

## *James Hargrave, the Barrister*

by Thomas Waters

JAMES HARGRAVE and I were lads at school together, and fast friends. He was very intelligent—full, brimful of spirit—and far superior to me as a scholar. When I left school to commence my novitiate in Bow Street, our severance was for many years complete. We occasionally passed each other in the streets, but the recognition, when it took place, was, on both sides, cold and distant. The family had received a considerable lift in life, which enabled his parents, although they had seven or eight other children, to complete his education in the London University. That accomplished—very successfully, as I saw by a newspaper report—James Hargrave “ate his terms” at Lincoln’s Inn, was in due time called to the bar, and—knowing, as I did, his mounting ambition, I was sure he had from that moment the great seal in his imaginary clutch. It was almost the duty of such a man to tacitly disclaim any personal acquaintance with a mere police officer. He obtained, however, so far as I could judge by the law reports, very few briefs during five or six years; and when engaged, his part was a very subordinate, trifling one. Gall, wormwood, hell-fire that, I was quite sure, to James Hargrave; in whom, assuming the boy to be father of the man, the quality of patience would be strikingly deficient.

The melodramatic mind of London, and, I have no doubt, of the country generally, was strongly excited by the death, with its attendant circumstances, of Caroline Denby, who was found drowned in the Regent’s canal. I mean by the “melodramatic mind,” that which revels in—gloats over—details of mystery and crime. Caroline Denby had been nursemaid in the family of Mr. George Watson—a gentleman of fortune, residing in Regent’s Park, and having the reputation of being a great admirer of youthful beauty. Caroline Denby, whom I myself had observed with interest, was a remarkably pretty, interesting girl; her age when she perished eighteen only. The body was discovered, soon after dawn, by a passerby. Police officers were soon upon the spot, who at once declared that the poor girl had been murdered. By the marks round her throat, there seemed no doubt that she had been strangled and afterwards flung by the assassin into the canal. In one of her pockets was found a note, in a man’s hand, signed “George,” appointing to meet her, at nine o’clock the previous evening, not far from where the corpse was found; and there was positive proof that the unfortunate girl had been seduced. An inquest was held on the body, and a verdict returned of willful murder against some person or persons unknown. A reward of one hundred pounds was offered by the Government for the discovery of the unknown person or persons and the affair was placed in my hands.

I had not heard the evidence given before the coroner, but I had read it as reported in the newspapers. The impression which it made upon me and the public generally was that Caroline Denby had been seduced and murdered by her gay master, Mr. George Watson; although sufficient legal proof of his guilt might not have been adduced. He had been seen to toy with the girl when he thought himself unobserved; and when Mrs. Watson, whose suspicious would seem to have been aroused, insisted, with tears and in the hearing of servants, that “the hussy” should be immediately discharged, her husband angrily refused compliance. The name at the foot of the note found in the girl’s pocket was his own—“George;” and though the writing did not appear to be his, that might have been easily managed. Moreover, it was shown that the girl—refused leave to go out on the evening in question—had appealed to her master, by whom it was instantly

given. To be sure, it was proved that Mr. Watson had gone early to the Princess's Theatre, and been seen and spoken with there by several persons; two of whom expressed their belief—almost positive conviction—that he remained in the house till the end of the second piece, at about ten o'clock; and the assignation made in the note was for nine. But the hour might have been changed by verbal agreement, and it was remembered that Caroline Denby had asked leave to remain out till eleven. Then Mr. Watson had gone to the pit—most unusual circumstance—and he might easily have slipped out of a theatre so crowded as the Princess's on that night, without his departure or absence being noticed by the two friendly witnesses. Another suspicious item was, that, having agreed to preside that very evening at an anniversary dinner, in aid of a charity, at Paddington, he sent a note, excusing himself on the plea of indisposition, a few hours before he should have taken the chair. All this, combined with an injudicious suggestion, offered by a solicitor who watched the case on his behalf, that Caroline Denby might have committed suicide, having first vainly attempted to do so by strangling herself, which would account for the marks about her neck, before throwing herself into the water—a suggestion which greatly irritated the jury, whose minds were full of commiseration for the unhappy victim—nearly brought down upon him a verdict of willful murder. The coroner—calmer, more skilled in estimating the real value of evidence—dissuaded them from adopting that course, and the verdict as already given was recorded. With that verdict the authorities at the Home Office and Scotland-yard were so dissatisfied, that, at the same time instructions were given me to thoroughly investigate the case, officers were directed to watch the house in Regent's Park day and night; and should Mr. George Watson leave it, never for one moment to lose sight of him. In the event of his attempting to leave the country, they were ordered to arrest him forthwith. As I have said, a large reward—one hundred pounds—was offered for the discovery of the murderer or murderers.

The evidence, of which I have given a summary, did not, when more critically weighed, appear to press so heavily against Mr. Watson. As to having been seen toying with Caroline Denby, there were few pretty girls with whom, if he had a chance, he did not attempt to toy; and I saw by the copy of the depositions furnished me, it was sworn that Denby—though, like Mr. Watson, she believed they were both unseen—repulsed his advances with indignation up to the last. And would a man, contemplating the murder of the girl, subscribe his real Christian name to a note appointing the place, naming the hour, where and when the foul deed was to be perpetrated? And if the murder—by strangulation, there seemed no doubt—had been committed during a sudden access of passion, would not the assassin have searched the pocket of his victim, to assure himself that no such damning evidence of his guilt as that note should be found upon the body? It was true that that favourable inference would not bear much straining—proving, as it seemed, too much—that the man named, whoever he was who wrote the note, made the assignation, was not the murderer. Again, why should Mr. George Watson seek to compass the death of the girl? He was rich; could make ample compensation, as far as money could make compensation for the crime of seduction; and it would not have been the first time that he had braved the world's censure in that respect. The very fact, too, that he had openly given the girl permission to leave the house and stop out till eleven on the evening when she met her death told rather for than against him. It was a fine moonlight evening too. Strange, then, an intentional murderer—having no overwhelming inducement to commit such a crime—should take pains, one might almost say, to ensure detection!

The one circumstance which continued to weigh in my mind against him, was that deemed most favourable to him,—that he had been seen, spoken with, in the pit of the Princess’s Theatre, by several persons, two of whom were almost certain he remained in the house till ten o’clock. Why did he go there—declining, under a false pretence, an important engagement, that he might do so—except on purpose to be seen by those who could prove the fact?

Finding myself in this state of dubiety, it occurred to me that I might as well call upon Mr. George Watson; frankly admit that I was the detective officer commissioned to investigate the unfortunate affair, and invite him, if he thought that by doing so he might hope to clear himself of the probably unmerited stigma with which public opinion, as he could not but be aware, branded his name, to acquaint me with any circumstance that had fallen within his own knowledge, which might supply but a hint, if of the faintest kind, that might help to the solution of the mystery. I scarcely need remark that I should first remind him that any statement he should volunteer might be used against him, whilst it could only be evidence in his favour indirectly: that is, by fixing suspicion upon, and, as I hoped, leading to the discovery of the real culprit. Before, however, hazarding such an unusual step, I consulted the chiefs at Scotland-yard, who, with some hesitation, agreed that it might be well for me to call upon Mr. George Watson.

I was very well received. Mr. George Watson was a gentlemanly person, and I had no doubt, under ordinary circumstances, a gay, convivial, entertaining companion. For the moment he was “a grave man,” oppressed, beaten down by the terrible anathema hurled at him by public opinion.

He expressed gratitude for my visit, and would freely tell me all he knew or suspected that had any possible reference to the cruel death of Caroline Denby.

“I admit at once,” he said, “that I was smitten—to the extent that a gentleman of forty, of cultivated taste, and the married father of a family can be supposed to be smitten—with such a person as Caroline Denby. I made overtures to her, all which were repulsed. Almost the last time I spoke with her, she indignantly exclaimed, ‘Ah! I shall be as good as Mrs. Watson, before long! I laughed—”

“One moment, Mr. Watson. This may be important. As I understand, you were making what you call overtures to the girl, when she, repulsing those overtures with indignation, said ‘I shall be as good as Mrs. Watson, before long.’ Is that so?”

“Yes; Caroline Denby made use of those words, or words to that effect.”

“Go on, sir, if you please.”

“Mrs. Watson, as you are aware, refused to allow Caroline Denby to go out on the fatal evening. I gave her permission. I had more than one motive for doing so. In the first place I was jealous!”

“Jealous! I don’t understand.”

“Yes, jealous! It is somewhat humiliating to confess so much, in reference to a nursery girl; however attractive. I asked her where she was going; the reply was, to meet a friend, who would

take her to the Princess's Theatre. 'Your young man?' said I, perhaps with some bitterness. 'My young man, ' she pertly replied with a bridling smile, 'is a gentleman!' I was determined to see who the young 'gentleman' was, gave her leave to go, wrote to the secretary of the Charitable Institution, excusing myself from taking the chair at the dinner, and proceeded to the Princess's. I concluded that Caroline and her 'young gentleman' would be in the pit. I was disappointed. She was not there; and I did not remain till the end of the second piece,—though I have no doubt the witnesses who deposed to that effect believe I did. I waited only till the half-pay people came in; and Caroline Denby not coming with them, I left."

Mr. George Watson paused, his countenance expressing a doubt as to whether he ought to go on. He was not long in deciding that it would be well to do so.

"I left the theatre in an ill-humour. To be baffled in the pursuit of any object which, if gained, would be flung, after a moment's possession, in all probability, carelessly aside, is, I need not tell you, to invest that object with a thousand fold more attractions. I almost began to fancy myself seriously in love with Caroline Denby. Absurdity, of course! Still, that influence was upon me at the time; and remembering to have once seen the girl strolling near the Regent's Canal with a young fellow,—young gentleman, if you like,—the notion entered my head of seeking her there. And there I saw her. It was a splendid night. Caroline and the young gentleman,—I concluded from his figure and carriage that he was young, for I did not see his face,—Caroline and the young gentleman were walking side by side, but apart. He wore a military cap and cloak. I might have approached nearer, but that I saw Mr. Westbrook's (my neighbour) pony-chaise approaching; and not wishing to be seen there—why I can scarcely tell; men are not cased in glass, through which their thoughts, passions, intentions can be discerned—I turned away, hailed an omnibus in the Hampstead Road, and presently found myself in the Haymarket. I did not return home till the next day."

"The person you saw with Caroline Denby wore, you say, a military cap and cloak; but you did not see his face. Was he tall or short, stout or slender?"

"About the middling height, neither slender nor stout."

"And they were walking apart?—as if they were, or had been quarreling?"

"Yes, that was my impression; or perhaps I have only thought so since I heard of the catastrophe."

"I can understand that. You have nothing to add—no important circumstance?"

"None that I can at present call to mind."

"Of course you understand, Mr. Watson, that if at any future time you, or any person representing you, should attempt to prove that you were at the Princess's Theatre till ten o'clock, I should be under the necessity of stating that by your own voluntary avowal you left much earlier than that?"

“True, Mr. Clarke; but I believe you cannot give a part only of the voluntary statement I have made in evidence against me. It must be admitted in its entirety, quantum valeat, or not at all.”

“Humph! I regret to find, Mr. Watson, you are so well acquainted with the practice of our criminal courts. It deprives your statement of much of its value in my eyes. Good day, sir; I leave you for the present!”

He started, and his face perceptibly paled. I had emphasized, both by tone and look, the last three words; feeling sure that, though he might have told me the truth, it was not all the truth.

“Stop one moment,” he exclaimed, as I was leaving the room; “stop one moment. Let me try to remember. No,” he added, after a minute or so’s consideration, “no, I can recollect nothing else.”

At my lodgings a man who gave the name of Alexander King was waiting for me. He had seen by the placard offering the one hundred pounds reward that any information relative to the murder of Caroline Denby was to be communicated to me, and he had called to say what he knew about the matter. First, as to himself. He was a groom out of place, and had formerly lived with Mr. Watson, a very kind master, but who had refused to give him a character for sobriety. As that would be sure to come out, King thought it best to say so at once. The man added “that he had waited to see if a reward would be offered before saying anything.”

“Very well. And now what have you to say?”

“This: that I saw Mr. George Watson, at about nine o’clock in the evening when Caroline Denby was murdered, talking with her, not one hundred yards from where the body was found.”

“You did? Are you sure? Did he see you?”

“I am sure, as I saw his face as plainly as I see yours. He did not see me. I was curious to find out what was going on, and took care he should not. I was not quite near enough to hear what they were talking about; but I heard Mr. Watson, who seemed to be in a great passion, call her “a ridiculous fool.” Just then Mr. Westbrook’s pony-chaise came in sight, and Mr. Watson bolted. I followed, wishing to keep him in view, and thinking that he would perhaps return. I wanted to get a hold of him, you see, so as to make him give me a character. I like to speak out plain. He got into an omnibus; I climbed up to the top, but there I was done. The ‘bus stopped to take some one in, and hang me if he mustn’t have then slipped out; for no one was taken up afterwards, and when we stopped at the Oxford-street end of Tottenham-court-road, he was gone. I cut back again; but neither Mr. Watson nor Caroline Denby—poor girl! who, you must know, I myself had a fancy for, which drove me to drink—was there to be seen. This is what I have to say, which shows Mr. Watson couldn’t have been at the playhouse, as his friend swore he was.”

“I knew that before. Still your evidence is very important. You must go with me at once before a magistrate. Don’t frighten yourself. It is my duty, believing you have spoken the truth, to obtain a warrant for the arrest of Mr. George Watson.”

That was soon done, and within two hours after leaving him, I was again with the alleged culprit, accompanied this time by another officer. I curtly told our errand, adding, "You foolishly attempted to deceive me, by suppressing the fact that you spoke with Caroline Denby after leaving the Princess's Theatre for the purpose of seeing her. The fact that you did so has since been ascertained beyond a doubt."

The next day, Mr. George Watson was formally charged in the Marylebone police court with the willful murder of Caroline Denby, and then, sufficient evidence having been given, the prisoner was remanded. Amongst the crowded auditory I noticed, and few there could have helped noticing, Mr. James Hargrave, the barrister. Neither the prisoner nor the murdered girl, so far as I knew, was known to him; but had Caroline Denby been his sister, the accused his brother, he could not have been more painfully excited. His flaming glance now rested upon me, now upon the prisoner, the next moment upon the magistrate—upon whoever was speaking or giving evidence. Strange—passing strange! To be sure, he was always of a very excitable temperament; but there was a fire in those dark eyes which only volcanic passion could have kindled. Had he seen and loved the beautiful nursery-servant? Was he the—the real—? My mind refused to shape the dimly horrible suspicion which glanced across it.

Immediately the magistrate ordered the prisoner to be remanded, Hargrave pressed forward, and whispered eagerly to the solicitor who appeared for Mr. Watson.

"Your worship will accept bail, I trust," said the solicitor, evidently in compliance with Hargrave's suggestion. It can be given to any amount."

"I dare say it could. But no bail can, as you know, be accepted in such a case, not even by a judge, at this stage of the inquiry. I am surprised at such a question from a professional gentleman of your experience."

It was surprising, and still more so that a barrister had suggested it. What fiend unseen was whispering in Hargrave's ear?

"Mr. Clarke," said that gentleman, accosting me and proffering his hand as we left the court; "Mr. Clarke, it is a long time since we had a chat. Shall you be at home this evening? I wish to speak with you in confidence. You have, I see, the management of this unfortunate case."

"I am instructed, Mr. Hargrave, to make strict inquiry into all circumstances having the remotest relation to the death of Caroline Denby; and I will remain at home for the express purpose of hearing what you have to say upon the subject. It is of that, I am quite sure, you wish to speak."

"True! Quite true! In confidence, as between old friends."

"Mr. James Hargrave is a barrister, and therefore knows what 'confidence' must mean in such a case, were you my own brother. I do not invite this confidence, Mr. Hargrave; but I will accept it in my character of police officer. I frankly add that you are now an object of suspicion with me, in connexion with this melancholy, mysterious affair."

That suspicion will soon be removed. The ‘confidence’ I spoke of does not relate to any wish that you should keep any self-criminating secrets of mine. Not at all. However, I will see you at about eight o’clock this evening, and explain. Goodbye till then.”

Mr. James Hargrave was really drunk when he called upon me—not with wine or other intoxicating liquor, though he had perhaps drank freely; but with nervous excitement, passion! His mind was on fire; but what particular demon’s flaming glance—whether the Demon of Hate, Revenge, Jealousy, or an incarnation of all three—glared in those burning eyes, I was not sufficiently skilled to decide, I should presently know.

He burst forth at once:—” Watson is innocent of the murder he is accused of; innocent as you and I. I swear it; and yet he will be hanged—hanged like a dog, unless the truth be made known. And I—I alone—can put you on the track of the real murderer; of the triumphant seducer—the cowardly assassin,—and—oh, God! That it should be so—my most intimate friend! Clarke”—he went on, with gathering, culminating rage—” Clarke, I loved that unfortunate girl; loved her with such passion that, in a moment of delirium, I offered to marry her. The offer was rejected. She was engaged; would be soon the wife of a gentleman whom I knew well. The name of the successful wooer she would not disclose. A promise had been exacted from her that she should for a time keep that secret. I left her in a fury. Love—rejected love especially—is lynx-eyed, and it was not long before I discovered who it was that had deprived me of the prize,—prey would perhaps be the truer word. It was no other than the man to whom I had virtually introduced the unfortunate girl, by pointing her out to him one Sunday evening in the Regent’s Park,— Lieutenant George Halford, of the — Regiment of Foot, now quartered at Windsor.”

“Lieutenant George Halford!”

“Lieutenant George Halford. He is often in London—very often. He has influential friends, you know; d—n him!”

“You must furnish me with some proof, Mr. Hargrave, before I can act upon this terrible accusation.”

Furnish yourself with the proofs. Read this note. You will then know how to act.”

“MY DEAR HARGRAVE,

“Lose not a moment in forwarding to me the valise which, in the hurry of leaving town on Thursday morning last, I forgot to call for at your chambers. It contains papers of momentous consequence to me just now. I would run up to town myself, but that I am very—very ill!

“Yours faithfully,

GEORGE HALFORD.”

“This note does not enlighten me, Mr. Hargrave. If you have nothing else—”

“Tut! “ he broke in, impatiently “Tut! I have taken the liberty to open the valise, examine the papers of such momentous consequence to him just now. There are several notes addressed to Halford by Caroline Denby: one, the last dated, imploring, him to see her without delay, in reply to which he wrote that found upon his victim. He is naturally apprehensive that suspicion may fall upon him,—no wonder he is ill—very ill—he having been seen many times with the unfortunate girl; and should that be the case what more natural than that the police should make inquiries at the chamber of his friend Hargrave, where, it is known, he was generally to be found when in town? Should the police do so, one of the first articles they would see is the valise, with the name of Lieutenant George Halford painted thereon. In one of the girl’s notes,” continued Hargrave, “is an allusion to myself. She feared I was in the habit of watching them, and bids her lover ‘and future husband beware of that Mr. Hargrave.’ ‘There is danger in him,’ she adds. That note read by the police—by you—it will be your imperative duty to insist upon my appearance before the magistrate,—where I shall be required to state, upon oath, all I know relative to the murder. That will mainly be, that I saw Halford and Caroline Denby together on the evening of the murder, and heard high words pass between them.”

“How was Halford dressed?”

“He wore a military cap and cloak.”

“That tallies with a statement made by Mr. Watson. Did you see him at or near the place?”

“I did not. Nor did I myself remain long. I was not desirous that Halford should see me, and I left him and Caroline Denby together.”

“So far it is but a case of suspicion against Halford. No jury would convict upon it. What sufficient motive could he have had for murdering the girl?”

“A supreme motive!” replied Hargrave, the fire of passion, which had cooled somewhat, blazing fiercely forth again. “Ask the wealthy widow of the Bishop of — if he had not! He was to have married her daughter, Emily —, a few weeks hence—one of the loveliest maidens in London, and who will have a dowry of fifty thousand pounds at least. There is no question that he promised Caroline Denby to make her his wife—so madly infatuated, like myself, was he with her; and I have no doubt from a passage in one of the letters, that she had heard of the contemplated marriage, and threatened to write to the Bishop’s widow.”

..

“Such a threat would certainly have been motive sufficient. By-the-bye, I have seen you, Mr. Hargrave, more than once with the ladies in the late Bishop of —’s carriage.”

“Very likely,” said Hargrave, turning away, “I have the honour of a slight acquaintance with the family. At what hour shall you call at my chambers tomorrow morning?”

“I shall go there at once, taking another officer with me. Delays are not permissible in cases of homicide. Lieutenant Halford might send some one for the valise. Having secured that, we shall, should the letters justify such a step, be off at once to Windsor.”



“To arrest Halford?”

“Unquestionably. I do not, as I said before; believe that a jury will convict upon such evidence; but it will amply justify his arrest and examination before a magistrate.”

“I think with you,” said Mr. Hargrave, “that a conviction, should no corroborative evidence be forthcoming, would be very—very doubtful.”

“Not at all doubtful. He would be acquitted to a certainty. You, as a barrister, must know that. But the arrest, the strong suspicion of his guilt, the exposure of his criminal intercourse with Caroline Denby,” I added, looking hard at Hargrave, “will as certainly prevent his marriage with the Bishop’s rich and lovely heiress!”

“Yes, to be sure—to be sure,” said Mr. James Hargrave, with suddenly heightened colour. “I did not think of that!”

“Didn’t you?” thought I; “then I am strangely mistaken, that’s all.”

Lieutenant George Halford was taken in his bed the same night, and brought immediately to London. He expressed no surprise; but warmly protested his innocence. The note found in the girl’s pocket he admitted to be his, and that he had met her at the hour appointed. High words passed between them, and they parted in anger. I asked if it was true that he was soon to have married the late Bishop of —’s daughter.

“It is true,” he replied, with strong emotion; “but that dream is over, however the charge I am in custody for may be disposed of.”

As the prisoner admitted all the facts before the magistrate on the following day which Mr. Hargrave could have proved, that gentleman, to his great relief was not called upon to give evidence. The magistrate, though with considerable hesitation, finally committed Halford for trial on the capital charge. Mr. Watson was liberated, and left the court without a stain upon his character, so far as the murder of Caroline Denby was concerned. I confess that I felt great doubt of the soundness of the worthy magistrate’s decision in both cases; neither could I help suspecting that James Hargrave knew more than he chose, or dared to say, concerning the girl’s death.

The Grand Jury ignored the bill preferred at the Old Bailey against Lieutenant Halford, in deference to the recommendation of the Recorder, who, in his charge, said that as the evidence disclosed by the depositions taken before the committing magistrate would not justify a conviction, it would be better to throw out the bill against the prisoner, who might in that case be tried thereafter for the murder, should more conclusive evidence of his guilt be discovered. Lieutenant Halford was consequently discharged out of custody, with a blasted character—a free but utterly ruined man. The wrong he had confessedly done Caroline Denby was bitterly avenged.

Several times during the next five or six months I saw Mr. James Hargrave in the late Bishop of —'s carriage, always with the prelate's widow and daughter; and I more than once heard from parties likely to be well informed that he was the young lady's accepted suitor. My surprise was great, therefore, when I read in the papers a flaming account of her marriage with the eldest son of a viscount in the peerage of England. A fickle minded lady, it seemed; but coronets would have charms as potent with a bishop's daughter as with supposedly less worldly-minded damsels. Hargrave had missed the great prize, after all. Could he have foreseen that he should, would Halford have been charged with the murder of Caroline Denby? I thought not—decidedly not.

The next day, a hurriedly-scrawled note from Hargrave was placed in my hands by his clerk. The writer wished to see me immediately.

“Mr. Hargrave is dying,” said the pale, breathless man. “The doctor is with him; but nothing can be done to save, or even prolong his life. We must be quick, if you would see him alive.”

A sad spectacle waited me at my old school fellow's chambers. Hargrave, extended upon a sofa, was dying by his own act. He had taken poison, and was sinking fast. He recognised me, and held out his shaking hand in token that he did. He then motioned for some brandy to be given to him. The spirit gave him sufficient strength to say—

“Hand me that paper on the table. This paper, Clarke,” continued the wretched suicide, “is my dying confession, written by my own hand; and knowing myself to be dying, that I have but a few minutes to live, I declare it to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as respects the death of Caroline Denby. Read it aloud.”

“I, James Hargrave, barrister-at-law, being of sound mind, make the following statement. It is the discharge of a debt of honour due to Lieutenant George Halford; and as I have at last finally decided to cast off the burden of a worthless, intolerable existence, it may as well be paid. Overwhelmed with pecuniary difficulties, bankrupt in heart and hope, no longer capable of labour, why should I live? This act of reparation accomplished, I shall gladly—most gladly—close my eyes forever on a hateful world. As to the next I must take my chance. George Halford is innocent of the death of Caroline Denby; that is to say, she perished by her own act, not by his; though it, cannot be denied that he was indirectly the cause of her untimely end. She must have thrown herself into the Regent's Canal during an access of despair. I was watching them, and distinctly heard him say that was the last time they would ever meet. He said something about a liberal allowance of money, which the poor, proud girl fiercely resented. He then went off, and I presented myself, endeavoured to soothe her passionate grief with kind, respectful words; for I loved the girl, and my heart bled with pity for her. She refused to be comforted, and angrily bade me begone. I did go; and was about half way to my chambers when the terrible idea occurred to me—I repeat that I loved, deeply loved the unfortunate girl—when the terrible idea occurred to me that she might in her agony of sorrow, shame, destroy herself by drowning—the canal being, as one may say, so temptingly near. Instantly I turned back, having been perhaps half an hour, perhaps more, away. When I reached the place, she was nowhere to be seen. The moon had gone down, but, it was starlight, and peering along the dark surface of the canal, I at last descried part of a white dress caught in a projecting timber of the lock. With much difficulty I caught hold of it, and ultimately succeeded in dragging the body out of the water. It was Caroline Denby's. She

was quite dead, and the sight of the pale corpse, the lightless, blindly staring eyes, so beautiful when I last, so short a time previously, looked thereon, threw me into an ecstasy of rageful grief. I knelt down by, embraced, kissed, hugged the dead girl; was in truth for a time, I knew not how long, mad, literally mad. At last, regaining my self-possession, I saw discolouring marks about her neck. There was nothing of the kind when I drew her out of the water. I am sure of that. I, in that passionate delirium, must have inflicted them. It was an anonymous note from me, handed to the solicitor at the police court during Watson's examination, which induced that gentleman to ask the surgeon who was giving evidence if he was sure those marks had been made before life was extinct. The learned medico had no doubt they had been made before life was extinct. A blockhead!— fool! But to go on, the danger to myself, should I be found there, immediately rose up before me in ghastly shadow, and I hurried away. It was an afterthought of mine to endeavour to profit in a certain quarter—(heartless, kindless woman—devil rather)—that I might profit in a certain quarter by fastening suspicion upon Halford. Clarke, the detective, whom I intend sending for, always, I think, suspected me. If of the murder of Caroline Denby, he grossly wronged me. Mr. Watson's peril also influenced me. Depraved, reckless, idle scamp that I am, I am not all bad. This is all I have to say,

Signed, JAMES HARGRAVE"

As I finished reading the paper, I looked round upon him whose hand had traced the characters, He was dead.

Waters, Thomas. [Pseud.] [Attrib. William Russell.] *Autobiography of a London Detective*. NY: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1864