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"But she wasn't," retorted the station-master. "And you say you saw her brother only a few minutes before you got into the train at St. Anton's Park?"

"Yes, though that has nothing to do with this," answered Max, with a glance at the silent figure. "My being in the same compartment with Miss Chase was entirely accidental; if I had gone into another compartment I should not have known she was in the train at all. Do you not understand?"

"You mean—that when you got into this compartment, sir, she was in the same state then that she is in now, and you had no notion there was anything wrong?"

"Precisely," said Max; "that is the case."

"You thought she was asleep after you got into the compartment because she sat so motionless, and when the train pulled up here you thought she was still asleep and tried to wake her?"

"I saw him trying," said the porter, who had witnessed Max's efforts at arousing Sylvia Chase. The man had returned to the platform, and by his side was a policeman.

"Yes; just so," said Max.

"It sounds rather strange," said the station-master, with an accent of doubt, "but I dare say it's all right so far as you are concerned, Mr. Hamilton."

"Oh, yes," rejoined Max, and he beckoned to the constable, who came into the compartment, looked at the lady, and then asked Max what he had to tell him about the case—which Max did, while the officer took notes of what he said.

"I must ask you to wait for a few minutes at least," said the constable to Max whom he eyed in a curious manner.

"Certainly. I am deeply interested, naturally, and I wish to hear what the doctor has to say," Max answered readily.

"Oh, he can do no good," said the policeman, with decision. "She's past all help; she's dead. I wonder what is the cause of her death, but the doctor will soon tell us."

He looked at Max.

"And you are Mr. Hamilton of 'The Day'?"

"Yes."

"I know your name, sir," he said, "for I've taken in your paper every morning for years."

But the station-master broke in, with some impatience.

"What are you going to do?" he asked the constable. "We must shift the train; it cannot stop here unless it's absolutely necessary; we ought to run it on to the line just behind the station where it will stop until it's wanted again in a few hours. Shall I have a stretcher brought? The lady can be put into the waiting-room for the present."

"Very well," said the constable, after some hesitation; he took a rapid yet keen survey of the compartment. So far he had not touched the body, probably because he had made up his mind from the beginning that it was the body of a dead person. He now drew up Sylvia's veil, and put his hand upon her cheeks which were not yet rigid.

"She's been dead only a short time," he remarked to Max.

"Yes; I told you that when I felt her wrist it was not cold," he replied. "I did not feel sure that she was dead."

THE constable scanned Sylvia's face minutely, as did Max who, now that the veil no longer partially concealed it, read not only death in it but something unnatural, something terrible. For the first time there flashed upon him the thought that there had been foul play.

"Mr. Hamilton," said the constable, "I read those articles of yours in 'The Day' which you wrote during the war between Russia and Japan. On the battlefields in Manchuria you must have seen the faces of many men who died a violent death." He paused suggestively. "Looking at that," he went on, nodding at the white face, "would you not say that Miss Chase had died a violent death?"

"But it is so improbable," said Max, following out his own line of thought.

"Why should she kill herself, or why should anyone kill her?"

"Ah, I see," said the constable, who was a man of experience, "you have been thinking the same thing as myself."

"Yes—looking at her face just now, it flashed upon me that there might have been foul play. But why? Who could have done it?"

It was the question many people were to ask in the days that were to come.

"Who could have done it?" repeated the constable.

"Who could have a motive for killing her?" asked Max. "And it's hardly likely she would kill herself!" he protested.

"I suppose not. But I don't think I can have the body taken out of the compartment till after the doctor has seen it; he ought to see the position it is in."

Two porters had appeared with a stretcher.

"No," said the constable to the station-master; "I think we must wait for the doctor."

"The train must remain here, then?"

"It can't be for very long," said the constable soothingly. "The doctor must come soon."

All this had taken place much more rapidly than it can be written. The train, a few minutes late, had come into the station about a quarter to twelve, and it was not quite midnight when a middle-aged man, of distinctly professional aspect, came into the compartment.

"Ah, Doctor Wagstaff," said the station-master, with a sigh of relief; "here you are at last!"

"I came as quickly as I could," said the doctor, and immediately turned his attention to the unfortunate lady, while the others watched his every movement.

"She's dead," he said almost at once, and his voice was uncommonly grave. "But she must have died very recently," he continued; "within the last hour, I should say."

He held his fingers, which were stained, to the light.

"Blood," he said, simply. "It comes from her clothes just over her heart. I must make a further examination before the body is moved. This is a serious business."

He was not more than a minute or two in giving his verdict.

"There is a wound over the heart," he said. He looked at the body. "Has it been moved?" he asked the constable who thereupon looked at Max.

"It has not been moved," said Max. "Except for the head, the body is in the same position in which it was when I saw it on entering the compartment at St. Anton's station."

"Then," said the doctor, positively, "the wound was never self-inflicted. The lady has been murdered."

The constable nodded at Max, as much as to say, "What did I not hint to you?"

"Murdered!" cried the station-master, and there were murmurs among the little crowd on the platform.

"I cannot say more," observed Wagstaff, "—at the moment; there will have to be a careful investigation of the wound. You know what to do," he said to the policeman.

"It's a case for the coroner and for us," the constable answered. "The body must be removed to the mortuary," he said to the station-master, "and the compartment must be sealed up. I'll telephone to Scotland Yard, and a superintendent will come who will take charge of the case."

"What about the train?" inquired the station-master.

"You can move it, once the body has been taken away and I have sealed up the compartment," was the reply.

Max handed his card to Dr. Wagstaff who read it.

"Your name is well-known to me, Mr. Hamilton," said the doctor civilly, but something in his glance asked what Max was doing there. Max told him the circumstances in a few words.

"When did you get into the train?" asked the doctor.

"The train was due at St. Anton's Park at 11.24, but I fancy it was a minute or two late, otherwise I could scarcely have caught it," Max replied.

"Ah, 11.24. I should put her death a few minutes, perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes, earlier," said the doctor.