

## A Detective's Experience *A Woman's Revenge*

"I'll tell you of an incident I never reflect on without regret," said Mr. F——, as he turned to the reporter in response to his request for another story.

"The life of a detective is not one of excitement merely. It is sometimes crossed with events as wild and startling as ever gave coloring to romance. No emotion, no passion or phase of character, is hid from us. We learn to play upon the feelings, the hates and affections of men and women, as unerringly as the pianist on his instrument. Whilst the [xxx] would hesitate to take advantage of this, the necessities we are under compel us to omit no opportunity which may lead us to success.

"I say this because the incident I am about to relate reveals what a woman will do when excited by jealousy and thirsting for revenge.

"We were on the track of a man who had robbed an Havana jeweler of almost incalculable wealth. He had fled to the United States, and we believed was in the Southern country. At this time New Orleans was full of Cubans and visitors from all parts of the world. One couple, peculiar from the rest, excited the attention of the fashionable world, and became the favored pets of society, which in New Orleans that winter was perhaps the most brilliant on the continent. Their lavish expenditure, and almost Eastern magnificence of apparel and equipage, excited the admiration and envy, it may be, of their fashionable acquaintance. They, too, were Cubans. The man, inheriting all the peculiarities of the Spaniard, was, in personal appearance, a type of his race. But I cannot describe to you the woman that [paired] as his wife. She was the most beautiful creature I ever saw. The ideal of the poet, when he painted the dark eyed maiden Khorasan, was realized in her person. She seemed to me like some living, beautiful idol for men to worship. The tint of the olive was on face and brow, and in the dark, luminous eyes a wealth of affection; but they told, too, of a spirit resentful of injustice, and fierce in wrath as the glare of her native sun. By the devious paths we pursued, when on the trail of the criminal, we traced "our man" to the city. We knew he was here, and we searched for him incessantly. But, as if to baulk our exertions and put to shame our efforts, this was all we could learn. The Spaniard was the only person who answered the description of the criminal. But what folly to suspect him!—the petted courtier of society—the millionaire—he would have laughed our suspicions to scorn. But still we hung around him. By a strange, magical influence it was impossible to divorce ourselves from the belief that he was the party we were in search of. This constant attendance at the places he frequented, this hovering around the sphere in which he moved made us at last acquainted with the fact that his wife was unhappy and ill treated by her husband. He had begun to neglect her, and pay studious court to a fashionable belle. One night we saw him enter the theatre with the fair American, and entering a private box was paying her the most devoted attention. Shortly afterwards a woman, whom we at once perceived was his wife, but evidently disguised, entered, and passing around the dress circle took a seat directly facing him. By a strange coincidence she was right by me. She looked at the couple in the box long and earnestly; her face, which we could see from our position, gradually changing to an expression of the most fearful and vindictive passion I ever beheld. Accustomed as I was to every phase of human emotion it appalled me. At last she arose and left the theatre followed by an attendant. Now was

our time. I got up as quietly and was by her side when she reached the street. I was determined on a stroke of policy, which if I read her countenance aright would place the man in our power. If I was mistaken it could do no harm. Actuated by this impulse I placed myself in front of her and raised my hat.

“Madam, pardon me!”

“What do you wish, sir, and who are you?”

“My name is F——. This is my friend Mr. I——. We are detectives, and in search of the robber of the Havana jeweler. We believe you can point out to us the man.”

“I can, I can!” It was almost a shriek, so fierce and bitter hissed the words, “come with me, come with me!”

It is useless to detail what followed. The next morning the fashionable world was shocked by the intelligence of the arrest of Don C—— R——; but it was still more surprised that he was betrayed by his wife. We recovered nearly \$100,000 in jewelry and gold. But to the poor woman the result was terrible. She was but the victim of his perfidy, but the moment she saw him arrested, all of the old love, that had ruined her, returned. She clung to his neck with a wild frantic despair that was terrible to see. The anguish of that young face will haunt me to my dying day. The next day she disappeared, no one knew whither, but a few days afterward the body of a beautiful unknown woman was picked up on the lower coast—a suicide.

*The Daily Picayune* [New Orleans, LA], August 2, 1868

*The Montgomery* [AL] *Advertiser*, September 11, 1868—with the subtitle “Strange Episode in the Career of a Detective”—cites the *Picayune*

*The* [Nashville] *Tennessean*, June 14, 1878

*Public Ledger* [Memphis, TN], June 17, 1878

*The Indiana State Sentinel*, June 19, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”

*The Southern Standard* [Arkadelphia, AR], June 22, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”

*The Boston* [MA] *Globe*, June 23, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told of What a Woman Will do When Excited By Jealousy and Thirsting for Revenge” and attributed to “The San Francisco Chronicle”

*The Marion* [AL] *Commonwealth*, June 27, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”

*The Russell Register* [Seale, AL], June 27, 1878

*The Saline County Journal* [Salina, KS], July 4, 1878

*The* [Columbia, TN] *Herald and Mail*, July 12, 1878

*Clarkesville* [TN] *Chronicle*, July 20, 1878

*The* [Columbia, TN] *Herald and Mail*, July 12, 1878

*The Pulaski* [TN] *Citizen*, August 1, 1878

*The Blue Rapids* [KS] *Times*, August 8, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told” and attributed to “The San Francisco Chronicle”

*The Fredonia* [KS] *Tribune*, August 8, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told” and attributed to “The San Francisco Chronicle”  
*The Lake Charles* [LA] *Echo*, August 8, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told” and attributed to “The San Francisco Chronicle”  
*The Wathena* [KS] *Mirror*, August 8, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told” and attributed to “The San Francisco Chronicle”  
*The Weekly* [Fort Scott, KS] *Herald*, August 8, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”  
*The Workingman’s Friend* [Leavenworth, KS], August 9, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”  
*The Pee Dee Herald* [Wadesboro, NC], August 21, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”  
*The Clay Center* [KS] *Dispatch*, September 21, 1878—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Told”  
*The South Bend* [IN] *Tribune*, April 17, 1880—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Recently Told” and attributed to “American Detective”  
*The Muncie* [IN] *Morning News*, February 12, 1881—with subtitle “The Story a Detective Repeatedly Told” and attributed to “American Detective”  
*The Morristown* [TN] *Gazette*, July 17, 1878—with the preface “A Detective’s Story. An Incident of the Early Days of San Francisco”

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*The Valley Falls* [KS] *New Era*, June 22, 1878;  
*The Russell* [KS] *Advance*, July 13, 1878;

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