

The Clew at Last

[From the Brooklyn Eagle]

“I think I’ve got a clew to this Connecticut mystery that will solve the whole business,” observed a military-looking gentleman leaning on the ledge of the cashier’s window and assuming a confidential manner toward that functionary not at all warranted by the acquaintance.

“Let’s have it,” said the cashier, proceeding quietly at his task of filling out the payroll.

“You noticed, I suppose, that they found corpuscles on her person,” continued the stranger. “That I regard as one of the most important steps in the investigation up to this point.”

“Don’t wait. Finish up,” pleaded the cashier. “Pay no attention to me. Go right on just as though I were not here.”

“Then you have undoubtedly noticed that they took away the murdered girl’s stomach. Do you detect any coincidence in that?”

“Lots of them,” asserted the cashier, with a tired look in his eyes.

“Just so,” the stranger went on. “Those two points secured, we have comparatively easy sailing. Now, who else in Connecticut has corpuscles as far as we know from the records? Mary Stannard! There you have it!”

“Have what?” asked the cashier, innocently.

“One-half my clew,” replied the stranger, mildly. “Don’t you see it yet?”

“Sure,” answered the cashier. “It is as plain as the croak of a frog.”

“Very well, then,” continued the stranger. “We have gained that much, and I see you are a very intelligent man. Now, who else had her stomach carted around the State for a month or two? Do you remember?”

“Mary Stannard!” shouted the cashier, in a burst of triumph.

“No, no,” growled the stranger, impatiently. “Not Mary Stannard. It was Jennie Cramer. Now does it dawn on you?”

“Who carried the stomach?” inquired the cashier, with the air of a man who only wanted that point settled to become master of the whole situation.

“That doesn’t make any difference,” exclaimed the stranger, pettishly. “I’m after the coincidence.”

“Was that his name?” demanded the cashier. “If you’ve got your man why didn’t you bring it out in the first place? What do you want to keep me here all day for guessing riddles?”

“Hold on! Don’t fly off so quick! I’m getting at it now. You see, Mary Stannard had corpuscles and Jennie Cramer lost her stomach. That’s all very well. So did Rose Ambler. Very good. Now do you see my point?”

“Which one?” asked the cashier.

“Simply this: that Mary Stannard and Jennie Cramer murdered Rose Ambler.”

“Great heavens!” exclaimed the bewildered cashier. “You don’t tell me! Who are you to have made this deep discovery of the perpetrators of that horrible crime?”

“I am a Connecticut Coroner,” replied the military man, with a modest smile. “I worked this out myself. Do you doubt me?”

“Not in the least,” sighed the cashier. “You have given indisputable evidence of being a Connecticut Coroner, and the whole detective force beside. Now I suppose you want about half a dollar for your information. Our assassin is busy just now, but as soon as he is disengaged he will take you up to the top of this institution and let you drop. Take a chair. He’s only killing a policeman who wants to sleep here nights and he won’t keep you waiting long. Sit down.”

But the Coroner thought there might be a thread or two loose in his clew, and promised to be back in a day or two.

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