

CASE 113

(Continued from page 6)

"any cause for believing that M. Fauvel robbed himself? If you have, say so."

The prisoner preserved a rigid silence.

"I see, monsieur," said the judge, "that you need time for reflection. Listen to the reading of your examination, and after signing it you will return to prison."

The unhappy man was overcome. The last ray of hope was gone. He signed the paper without looking at it. He tottered as he left the judge's office so that the keeper was forced to support him.

If Prosper had remained an hour longer in the gallery, he would have seen the same bailiff who had called him come out of the judge's office and cry out:

"Number three!"

Witness No. 3, who was awaiting his turn and answered the call, was M. Fauvel.

Although he had very slightly examined Prosper, the judge was now scrupulously attentive and particular in having every question answered.

"Did you ever suspect your cashier of being dishonest?" he asked.

"Certainly not. Yet there were a thousand reasons which should have made me distrustful."

"What reasons?"

"M. Bertomy gambled. I have known of his spending whole nights at the gaming table and losing immense sums of money. He was intimate with a bad set. Once he was mixed up with one of my clients, M. de Clameran, in a scandalous gambling affair."

"You must confess, monsieur," interrupted the judge, "that you were very imprudent, not to say culpable, to have intrusted your safe to such a man."

"Ah, monsieur, Prosper was not always thus. Until the past year he was a model of goodness. He was received into my house as one of my family. He spent all of his evenings with us and was the bosom friend of my eldest son, Lucien. Then suddenly he left us and never came to the house again. Yet I had every reason to believe him attached to my niece Madeleine."

"Then you can see no motive for your cashier's conduct?"

The banker paused to reflect.

"It is impossible for me to account for it. I have, however, always supposed that Prosper was led astray by a young man whom he met at the house about nine o'clock, M. Raoul de Lagors."

"A relative of my wife, a charming fellow, but somewhat wild, though rich enough to pay his way?"

The judge listened attentively to this, then wrote the name Lagors at the bottom of an already long list of his memoranda.

"Now," he said, "we are coming to the point. You are sure that the robbery was not committed by any in your house?"

"Quite sure, monsieur."

"You always kept your key?"

"Usually I carried it about on my person, and whenever I left it at home I put it in the secret drawer in my bed chamber."

"Where was it the evening of the robbery?"

"In my secretary."

"But then?"

"Pardon me for interrupting you," said M. Fauvel, "and permit me to tell you that to a safe like mine the key is of no importance. In the first place, one must know the word upon which the five movable buttons turn. With the word one can open it without the key, but without the word—"

"And this word you never told to any one?"

"To no one in the world, monsieur, and sometimes I would have been puzzled to know myself with what word the safe had been shut."

"Had you forgotten it on the day of the theft?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"

"No; I dined and spent the evening with a friend. When I returned home about 1 o'clock, my wife was in bed, and I went to bed immediately."

"And you were ignorant of what was done in the safe?"

"No; the word had been changed the day before, and its peculiarity struck me."

"What was it?"

"Gipsy—G-i-p-s-y," said the banker, spelling the name.

M. Patriget wrote down the name.

"One more question, monsieur. Were you at home the evening before the robbery?"</