

THE INVISIBLE LINK

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ave turned immediately into an amateur detective, and is just possible that—but there is nothing more futile than discussing things that are just possible!

As a matter of fact, Adam Torrance and his poor little wife did not think of the Stores at all when the agony of their great loss came upon them. They thought of nothing day or night except Elice, little baby Elice, who had just begun to be troubled by a first tooth. The circumstances of the kidnapping were, according to the newspapers, "shrouded in impenetrable mystery." They, the papers, decided that the crime was "another of those base and cruel reprisals of the poor upon the rich which defy our methods of detection and remain a blot upon the fair name of our country." Apparently it was not a case of capture for ransom. Eagerly the frantic parents waited for some word from the kidnapers, and as the suspense grew more terrible Adam Torrance let it be publicly known that he would pay. In spite of the fact that he was bound to a league of millionaires who had sworn—for the better protection of their children—that no ransoms would be paid to kidnapers, he let it be known that he would pay: nor indeed did those others seek to dissuade him. Human nature, touched in a vulnerable place, is apt to make light of contracts. In a week, to be exact, upon the day after the bargain sale, Mr. Torrance capitulated entirely. He sent a notice to the papers begging for news of his lost daughter and offering to pay anything in any way the kidnapers might demand.

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"Make it as broad and as strong as possible," the white-faced young father told the silent reporters. "I'll do anything to get the baby back. I think my wife is dying. The baby will certainly die if it is not getting good care—what can those dastardly villains know