

Lost Diamonds

A Story of Robbery and Recovery (N.Y. Herald.)

Here is a story which is vouched for by many persons who are unwilling to have their names made public and which has strong circumstantial evidence to back its authenticity. The detectives engaged in the case were bound to secrecy by the parties interested, more especially as the lost treasures were recovered; those involved in the transaction are persons in the very highest ranks of society, therefore names have been suppressed. Nevertheless, the circumstance is quite sensational. One morning last week about seven o'clock the door bell of Sergeant Keely, of the detective office, was rung by a district telegraph messenger, who asked for the Chief of the Metropolitan Secret Service Bureau, and handed him a note from one of his private acquaintances. It read thus:—

DEAR Jim—Miss— has lost her two diamonds last evening. She is in a frightful condition. Call and see her and do what you can for her.

It appears that Sergeant Keely having two hours to spare, not being due at the Central Office before nine A.M., resolved to go to the address indicated. Before he had got on his great coat and overshoes preparatory another district messenger brought another note begging of the Chief to come at once, as Miss — was almost beside herself with anxiety regarding the loss of her solitaires, for which she had paid \$2,000. Sergeant Keely immediately left the house and took a car bound to the vicinity of the Central Park, where he alighted, and seeking out the lady's residence was astonished to find that it fronted on one of our most fashionable avenues and was a young ladies' boarding school. The pupils are daughters of some of the best known and most prominent men in the country, and the principal is quite wealthy. When Sergeant Keely was shown into the waiting room he had scarce time to compose himself ere the fair mistress of the institute stepped in and told him the circumstances attending her loss. She was very much depressed and was really at her wits' end, because the case was so peculiar that she felt almost unable to proceed in it openly. Whom should she suspect?

On the previous evening, while at tea with her pupils, she took a pocket handkerchief out of her pocket, which was somewhat soiled and evidently not intended for use. Blushingly she turned to a young lady and apologetically remarked:—

“Oh! This is the kerchief in which I tied up my diamonds.”

The pupil, who is the daughter of one of the richest men in the city, merely smiled in return and there the matter dropped. At nine p.m., the principal again sought her pocket handkerchief, intending, no doubt, to remove the diamonds. Lo! It was gone—handkerchief, diamonds and all. Hastily at first, carefully at last, she searched every room and passage, every chair and lounge—anywhere, in fact, that she might have dropped them. What had become of them? Surely no one in her household could have stolen them? Her servants were old and tried, her pupils rich and possessed more precious stones than she could purchase. In despair she dropped into a chair to collect her thoughts and determine on what course she should pursue. She resolved to remain

silent as to her loss, but issued orders that neither pupil nor servant should absent themselves from the institution until a certain hour on the following day. Meanwhile she sent a note to her friend, the gentleman who had written to Sergeant Keely, and the result was the latter's arrival at the institution.

After hearing these details, Sergeant Keely ruminated a while, and then offered one or two suggestions, which, to the lady's mind, were utterly impractical.

"If," said she, "you search or even hint at searching the pupils, they will be indignant and request their parents to withdraw them from a house in which they had suffered such an indignity; and as for Miss —, to whom I showed the handkerchief at tea time, why she has only to ask her father for diamonds more valuable than mine to get them at once. The servants I cannot suspect, because I am certain none of them was near enough to me during the whole evening to have touched my garments. I'm sure I don't know what you had better do, Sergeant Keely. Only I wish you could find my diamonds.["]]

"Indeed, I wish I could, madame," replied the sergeant. But there he was in a quandary afraid to move one way or the other lest he should put his foot in it and destroy every chance of the lady recovering her precious stones. It was getting on toward nine a.m. and the sergeant was bound to be at the office in Mulberry street; so he took his leave of the lady and going to the nearest station telegraphed Captain Mount, of the Nineteenth to send down two of the officers in Citizen's clothes to the central office. These men were placed upon the case, and at the same time two men from his own office—LaRue and Adams—were likewise detailed to work upon the affair. They proceeded to the house, and to the dismay of the pupils, began to rummage and search it from top to bottom. The young ladies, who had not been out at all were horrified and began to suspect that something had been lost or stolen. They devoted themselves to their studies, but were distracted by the presence and actions of the strangers. Garret, bed-rooms[,] sitting-rooms, parlors, studies, every apartment, in short were examined; but there was no trace of the diamonds. Where were they?

Nothing now remained for the officers to do but to pay a visit to the cellar, where the lady had not been at all. Thither they went, and saw nothing more than the coals, heater and some boxes of ashes. They were about to give up further search when their eyes fell upon these boxes, and they made up their minds to sift the ashes. The gas was lit, and with the aid of a sieve, the officers went to work sifting. Clouds of dust half blinded and choked them, but they persisted.

"I have one of them!" shouted Adams, holding up to view a stone from which the gold setting had been melted and the luster taken forever. A few moments later LaRue found the other bright, brilliant, sparkling, but without a vestige of the gold that held it to the ear of its pretty owner. By questioning the servant it was found that the ashes from the stove in the supper room had been emptied into the box in which the diamonds had been found.

"But how did they get here?" said the lady.

"Why, when you were passing the stove the handkerchief must have been hanging from your pocket, and being caught by the door of shelving dropped into the fire. The rest explains itself."

Great relief on all hands.

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