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one thing from several people, in order that he might check one description against another. He probably had Harriet's and Avery's description of Eaton and now was getting Harriet's again.

"He would be called, I judge, a rather likable-looking man?" Santoine said tentatively; his question plainly was only meant to lead up to something else; Santoine had judged in that particular already.

"I think he makes that impression." "Certainly he does not make the impression of being a man who could be hired to commit a crime?"

"Very far from it."

"Or who would commit a crime for his own interest—material or financial interest, I mean?"

"No."

"But he might be led into crime by some personal, deeper interest. He has shown deep feeling, I believe—strong, personal feeling, Harriet?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Eaton,"—Santoine addressed him suddenly—"I understand that you have admitted that you were at the house of Gabriel Warden the evening he was killed while in his car. Is that so?"

"Yes," said Eaton.

"You are the man, then, of whom Gabriel Warden spoke to his wife?"

"I believe so."

"You believe so?"

"I mean," Eaton explained quietly, "that I came by appointment to call on Mr. Warden that night. I believe that it must have been to me that Mr. Warden referred in the conversation with his wife which has since been quoted in the newspapers."

"BECAUSE you were in such a situation that, if Mr. Warden defended you, he would himself meet danger?"

"I did not say that," Eaton denied guardedly.

"What, then, was your position in regard to Mr. Warden?"

Eaton remained silent.

"You refuse to answer?" Santoine inquired.

"I refuse."

"In spite of the probability that Mr. Warden met his death because of his intention to undertake something for you?"

"I have not been able to fix that as a probability."

The blind man stopped. Plainly he appreciated that, where Connery and Avery had failed in their questionings, he was not likely to succeed easily; and with his limited strength, he proceeded on a line likely to meet less prepared resistance.

"Mr. Eaton, have I ever injured you personally—I don't mean directly, as man to man, for I should remember that; have I ever done anything which indirectly has worked injury on you or your affairs?"

"No," Eaton answered.

"Who sent you aboard this train?"

"Sent me? No one."

"You took the train of your own will because I was taking it?"

"I have not said I took it because you were taking it."

"That seems to be proved. You can accept it from me; it has been proved. Did you take the train in order to attack me?"

"No."

"To spy upon me?"

"No."

Santoine was silent for an instant. "What was it you took the train to tell me?"

"I? Nothing."

Santoine moved his head upon the pillow.

"Father!" his daughter warned.

"Oh, I am careful, Harriet; Dr. Sinclair allows me to move a little. . . . Mr. Eaton, in one of the three answers you have just given me, you are not telling the truth. I defy you to find in human reasoning more than four reasons why my presence could have made you take this train in the manner and with the attending circumstances you did. You took it to injure me, or to protect me from injury; to learn something from me, or to inform me of something. I discard the second of these possibilities because you asked for a berth in another car, and for other reasons which make it impossible. However, I will ask it of

you. Did you take the train to protect me from injury?"

"No."

"Which of your former answers do you wish to change, then?"

"None."

"You deny all four possibilities?"

"Yes."

"Then you are using denial only to hide the fact, whatever it may be; and of the four possibilities I am obliged to select the first as the most likely."

"You mean that I attacked you?"

"That is not what I said. I said you must have taken the train to injure me, but that does not mean necessarily that it was to attack me with your own hand. Any attack aimed against me would be likely to have several agents. There would be somewhere, probably, a distant brain that had planned it; there would be an intelligent brain near by to oversee it; and there would be a strong hand to perform it. The overseeing brain and the performing hand—or hands—might belong to one person, or to two, or more. How many there were I cannot now determine, since people were allowed to get off the train. The conductor and Avery

"Father!"

"Yes, Harriet; but I expected better of Avery. Mr. Eaton, as you are plainly withholding the truth as to your reason for taking this train, and as I have suffered injury, I am obliged—from the limited information I now have—to assume that you knew an attack was to be made by some one, upon that train. In addition to the telegram, addressed to you under your name of Eaton, and informing of my presence on the train, I have also been informed, of course, of the code message received by you addressed to Hillward. You refused, I understand, to favor Mr. Avery with an explanation of it; do you wish to give one now?"

"No," said Eaton.

"It has, of course, been deciphered," the blind man went on calmly. "The fact that it was based upon your pocket English-Chinese dictionary as a word-book was early suggested; the deciphering from that was simply a trial of some score of ordinary enigma plans, until the meaning appeared."

Eaton made no comment. Santoine went on:

"And that very interesting meaning presented another possible explanation—not as to your taking the train, for as to that there can be only the four I mentioned—but as to the attack itself, which would exonerate you from participation in it. It is because of this that I am treating you with the consideration I do. If that explanation were correct, you would—"

"What?"

"You would have had nothing to do with the attack, and yet you would know who made it."

At this, Eaton stared at the blind man and wet his lips.

"What do you mean?" he said.

SANTOINE did not reply to the question. "What have you been doing yesterday and to-day?" he asked.

"Waiting," Eaton answered.

"For what?"

"For the railroad people to turn me over to the police."

"So I understand. That is why I asked you. I don't believe in cat-and-mouse methods, Mr. Eaton; so I am willing to tell you that there is no likelihood of your being turned over to the police immediately. I have taken this matter out of the hands of the railroad people. We live in a complex world, Mr. Eaton, and I am in the most complex current of it. I certainly shall not allow the publicity of a police examination of you to publish the fact that I have been attacked so soon after the successful attack upon Mr. Warden—and in a similar manner—until I know more about both attacks and about you—why you came to see Warden that night and how, after failing to see him alive, you followed me, and whether that fact led to the attempt at my life."

Eaton started to speak, and then stopped.

"What were you going to say?" Santoine urged.

"I will not say it," Eaton refused.

"However, I think I understand your impulse. You were about to remind me that there has been nothing to in-