

forthcoming trial would probably be a mere matter of form, seeing that the later evidence acquitted him, the magistrate readily accepted bail for a small amount, and, to Edith's astonishment, the person who guaranteed it was Mr. Alder. He came forward in the most friendly way to stand security for his rival, and would not even hear of Edith thanking him when Arthur was released through his generosity.

'I knew he was not guilty,' said this benefactor to Edith, 'and I told Gebb it was a shame keeping an innocent man in prison.'

'How can we ever thank you?' said Edith, tearfully.

There is no need to thank me, Miss Wedderburn. Of course I should like you to marry me, but as Ferris proves to be the lucky man I can only make the best of my misfortune.

In her own heart Edith could not understand the kindness of Mr. Alder, for up to the present she had always thought him hard-hearted and selfish. Perhaps the succession to the Kirkstone estates had wrought this change, for previous to the death of his cousin the barrister had been in deep water, as Basson frankly told Gebb.

'It's an ill-wind that blows nobody any good,' said the Bohemian lawyer, 'and the wretch who killed that old woman put a power of money into Alder's pocket. He isn't the man to live on nothing, and has rather expensive tastes; so, if he hadn't come in for that property, he'd have been in Queer street. It's true I'm telling you.' To which latter remark Gebb quite assented, as Alder had rather the worn look of a man who lived hard, and made the most of his life.

'It's a pity Miss Wedderburn doesn't marry him,' he observed. 'She might keep him in order. He's a ship that needs an anchor in my opinion.'

'Well, well, Mr. Gebb, Ferris is the better man of the two.'

'But not the richer. Mr. Alder has offered two hundred pounds reward for the capture of Miss Gilmar's assassin.'

'And you intend to earn it, I suppose,' said Basson, smiling.

'If I can, but at present I see no chance of finding the criminal. Upon my word,' cried Gebb, in disgust, 'against my better judgment I'm beginning to believe that Dean is guilty after all.'

'I don't think so; but if that is your idea, why don't you find Dean and tax him with the crime?' An interview with him would put the matter beyond all doubt.

'I don't know here to look for him,' said Gebb, grumbling. 'I think I shall look up Parge about the matter. If anyone knows where Dean is to be found, Parge is the man. Yes, I'll see Parge.'

'You may see Parge,' said Basson in a tone of contempt, 'but it's doubtful if you'll ever see Dean. He has vanished so completely that I should not be at all surprised to learn that he is dead. If he was alive and in hiding, surely the police would have found him out before now.'

The police only perform miracles in novels,' replied Gebb dryly, and went off to see Parge.

The fat ex-detective received him almost as wrathfully as he had done on the occasion of the previous visit. Gebb had been so busily employed in searching for Miss Gilmar's assassin that he had foolishly omitted to pay Mr. Parge the attention which that gentleman considered his due; therefore he was greeted by his chief in anything but a friendly way.

'And I don't want to hear any more excuses,' said Parge, scowling; 'too much time is lost in telling unnecessary lies. Let me know how much further you have got on with the case.'

'Glad to escape further blame, the detective related all he had discovered in relation to Ferris and Miss Wedderburn. Parge listened attentively, and was gracious enough to signify his approval of Gebb's conduct.'

'You have not done badly,' he said with a nod. 'Although your discoveries have been due more to good luck than to your own intelligence. If the girl had not confessed about her visit, and her giving of the necklace to Ferris, you would still be in doubt about his innocence.'

'No, I wouldn't,' protested Gebb. 'Before Miss Wedderburn spoke I was quite sure that Ferris was guiltless. Alder's evidence proved that he was at the lecture at the time the crime was committed.'

'It didn't prove how Ferris became possessed of the necklace, however,' snapped Parge. 'But I don't see that

you are much further on than before. Have you examined that doorkeeper as to Miss Wedderburn's presence in the lecture hall on the night and at the hour of the murder?'

'I have not had time, Simon. Tomorrow morning I am going down to see him.'

'A Grangebury, I suppose,' said Parge. 'Will you find the man there?'

'Yes, the doorkeeper is also the caretaker of the hall.'

'Then at the same time you had better call on Mrs. Presk. I suppose the goods of Miss Gilmar have been moved by Alder as her heir.'

'Yes, the body was exhumed and has been identified, and now Alder has taken possession of the estates. Prain is attending to all legal matters concerning the will, and, by Alder's direction, he dismantled the Yellow Boudoir. I don't see what I shall gain by seeing Mrs. Presk.'

'You can find out if she has discovered anything touching on the first or second murder.'

'I don't quite understand.'

'Bah!' cried Parge, angrily. 'Can't you understand that a woman would not be left in possession of a dead woman's goods, without satisfying her curiosity in some way. I'll bet you, Absalom, that Mrs. Presk has searched in all Miss Gilmar's boxes, and clothes, and papers, to find out what she can about her. Now it is just possible that Mrs. Presk may have come across that confession you talk about.'

'Do you think it exists?' asked Gebb with some scepticism.

'Yes, I do; that hint in the anonymous letter written to Basson shows that Miss Gilmar had it in her mind to do justice to the man she wronged.'

'But you declared that Dean was guilty,' said Gebb, recalling his first conversation.

'So I did; it seemed so at the time,' rejoined Parge promptly. 'But I have altered my mind; especially since you told me about that letter written by Miss Gilmar to Basson. Either she or Laura Kirkstone killed the man. I don't know which, neither do you; so, for the gratification of our mutual curiosity and the clearance of Dean, you had better find that confession.'

'Well, Simon, if that confession is anywhere, it is hidden at Kirkstone Hall.'

'It might be,' replied Parge, cautiously. 'On the other hand, Miss Gilmar might have written it after she fled from the Hall, and have carried it about with her from place to place. If Mrs. Presk has found it, she is just the kind of woman, from your description, to make money over it, by refusing to give it up until she gets her own terms. Call on Mrs. Presk, Absalom, and find out the truth.'

'I'll do so,' said Gebb, making a mental note of this, 'but what about Dean?'

'Well, I believe that Dean is guilty of murdering Miss Gilmar,' said Parge, 'even if he is innocent of the first crime. He committed the second in order to punish the woman who unjustly condemned him. I am sure he had every cause to wish her ill. She treated him most vindictively.'

'It is no use our discussing that matter,' said Gebb, tartly. 'I believe—on arguments I furnished you with before—that Dean is innocent. You think he is guilty; time and discovery may prove which of us is right. The question now is, where is he to be found?'

'I can't say, Absalom. He escaped from prison in 1893, and we hunted for him high and low, but without success. He vanished as completely as though the earth had swallowed him up. I thought myself he might have gone to Kirkstone Hall to kill Miss Gilmar; and I searched the neighbourhood, but he was nowhere to be found. From that day to this not a word has been heard of him.'

'I suppose there is no use hunting for him.'

'It is waste of time to my mind,' retorted Parge, crossly. 'You see what Mrs. Presk is doing. Question her; question the servant who—By the way, what is the servant's name?'

'Matilda Crane; but she knows nothing.'

'It's as well to ask her, however,' warned Parge. 'The people who seem to know least usually know most. Now go away, Absalom, and don't be so long in looking me up again. I'm anxious to get to the bottom of this case.'

'You can't be more anxious than I am,' replied Gebb, disconsolately.

'At all events, I am more hopeful,' rejoined Parge, and dismissed his pupil, who went away with the conviction that the old man was worn-out—

that he was past work—and that no aid or useful advice could be expected from him. But Gebb still had sufficient reverence for his elder not to hint at these things. Besides Parge might have turned the tables on him had he been too frank.

The next day he went down to Grangebury, and called at the Town Hall to interview the caretaker. He proved to be a smart ex-soldier, with an observant eye and a good memory, which gifts he made use of on the present occasion for the benefit of Gebb, and also of his own pocket.

'I remember the lady quite well,' he said, after some thought. 'The young gentleman called himself Mr. Ferris, and told me he was going in, but that a lady, by name Miss Wedderburn, would come afterwards; and he asked me to bring her up to where he was sitting in the front seats. She came in about half-past nine o'clock, but refused to let me take her up to the front, as she did not wish to disturb the lecturer. She sat down near the door, and when the lecture ended the young gentleman joined her, and they went out together.'

'Were they in the hall before ten o'clock?' asked Gebb.

'Yes, sir. Before ten and after ten. I saw them both.'

This unprejudiced testimony put the matter beyond all doubt. So Gebb gave the man a florin, and went away quite convinced that Ferris and Edith were innocent. He next called upon Mrs. Presk, and had an interview with that lady, and with her servant. What the landlady told him may be gathered from a conversation later in the day which Gebb had with Edith.

It was in the afternoon when Miss Wedderburn saw him. She was sitting with Arthur in the drawing-room of Mrs. Barrington at Bloomsbury, and were anxiously discussing the case of Miss Gilmar's death when Gebb was announced. Neither Edith nor her lover was particularly glad to see the detective, as their associations with him had been anything but plea-

sant. However, Gebb took black looks and short answers as a portion of the ill incidental to his profession, and conversed with the pair in his most amiable and persuasive fashion.

'I have been down to Grangebury to-day,' he said, addressing Edith, 'and I saw Mrs. Presk, the landlady of your late cousin. From her I obtained a railway ticket; and it is a piece of evidence of such importance that I have come to you and Mr. Ferris about it.'

'A railway ticket!' repeated Edith, looking puzzled. 'From what station?'

'The ticket,' said Gebb, producing it from his pocket-book, 'is dated the 24th July, and is a return portion from London to Norminster.'

'It is not mine then,' cried Miss Wedderburn. 'I did not take a return ticket.'

'But you came up on the 24th July from Norminster, did you not?'

'Certainly; to see Ellen. But I bought a single ticket, second class.'

'Second class,' said the detective, looking at the ticket, 'that is a third class return. Are you sure it isn't yours?'

'Quite sure,' said Edith, decisively. 'Why should I deceive you about it?'

'Why, indeed!' said Gebb, ironically, with a hint at her former deception. 'Is it yours, Mr. Ferris?'

Arthur shook his head. 'No. If I travelled at all it would be third class, I admit. But I did not go to Norminster in the month of July.'


'I thought so,' said Gebb, with an air of relief. 'Then as this ticket belongs to neither of you, some third person must have travelled from Norminster to Grangebury on the 24th July. And I believe that person,' added Gebb emphatically, 'to be the murderer of Miss Gilmar.'

'On what grounds?' cried Edith and Arthur together.

'Because Mrs. Presk found this ticket in the Yellow Boudoir. It must have been dropped there by the assassin.'

(To be Continued.)

**FAC-SIMILE OF**  
**ROYAL TESTIMONIAL**



TRADE MARK REGISTERED

**ROYAL TESTIMONIAL!**  
**ROYAL TESTIMONIAL!**

*Berlin*  
*Resensstrasse*  
*Feb 25<sup>th</sup> 1896*

*"Koko" for the hair, is  
the best dressing I know  
it keeps the head cool,  
promotes growth, and is  
in every way excellent!*

*Princess Holabke*

**KOKO FOR THE HAIR**

Eradicates Scurf and Dandruff, Prevents Hair Falling, Promotes Growth, and its  
unique Testimonials prove it to be undoubtedly the Best Preparation for the Hair.  
Perfectly Harmless, Clean, Cool, & Invigorating. 1, 2, 3 & 6 sizes, of all Chemists,  
Stores &c. THE KOKO MARICOPAS CO., LTD., 18, Bevis Marks, LONDON, E.C.