

A Detective's Story

How a Cleveland Confidence Man Secured a Lady's Valuable Watch

Last summer, one afternoon, an estimable young lady whom I happen to know personally went down to Lakeview Park to bathe in the balmy breezes wafted o'er the lake from the pine forests of Michigan. As she strolled in perfect content with herself and the world in general she was accosted by an exceedingly nice-looking and well-dressed young man. His address was so refined that she soon fell into as animated a conversation with him as the warmth of the day permitted. They walked and talked and gradually the conversation began to turn upon himself. He painted his past life in glowing colors and made his future out to be dazzling in brilliancy. He was the only son of a wealthy lumberman and was traveling around the world on no other mission than that of killing time.

“They sat upon a seat under the shade of the trees, while he filled her full of fine words. He was an expert in the art of wooing and knew well when to draw the line between familiarity and reserve. He was the most modest of men at times and begged pardon for his presumption when no pardon was necessary. The young lady thought he was adorable. She gazed at him with eyes of love, and he was by no means slow in returning the divine feeling.

“Then when the sinking sun warned them that the day was dying she arose to go, gave him her address and asked him to call upon her that evening. That was exactly what he wanted, and as they walked homeward he dwelt upon the glories of the setting sun, the harmonious blending of the various colors, so vividly represented to them far out upon the lake, and hoped the closing of her life would be as splendid.

“In the evening he called upon her and won the hearts of pa and ma by the grace of his presence and the sageness of his utterances. He talked of Rome and the catacombs, Egypt and the Nile, the quaintness and the blazing whiteness of the houses of Marseilles, the glaciers and snow-capped mountains of Switzerland and the gaiety of Parisian life

“He asked the young lady to taken walk among the shade trees of Euclid avenue in the delicious coolness of the evening. She was nothing loath. Once outside he poured out the pent-up feelings of his heart, told her that he loved her as woman never was loved before, and would have fallen upon his knees on the sidewalk then and there if his suspenders had not been so tight. She verily believed that it was a case of love at first sight. Coyly he asked her for some proof of her affection and intimated that they had better exchange watches for the night, as that would furnish him with an excuse to call again in the morning. The idea was a brilliant one, and she at once accepted it. Her father had given her an elegant little gold watch at her last birthday. His watch glistened like burnished gold under the electric light. It was solid and heavy and three times as big as her own. They parted at the garden gate.

“He did not go to see her the next morning, nor has he been there since. Her suspicions were aroused, and she brought the watch to me. After his magnetic eyes were withdrawn it looked

vulgar in her sight, and she would have none of it. She gave it to me. ‘My idol is crushed to the dust,’ she cried as she left.

“Is it a good watch, you ask? The most enterprising one I ever saw. Makes from twenty-five to thirty hours a day. What is it worth? Oh, they sell them by the bushel, and if you find fault with the price they throw in a couple of shovelfuls extra.”—*Jewelers’ Weekly*.

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