

That night when he was alone, and should by rights have been asleep, he sat up on the heap of shavings under the counter in the store, which at the present served him for a bedroom, and pulled the locket out of its bag, to inspect it once again.

It was strange what a fascination the thing had for him. He told himself that this was because it had belonged to his father, whom he had never known, but perhaps it was because his father had set such value on it, that even in deep poverty it was not to be parted with, which made Elgar feel that he must value it also.

Holding it close to the kerosene lamp, which was really much too near the shavings for safety, Elgar espied a hinge in the side of the locket, and a very little more prodding resulted in the locket coming open in his hand.

He had no idea what it was that he had expected to see, but he was certainly surprised to find on one side the portrait of a man whose face was vaguely familiar, and on the other a tiny full length picture of a lady holding a fan.

After all it was the sight of that fan in the lady's hand which gave him the clue to where he had seen the portrait of the man before, and rummaging in his pocket for the bit of carved ivory wrapped up in sodden cardboard, he drew it out, and compared the two.

Yes, strange as it seemed, the two were portraits of the same man, but who was the man ?

In his effort to puzzle the matter out to his own satisfaction, Elgar lifted his eyes to the window, and then was startled to find a face pressed against the glass, and staring in at the thing in his hand. It was a white face, the chin covered with a dark beard, that was the impression which he got, for at his startled exclamation, the intruder swiftly disappeared.