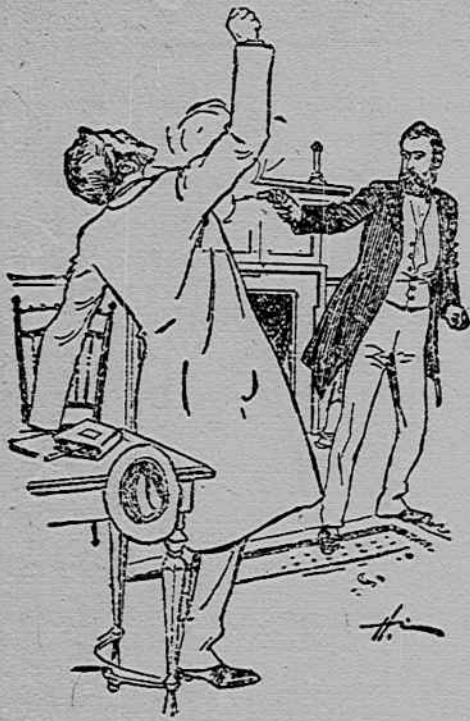


The Watchman and Southron.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 5, 1898.

**NO CONFLICT OF EVIDENCE.**  
BY RODRIGUES OTTOLENGUI  
AUTHOR OF "AN ARTIST IN CRIME ETC."  
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"I shot him and he died almost without a struggle."

to scorch and disfigure him beyond recognition. I then laid him down near the hearth so that it would appear that he had dropped there and had been burned afterward. Next I hurriedly wrote the slips of paper found by Virgie and the detectives, through which I meant to point to young Marvel as the murderer, forgetting that science would prove that death had been instantaneous and therefore that the victim had not had time to make such an accusation.

"When I first bought this house, foreseeing the necessity for this crime, I caused this secret room to be constructed, to do which it was only necessary to close up the closets which originally opened into the adjoining rooms. Here I had everything that I would need in this emergency, and therefore came to this room and quickly shaved off my beard. Then I washed out my hair and eyebrows, using a liquid which I kept specially for this purpose. Thus they were restored to their natural red color and would easily prevent my identification. Any resemblance in face or voice I hoped would be accepted as a natural inheritance of a son from his father. I left my own clothing in my sleeping room to give color to the theory that I had retired. The dead man's effects I packed in a satchel, except his overcoat, which I slipped on over the sailor's suit which I had adopted. I easily caught the train, which passes Lee Depot at 10:30, and thus it will be seen that the crime occurred while Virgie and young Marvel were together across the river. I left the train at Epping. Here fate favored me, for a hotel man gave me a lift in his wagon and claimed that he recognized me as young Marvel. So I admitted that he had guessed my name. Leaving him, I went to the old house belonging to Marvel, and here I burned the articles that I had in the satchel, among which there must have been some wire, which Burrows afterward, to strengthen his theory, erroneously claimed was a part of a set of false whiskers. Next I hid the pistol and the piece of plate which had my name engraved on it and which I broke from the satchel. In rearranging the stones I did so in such a clumsy way that any one would discover it was hidden beneath.

"It was now but half past 11, and, thinking there was sufficient time before me, I threw myself on the bed and tried to sleep. I had not been there more than two or three hours, however, when I heard some one enter the house. I started up and sprang to the window. The boughs of a huge elm were quite near, and I easily stepped into the tree. Here I remained hidden by the dense foliage, for, despite the danger, I could not resist the curiosity to know who it was that was in the house. In a very few moments a light appeared, and I clearly saw that it was young Walter Marvel himself. Everything seemed to favor my plot. Waiting until his light was extinguished again and until I could slip out of the tree without attracting his attention I stole silently away. I walked to New Market Junction, where I boarded the early morning train for New Market, for to that place on foot, I wished to give color to the story which I intended to tell, of having come from Portsmouth, by being seen to leave the proper train. During this short ride the conductor pointed out to me two men and told me that they were detectives. It was these same two that I afterward recognized at the saloon, when the squire informed me that he was taking detectives to my house. I was startled, not unnaturally, to learn that experienced men would be on the scene of the crime so early, and in my agitation I almost betrayed myself, as I know, because Burrows questioned me afterward.

"Another unexpected event was when my dog recognized me at the house and plainly showed his friendship. Strange as it may seem, this possibility, obvious as it should have been, had not even occurred to me. A man who commits a crime always overlooks something. I was so taken by surprise that I scarcely knew what to do, for the animal is so savage that it would, of course, look strange to the squire to see him fawn upon a stranger. However, I made a lame attempt at explanation, but poor as it was it served to lull suspicion.

"That night, as fate would have it, I was assigned to my own room, and, thinking over the whole affair, it suddenly occurred to me that a post-mortem would reveal the fact that one wound had caused instantaneous death, and, for all that I could tell at that time, the other might be of the same character. However, I saw at a glance that the only way to explain the presence of the paper which I had written would be by supposing one wound to have been made by either of the shots which had been fired from the lawn. In that event the position of the wound on the body would lead the detectives to search for the corresponding hole through my clothing. I therefore determined to secrete these garments in this apartment, and to let their disappearance be a part of the mystery.

"Everything went as I had planned, except that the paper fell into the hands of Virgie, and led her to believe in young Marvel's guilt. Thus, in her ef-

orts to save him, she herself became entangled in the affair and even accused herself of the crime. To prevent the consequences of this, I led Mr. Barnes to where he would find the evidence which I had manufactured against young Marvel. I wished to remain behind to search for the bundle which he claimed to have thrown into the river, and which I would have destroyed if I had found it. But the shrewd detective would not allow me to leave him. When we reached Epping, we found Burrows ahead of us. He had ferreted out all that I wished to be discovered. I congratulated myself that all would yet be well, when Mr. Barnes at once demonstrated the fact that Marvel could prove an alibi, or else that Virgie must be considered an accomplice.

"Thus I have no recourse but to die. The truth must be known that the innocent may not suffer. It is hard that what I have so long and earnestly guarded should at last be revealed. I have been a victim of circumstances, rather than a criminal, and it seems unjust. I suppose I should not have raised my hand against my fellow man, and, though it was, as I thought, in self defense, still it is true that I had long premeditated the killing, and so I bow my head to the stroke of fate. The one pang that I suffer is that, after all these years, my niece must learn what a villain her father was and that her uncle is a murderer and a suicide.

"I am confident that Mr. Barnes suspects the truth and that his skill will place him in a position to unravel the mystery. Should he be the one, as I think likely, to discover my dead body and this writing, it is the last prayer of a doomed man that if his fertile brain can invent a tale whereby Virgie will be kept in ignorance of my sin he will exert himself to that end. If not, I humbly pray that Virgie will pardon me for the misery which I have caused her, that she may enjoy long years of happiness, and that in time she may come to think of me as one who loved her dearly and who now cheerfully sacrifices his life to insure her safety. And now, God's will be done, and may he have mercy on my soul."

"Amen!" exclaimed Mr. Barnes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DETECTIVE BARNES SURPRISES DETECTIVE BURROWS.

"A noble man destroyed by a cruel chain of circumstances," thought Mr. Barnes, as he concluded the perusal of the tale. He then leaned his elbow on the table and, with his mouth partly open, beat a tattoo upon his teeth with his finger ends, a habit of his when lost in thought and intent upon some knotty problem. He sat thus for more than a quarter of an hour, and then muttered:

"I have it. That man's secret shall be preserved."

Carefully placing the document in his pocket, he then gathered up all the writing materials that lay on the table, his idea being to prevent any one from entertaining the suspicion that the dead man had left any telltale writing behind him. Satisfied that this was accomplished, he descended to the room below and awaited the arrival of the squire, who, in due time, came with Virginia, accompanied also by Burrows and Dr. Snow.

"Ah! Mr. Barnes," said the squire, "Virgie tells me that you have solved the mystery of this murder."

"Yes, sir. Chance has favored me, and I am glad that I have succeeded in saving the accused without the necessity of a trial."

"Are you sure you can do that?" asked Burrows.

"Oh, yes. I could demand Marvel's discharge, even though I had not discovered the real murderer, for I have the disguise which he threw into the river, and in the pocket of the vest I found the locket which he said would be there."

Burrows was astounded, but was unwilling to give up his pet theory without a struggle.

"How do you account for the initials of the accused being on the locket found in the dead man's hands?"

"They also appear on the one which I found in the vest and which I have here. You may examine it, and you will observe that it is the facsimile of the other. Thus it is plain that there were originally two, and I presume that by a coincidence these are the initials also of Miss Lewis' mother. She is not certain, as she only knows one of the names, 'Matilda.' The other must have begun with 'W.'"

Mr. Barnes knew better than this, but he had decided to suppress the truth, and therefore he accounted for this point as best he could. He then related the means by which he had recovered the bundle, and Burrows, at the conclusion of his tale, exclaimed:

"Well, Mr. Barnes, you have entirely overturned my theory, and the only satisfaction left to me is that the innocent will not be made to suffer through me."

"Mr. Barnes," said the squire, "you have not told us yet who the murderer is and how you discovered him."

"It is very simple. By an unaccountable prejudice I suspected that this man was not what he claimed to be. You recall his story of having been at school in New York. I repaired thither and learned that no such boy had ever been there. Mr. Lewis, it seems, made a present to the academy years ago, and this man must have found some of the letters which Mr. Lewis received while stopping there, and, using the envelopes to get the dates right, forged the inclosed letters which he showed to you."

"Then you came back here, I suppose, to arrest him?"

"Exactly, and I find him dead. That would seem to prove that he feared discovery and took his life to evade arrest. However, that is not sufficient for me. I must find out the exact object of this crime and will do so. I promise you that if you will delay the inquest till Tuesday, so as to give me a chance to follow up a clew which I have, I will endeavor to clear up the whole matter."

The squire willingly acquiesced. Mr. Barnes hastened to New York as speedily as possible and learned from the spy that the woman had made no effort to change her place of residence, perhaps

realizing the uselessness of so doing after what had taken place in her apartment. He went at once to the hotel, and, sending his name up, was shown into her presence. As soon as he entered she began:

"I do not know why I have allowed you to come up to see me!"

"I do!" replied Mr. Barnes tersely.

"Then tell me."

"Curiosity."

"You are clever. Now, satisfy my curiosity."

"I came here to tell you all that I have discovered."

"Well?"

"I was engaged to find your husband."

"Yes. Go on."

"I have found him."

"Where?"

"Where I told you that I would. He left this city with a murderous intent, and I looked for him in the vicinity of the crime."

"He has not killed any one. I will not believe it."

"No; his guilty plans reacted on himself."

"What do you mean?"

"He is dead."

"Merciful God!"

"Yes; the Almighty has been merciful to him if we consider the wrong that he had done and still meditated. His victims have suffered far more than he. Now, madam, let us come to business at once. You must go with me."

"Go with you? Where?"

"To New Hampshire. Listen! Your husband, as you call him, went up there to commit a crime which he had threatened many years ago—namely, to kill this man Lewis. He reached the house and met Lewis, but the latter had long awaited his coming and was prepared for his arrival. Before your husband could carry out his design a bullet ended his career."

"This is terrible. Why did he go? I warned him that the man would not allow himself to be harmed."

"Ah! Then, as I supposed, you knew his intentions before he went. However, as he did not succeed you cannot be held on that charge. To continue, Lewis, as I have said, killed Marvel. He then succeeded in making every one believe that it was his own body which was found, while he passed off for his son, just returned from sea. This might have been a successful ruse had not a strange chain of circumstances implicated his niece in the affair, and despairing of proving her innocence in any other way he committed suicide, leaving a full confession."

"I don't see what I have to do with all this."

"You will in a moment. If the truth is exposed, the knowledge must come to this girl of who and what her father was, besides the fact that her uncle killed him. This I have determined shall not be. Justice makes no such demand, and I choose to give this girl a future unclouded by such a past."

"How will you hide the truth?"

"I must invent a tale which will fit the circumstances, and you must substantiate the story."

"I will do nothing of the kind."

"Oh! Yes, you shall. You will have no choice in the matter."

"I tell you I will not. Who is this girl? The daughter of the woman who crossed the sea to take my husband away from me."

"You and that man, by your heartless treatment of that woman, hastened, I may say caused, her death."

"What do I care for that? If you think I will help you to spare the delicate feelings of this girl, you do not know me."

"It is just because I imagine that I do know you that I am so confident that you will aid me."

"What do you mean?"

"You must choose between obeying me and absolute poverty."

"How so?"

"I will explain. Marvel married this girl's mother, and she is his child. His wife was alive when you married him, and, according to your confession to her, when she met you in Paris, you knew of this first marriage, but chose to ignore it. If you had been united in this state, I could easily have you imprisoned for that bigamous marriage, but fortunately for you, you were married abroad. However, I will not let you slip through my fingers for all that. I think you did what you attributed to the real wife. You were anxious to share Marvel's position and his fortune, and therefore I believe you will do anything for money. So I intend to manage you through your cupidity. If you persist in your obstinacy, I will reveal all that I have learned and will see that steps are taken to gain possession of Marvel's property for his rightful heir, his daughter. Moreover, you shall be made to give up whatever moneys you now have of his, as they become a part of his estate. This will be simple, for, as you can easily be shown by the records of the Parisian court to be the bigamous wife only, of course you would be entitled to no share in his property."

"How is it that you are so well informed?"

"It is my profession to be well informed. I have no time to spare. Choose!"

"You are a devil!" Then, after a few minutes' hesitation, "What is it that you wish me to do?"

"So! You decide that my way is best, do you? You are wise! Well, then, you will return with me, and on the way I will explain what I require of you. Obey me and no harm shall come to you."

The inquest over the dead body which had been found in the secret room attracted even more interest and a greater crowd than had the first. All looked eagerly forward to the explanation promised by Mr. Barnes, and loud were the praises which he received on every side. At length the moment arrived, and the woman whom the detective had brought with him against her will was made to take the stand. Prompted by Mr. Barnes, Mr. Tupper conducted the examination of this witness:

"Will you give your name if you please, madam?"

"Mrs. Horace Paul."

"You have seen the body of the deceased?"

"I have."

"Do you recognize it?"

"I do. It is the body of my husband." This caused a sensation.

"Can you give any reason why he should have wished to harm Mr. Lewis?"

"He knew Mr. Lewis long ago and did some work for him. My husband was an architect and a practical carpenter. Mr. Lewis engaged him when he first came to this town to build a secret apartment in his house. Mr. Lewis was very anxious that no one should know of this hiding place, and that is why he brought a man from a distant city to do this work. His anxiety to keep his secret, coupled with the fact that he paid my husband an immense sum of money and stipulated that he should never return to Lee, made my husband suspect that it must have been a storehouse for money that he wished to use it. He spoke so often of this that, fearing he might be tempted to investigate it, at length I persuaded him to go with me to Europe. Lately, however, he insisted on returning, as we had used up most of our means. I did not believe, after so many years, that he would again think of this 'hidden treasure,' as he was wont to call it. But now I see it must have been that which brought him here."

After this testimony she was allowed to retire, and Mr. Barnes took the stand to make a statement.

"Before we give this case to the jury I should like to say that I think this man remained after the crime was committed with the intention of searching for the treasure. Mr. Burrows will testify that he heard him in the secret chamber during the first night after the murder. I think he assumed the personality of the dead man's son as the best means of enjoying the fortune which he expected to obtain as well as to avoid suspicion most effectually. Failing to find any treasure or to inherit under the will, it was still his only means of safety to remain. Fear or remorse at last impelled suicide, a not unusual thing with criminals of an intellectual order."

The verdict of the jury placed the responsibility for the murder on the dead man, and indeed, though it little understood the true facts of the case, that was where it justly belonged.

There still remained one or two points about which Mr. Barnes felt a curiosity, and at the first opportunity after Marvel's release he questioned him.

"Mr. Marvel," said he, "how is it that you thought that Mr. Lewis was dead, as we supposed him to be when I spoke to you on the vessel at Portsmouth?"

"I guessed it. I had received a letter from Miss Lewis, in which she used the

words 'after the events of last night.' I did not quite understand this at first, though I placed no special importance on it until you told me that a murder had been committed. It flashed over my mind in a moment that it was to this that Virgie had alluded, and I feared that she and her uncle had quarreled on her return to the house after leaving me and that in a fit of passion she had killed him. That is why I refused to go back with you. I did not wish to be a witness against her. Afterward it dawned upon me that I myself must have been suspected, or you would never have come after me. Then I was anxious to return."

"That explains the point in question, but there is one other matter. Why was it that Mr. Everly sent you a letter that night and that you went to Epping instead of going to Portsmouth?"

"I formed the idea of going to Portsmouth after I reached the farm that night. Previously I had sent word to Everly, asking him to get some money for me and explaining how he could forward it without betraying my whereabouts. If he had brought it himself, his presence in Epping might have excited suspicion, as he was well known to be my friend. I knew that we could trust the matter to Harrison, and I suggested him as the bearer of the letter and money. To receive these I was compelled to go to Epping."

"Some months later Mr. Barnes received cards to the nuptials of Virginia Lewis and Walter Marvel and was pleased to attend the ceremony. The bride and groom went abroad on their honeymoon. A few days after their departure Squire Olney sent to the detective a certified check for \$5,000, with the information that it must be accepted from the newly married couple, as Virginia happily expressed it, "in part payment for our happiness, which we enjoy through you." They had delayed making this presentation until they should be out of the country, lest Mr. Barnes might endeavor to return the gift. Appreciating the intentions which prompted its bestowal, Mr. Barnes accepted the money. He is now his own master, being chief of a private bureau which he has established in New York. I may as well mention, also, that Burrows manfully apologized to Mr. Barnes for his actions in this case and was once more received into the good graces of the more experienced detective.

THE END.

Watch for the next story.

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**CONDENSED SCHEDULE.**  
TRAINS GOING SOUTH.

Date	Dec. 23, 1897.	No. 55.	No. 56.
Leave Wilmington		P. M. 7:40	
Leave Marion	6:45		
Arrive Florence	7:25		
Leave Florence		P. M. 8:00	A. M. 9:30
Arrive Sumter	9:10		4:40
Leave Sumter		P. M. 8:55	A. M. 10:55
Arrive Columbia		10:30	10:55

No. 52 runs through from Charleston via Central R. R., leaving Charleston 7 a. m., Lanes 8 28 a. m., Sparing 9 05 a. m.

**TRAINS GOING NORTH.**

Date	No. 52.	No. 53.
Leave Columbia	A. M. 7:00	P. M. 8:00
Arrive Sumter	8:22	6:20
Leave Sumter	A. M. 8:25	No. 52. P. M. 9:30
Arrive Florence	9:35	7:45
Leave Florence	A. M. 10:05	
Leave Marion	10:44	
Arrive Wilmington	1:25	

\*Daily. †Daily except Sunday.

No. 53 runs through to Charleston, S. O., via Central R. R., arriving Marion 6 58 p. m., Lanes 7 36 p. m., Charleston 9 15 p. m. Trains on Conway Branch leave Chadborn 11 50 a. m., arrive at Conway way 2 10 p. m., returning leave Conway at 2 45 p. m., arrive Chadborn 5 15 p. m.; leave Chadborn 7 45 p. m., arrive at Hub at 8 25 p. m., return to leave Hub 8 30 a. m., arrive at Chadborn 9 15 a. m. Daily except Sunday.

†Daily except Sunday.  
J. J. KENLY, Gen'l Manager.  
T. M. BERNERSON, Traffic Manager.  
H. M. BERNERSON, Gen'l Pass. Agent.

**Wilson and Summerton R. R.**

In effect January 15th, 1898.

**TRAINS GOING NORTH.**

Leave Wilson Mill	No. 72. P. M.	Arrive Summerton
" Jordan,	9:10 a m	9:36 a m
" Davis,	9:35 a m	9:55 a m
" Summerton,	10:10 a m	
" Millard,	10:45 a m	
" Silver,	11:10 a m	
" Pocksville,	11:30 p m	
" Tindal,	11:55 p m	
" W. & S. Junc.,	12:27 p m	
Ar. Sumter,	12:30 p m	

**TRAINS GOING SOUTH.**

Leave Sumter,	No. 73. P. M.	Arrive Wilson Mill
" W. & S. Junc.,	2:30 p m	2:33 p m
" Tindal,	2:50 p m	
" Pocksville,	3:10 p m	
" Silver,	3:35 p m	
" Millard,	3:45 p m	
" Summerton,	4:40 p m	
" Davis,	5:20 p m	
" Jordan,	5:56 p m	
Ar. Wilson Mill,	6:30 p m	

Trains between Millard and St. Paul leave Millard 10 15 a. m. and 3 45 p. m., arriving St. Paul 10 25 a. m. and 3 55 p. m. Returning leave St. Paul 10 25 a. m. and 4 10 p. m., and arrive Millard 10 45 a. m. and 4 20 p. m. Daily except Sunday.

\*Daily except Sunday.  
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