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THE CENTAUR COMPANY, 27 MURRAY STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

## The Holladay Case

A Mystery Of Two Continents

By BURTON E. STEVENSON

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"Ill!" repeated Jenkinson, in evident surprise. "But is she ill?"

"She's your patient, isn't she? I thought you were the family doctor."

"So I am," assented the other. "But I haven't seen Miss Holladay for ten days or two weeks. At that time she seemed quite well—a little nervous, perhaps, and worried, but certainly not requiring medical attention. She has always been unusually robust."

Mr. Royce stopped, perplexed. As for me, my head was in a whirl again.

"I'll tell you the story," he said at last. "I should like the benefit of your advice." And he recounted rapidly the facts of Miss Holladay's illness, in so far as he knew them, ending with an account of our recent visit and the statement of the maid that her mistress was under a doctor's care. Jenkinson heard him to the end without interrupting, but he was plainly puzzled and annoyed.

"And you say she looked very ill?" he asked.

"Oh, very ill, sir; alarmingly ill, to my unpracticed eyes. She seemed thin and worn. She could scarcely talk, she had such a cough. I hardly knew her."

Again the doctor paused to consider. He was a very famous doctor, with many very famous patients, and I could see that this case piqued him—that another physician should have been preferred!

"Of course, Mr. Royce," he said finally, "Miss Holladay was perfectly free to choose another physician if she thought best."

"But would you have thought it probable?" queried our junior.

"Ten minutes ago I should have thought it extremely improbable," answered the doctor emphatically. "Still, women are sometimes erratic, as we doctors know to our sorrow."

Mr. Royce hesitated and then took the bull by the horns.

"Dr. Jenkinson," he began earnestly, "don't you think it would be wise to see Miss Holladay—you know how her father trusted you and relied on you—and assure yourself that she's in good hands? I confess I don't know what to think, but I fear some danger is hanging over her. Perhaps she may even have fallen into the hands of the faith curists."

Jenkinson smiled.

"The advice to seek rest and quiet seems sane enough," he said, "and utterly unlike any that a faith curist would give."

"But still, if you could see for yourself," persisted Mr. Royce.

The doctor hesitated, drumming with his fingers upon the arm of his chair.

"Such a course would be somewhat unprofessional," he said at last. "Still I might call in a merely social way. My interest in the family would, I think, excuse me."

Mr. Royce's face brightened, and he caught the doctor's hand.

"Thank you, sir," he said warmly. "It will lift a great anxiety from the firm, and, I may add, from me personally."

The doctor laughed good naturedly.

"I knew that, of course," he said. "We doctors hear all the gossip going

I might add that I was glad to hear this bit. If you'll wait for me here, I'll go at once.

We instantly assented, and he called his carriage and was driven away. I felt that at last we were to see behind one corner of the curtain—perhaps one glimpse would be enough to penetrate the mystery. But in half an hour he was back again, and a glance at his face told me that we were again destined to disappointment.

"I sent up my card," he reported briefly, "and Miss Holladay sent down word that she must beg to be excused."

Mr. Royce's face fell.

"And that was all?" he asked.

"That was all. Of course there was nothing for me to do but come away. I couldn't insist on seeing her."

"No," assented the other; "no. How do you explain it, doctor?"

Jenkinson sat down and for a moment studied the pattern of the carpet.

"Frankly, Mr. Royce," he said at last, "I don't know how to explain it. The most probable explanation is that Miss Holladay is suffering from some form of dementia, perhaps only acute primary dementia, which is usually merely temporary, but which may easily grow serious and even become permanent."

The theory had occurred to me, and I saw from the expression of Mr. Royce's face that he also had thought of it.

"Is there no way that we can make sure?" he asked. "She may need to be saved from herself."

"She may need it very badly," agreed the doctor, nodding. "Yet she is of legal age and absolute mistress of her actions. There are no relatives to interfere, no intimate friends even that I know of. I see no way unless you, as her legal adviser, apply to the authorities for an inquest of lunacy."

But Mr. Royce made an instant gesture of repugnance.

"Oh, that's absurd!" he cried. "We have no possible reason to take such action. It would offend her mortally."

"No doubt," assented the other. "So I fear that at present nothing can be done. Things will just have to take their course till something more decided happens."

"There's no tendency to mental disease in the family?" inquired Mr. Royce after a moment.

"Not the slightest," said the doctor emphatically. "Her father and mother were both sound and well balanced. I know the history of the family through three generations, and there's no hint of any taint. Twenty-five years ago Holladay, who was then just working to the top in Wall street, drove himself too hard—it was when the market went all to pieces over that Central Pacific deal—and had a touch of apoplexy. It was just a touch, but I made him take a long vacation, which he spent abroad with his wife. It was then, by the way, that his daughter was born. Since then he has been careful, and has never been bothered with a recurrence of the trouble—in fact, that's the only illness in the least serious I ever knew him

to have."

There was nothing more to be said, and we turned to go.

"If there are any further developments," added the doctor as he opened the door, "will you let me know? You may count upon me if I can be of any assistance."

"Certainly," answered our junior. "You're very kind, sir," and we went back to our cab.

The week that followed was a perplexing one for me and a miserable one for Royce. As I know now, he had written her half a dozen times and had received not a single word of answer. For myself, I had discovered one more development of the mystery. On the day following the delivery of the money I had glanced, as usual, through the financial column of my paper as I rode home on the car, and one item had attracted my attention. The brokerage firm of Swift & Currier had that day presented at the subtreasury the sum of \$100,000 in currency for conversion into gold. An inquiry at their office next morning elicited the fact that the exchange had been effected for the account of Miss Frances Holladay. It was done, of course, that the recipient of the money might remain beyond trace of the police.

CHAPTER IX.

OUR regular work at the office just at that time happened to be unusually heavy and trying. The Brown injunction suit, while not greatly attracting public attention, involved points of such nicety and affected interests so widespread that the whole bar of New York was watching it. The Hurd substitution case was more spectacular and appealed to the press with peculiar force, since one of the principal victims had been the eldest son of Preston McLandberg, the veteran managing editor of the Record, and the bringing of the suit impugned the honor of his family. But it is still too fresh in the public mind to need recapitulation here, even were it connected with this story. The incessant strain told upon both our partners and even upon me, so that I returned to my rooms after dinner one evening determined to go early to bed. But I had scarcely donned my house coat, settled in my chair and got my pipe to going when there came a tap at the door.

"Come in," I called, thinking it was Mrs. Fitch, my landlady, and too weary to get up.

But it was not Mrs. Fitch's pale countenance, with its crown of gray hair, which appeared in the doorway; it was a rotund and exceedingly florid visage.

"You will pardon me, sir," began a resonant voice, which I instantly remembered, even before the short, square figure stepped over the threshold into the full light, "but I have just discovered that I have no match with which to ignite my gas. If I might from you borrow one—"

"Help yourself," I said, and held out to him my case, which was lying on the table at my elbow.

"You are very good," he said, and then, as he stepped forward and saw me more distinctly, he uttered a little exclamation of surprise. "Ah, it is Lester!"

"Lester," I added, seeing that he hesitated.

"It is a great pleasure," he was saying as he took the matches; a "great good fortune which brought me to this

house. So lonely one grows at times—and then, I greatly desire some advice. If you would have the leisure—"

"Certainly," and I waved toward a chair. "Sit down."

"In one moment," he said. "You will pardon me," and he disappeared through the doorway.

He was back almost at once with a handful of cigarettes, which he placed on the table. Then he drew up a chair. With a little deprecatory gesture he used one of my matches to light a cigarette.

"It was truly for the gas," he said, catching my smile, "and the gas for the cigarette!"

There was something fascinating about the man—an air of good humor, of comradeship, of strength of purpose. My eyes were caught by his stodgy, nervous hands as he held the match to his cigarette. Then they



"My name is Martigny—Jasper Martigny."

wandered to his face, to the black hair flecked here and there with gray, to the bright, deep set eyes, ambushed under heavy brows; to the full lips, which the carefully arranged mustache did not at all conceal; to the projecting chin, with its little plume of an imperial—a strong face and a not unhandsome one, with a certain look of mastery about it.

(To be Continued.)

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