

A NOVELTY IN MYSTERY STORIES THE SECRET OF LONESOME COVE

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They left him, groaning at his door, and went to look up Dimmock, the rummage man. But he was wholly unable to throw any light on the former owner of the reports, in which the drawing had been tucked away. There the investigation seemed to be up against a blank wall.

"Isn't it astounding!" said Sedgwick. "Here's a portrait antedating 1830, of a woman who has just died, young. What was the woman I saw; a revenant in the flesh?"

"If you ask me," said Kent slowly, "I should say, rather, an imitation."

Further he would not say, but insisted on returning to the Nook. As they arrived, the telephone bell was ringing with the weary persistence of the long-unanswered. To Kent's query, Lawyer Bain's voice announced:

"I've been trying to get you for an hour."

"Sorry," said Kent. "Is it about the newspapers?"

"Yes," said the Lawyer. "I've got the information." And he stated that four newspapers went regularly to Hedgerow House.—The New York Star and Messenger and The Boston Eagle to Alexander Blair, and The Boston Free Press to Wilfred Blair.

Over this information Kent whistled in such melancholy tones that his host was moved to protest.

"You're on the track of something, and you're keeping it dark from me!"

"I'm not travelling the most brilliantly illuminated paths myself, my young friend," replied Kent, and lapsed into silence.

The artist set the Elliott sketch beside the copy, and compared them for a time. Then he fell to wandering desolately about the studio. Suddenly he turned, walked over to his friend, and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Kent, for the love of heaven, can't you do something for me?"

"You mean about the girl?"

Sedgwick nodded. "I can't get my mind to stay on anything else. Even this infernal puzzle of the pictures doesn't interest me for more than the minute. The longing for her is eating the heart out of me."

"My dear Frank," said the other quietly, "if there were anything I could do, don't you think I'd be doing it? It's a very dark tangle. And first of all I have to clear you—"

"Never mind me! What do I care what people think?"

"Or what she may think?"

Sedgwick's head drooped. "I didn't consider that."

"It may be the very center-point for consideration."

"If there were only something to do!" fretted the artist. "It's this cursed inaction that is getting my nerve!"

"If that's all," returned Kent slowly, "I'll give you something to do. And I fancy," he added grimly, "it will be sufficiently absorbing to take your mind from your troubles for a time at least."

"Bring it on. I'm ready!"

"All in good time. Meantime, here's a little test for your intelligence. Problem," continued Kent, with smile: "when the bewildered medieval mind encountered a puzzle too abstruse for ordinary human solution, what was its refuge?"

"Magic, I suppose," said Sedgwick after some consideration.

"Good! You get a high mark. The medieval mind, I may observe, was at times worthy of emulation."

"Explain."

"I am seriously thinking, my dear young friend," said Kent solemnly, "of consulting an astrologer."

"You're crazy!" retorted Sedgwick.

"I wish I were for a few hours," said Kent with entire seriousness. "It might help."

"Well, that's where I'll be if you don't find something for me to do soon. So, come on, and materialize this promised activity."

"If you regard a trip to the Martindale Public Library as activity, I can furnish that much excitement."

"What are you going to do there?"

"Consult the files of the newspapers, and pick out a likely high-class astrologer from the advertisements."

"That has a mild nutty flavor; but it doesn't excite any profound

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