Besides, I had hired a modern one last week."

"Mr. Howell interested me in that old machine. You have no objection to my seeing it?"

"Of course not." The girl looked at the young psychologist with growing astonishment. "It is right here." She led the way through the hall, and opened the door to a rear room. Through the doorway Trant

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could see in the little room two typewriting machines, one new and shiny, the other, under a cover, old and battered.

"Say! what do you want?" A challenging voice brought Trant around swiftly to face a scowling boy clattering down stairs.

"He wants to look at the typewriter, Robert," the girl explained.

Trant looked the boy over quietly. He was a clean-looking chap, quietly dressed and resembling his father, but was of more powerful physique. His face was marred by sullen brooding, and in his eyes there was a settled flame of defiance. The psychologist turned away, as though determined to finish first his inspection of the typewriter, and entered the room. The boy and the girl followed.

"Here, you!" said Robert Gordon, harshly, as Trant laid his hand on the cover of the old machine, "that's not the typewriter you want to look at. This is the one." And he pointed to the newer of the two.

"It's the old one I want to see," answered Trant.

The boy paled suddenly, leaped forward and seized Trant by the wrist. "Say! Who are you, anyway? What do you want to see that machine for?" he demanded, hotly. "You shall not see it, if I can help it!"

"What!" Trant faced him in obvious astonishment. "You! You in that! That alters matters!"

William Gordon had appeared suddenly in the doorway, his face as white as his son's. Robert's hand

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