

# CRIM

By FRED. M. WHITE, Author of "The Robe of Lucifer," etc.

**A story of a novel type, stirring, fascinating  
the most striking success in recent fiction.**

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## CHAPTER XL—(Continued.)

"I fancy I can even explain that, dear Madam. I came down suddenly today from London. I have certain papers in a locked-up bureau. Now, those papers were locked up in a drawer at 219 given over specially to Mr. Henson. My uncle promptly broke open the drawer and took out the papers. But, madam, I have in my pocket a package in which is one of Lockhart's big linen-lined envelopes—a registered letter envelope, in fact. My uncle had little time to spare, so he hid the package in the bureau last night. He suggested that as the back of the drawer was broken and the envelope presumably contained valuables, I had better not open it. I did so, however, the one time that I stole the envelope open. I shouldn't have done so if Lockhart's name had not been on the flap. In a little case inside I found a diamond bracelet, which I have in my pocket, together with a receipted bill for seventy odd pounds made out to me."

"Do you?" David cried. "Do you mean to say that—?"

"Indeed I do. The receipt was made out to me, and with it was a little polite note to the effect—'Dear Madam, I have in exchange the cigar case for the diamond bracelet, and that they hoped Miss Gates would find the matter perfectly satisfactory.'"

"You are astonished to say anything for the moment. The skein was too tangled to be thought out all at once. I presently began to see his way."

"I am not astonished," said Madam, "change seems impossible," he said. "Especially seeing that the juggling could not have been done without both the cases and I had thought previously that the case was a forgery. I have it! What is the date of that letter?"

Ruth slowly unfolded a document she had taken from her pocket. "I am not sure," she said, "of your calling your 'great adventure,' she said. 'Henson or somebody took the real case—was sent back to Lockhart's by chance. It was a forgery. I have been admiring this self-made bracelet, and they had tried to sell it to me. My dear boy, don't you see this is all part of the plot to plunge me into a trap. I must be careful not to force us all to speak to save you? There are at least fifteen assistants at Lockhart's. Of course the ultimate sale of the cigar case was made by the assistant I overheard, seeing that the case had got back into the store again, and at the same time the incident of the change quite forgotten. And when you go and ask questions, you will find that the assistant is sure to do, as Henson knew—you are told of the sale only to the American. Depend upon it, that American was Henson's man, and some of the things that man is so cunning, too complex. And some of these days it is going to prove his fall.' David nodded thoughtfully. And yet, without admitting it, he was sure that the sale in the way of a scheme, Henson could not have placed him in his present position."

"There is only one thing to be done," he said. "You and I must go down to Lockhart's and make a few inquiries. With that diamond bracelet and letter in your possession, you will be able to call up and refresh their memories. Will you have some tea?"

"I am too excited," Ruth laughed. "I couldn't eat or drink. I must go at once to David, who is a lovely house you have."

"I'm glad to hear that you are going to like it," David said, dryly.

"I am not," said Madam, "of customers in the usual curly style. They were sorry they had no recollection of the transaction to which madam referred. The sale was duly and properly recorded on the books, and as indeed was the sale of the gun-metal cigar case to an American gentleman."

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## CHAPTER XLI.

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(To be continued.)