

made the victim of a practical joke. He dismissed the thought; such a thing was so unlike her. He walked around the little park, hoping he had mistaken the row of benches. She was not there. He read the letter again. It was plain enough—the sixth bench. He counted the benches, beginning at the church. One—two—three—four—five. There were only five benches in the row.

As he gazed stupidly at the fifth bench a man beside him said—

“That is the bench, sir.”

“What do you mean?” cried McLane, turning toward him, astonished at the remark.

“It was there that the young girl was found dead this morning—poisoned, they say.”

McLane stared at him—and then he said huskily—

“Who—was she?”

“Nobody knows that—yet. We will soon know, for everybody, as you see, is going into the Morgue. She’s the only one on the bench to-day. Better go before the crowd gets greater. I have been twice.”

McLane sank on the seat and drew his hand across his forehead.

He knew she was waiting for him on the sixth bench—the furthest from the church!