

THE IVORY QUEEN.

By NORMAN HUBST.

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Continued from First Page

"Some chessmen."
"Chessmen?"
"Yes; a set of carved Indian chessmen—horses and elephants and things. He said that he had an idea they had something to do with the murder."
"A set of carved chessmen—ivory, I suppose."
"Yes."
"Anything else?"
"Nothing."
"You're sure he took nothing else?"
"Certain."
"Very well, Mr. Dobson. I shall report your theory to your major. Darrent remarks as he finishes writing in his pocketbook and rises from his seat. "What the deuce," he mutters to himself, "did he take a set of chessmen for and leave the knife and what the deuce is he?"

"Do you want to know anything else?" Dobson sulkily asks as he re-lightens his pipe, which he has let go during the cross examination.

"Yes; give me the names and particulars about every one related to or friendly with the dead man. Any sons?"
"No; at least I don't know. Perhaps he is his son. You never know. Old Marsden always said he adopted him. I don't believe it."
"Never mind what you believe, Mr. Dobson. I'm asking for facts. Well, who is it?"

"Astray Marsden."
"Astray—curious name."
"Yes; old Marsden said he was a stray when he found him, and he stuck to the name. It was his joke."
"I see. Where is this Astray?"
"Quarrelled with old Marsden a couple of years ago and went abroad."
"Oh! Never been seen in Norcombe since, eh?"

Dobson hesitates under the keen eyes of the detective, who, it seems to him, is reading his inmost thoughts. It will be no good trying to keep anything from Herbert Darrent, so he suddenly blurts out: "Came back on the night of the murder."
"I see," says Darrent, again writing in his pocketbook. "That time?"
"I saw him about half past 10."
"Did he seem strange in his manner at all?"
"Not particularly; only a bit excited."
"Did he mention old Marsden?"
"No."
"Where did you meet him?"
"At the corner of the road that branches off to The Grange."
"How was he dressed?"
"Long overcoat and soft hat."
"Was it snowing then?"
"No; didn't commence till 11."
"Right. Thank you, Mr. Dobson. Now, do you know any one else connected with old Marsden either here or at Norcombe?"
"Only one or two distant relatives and acquaintances."
"Very well. You can employ the rest of your evening by making me a complete list of them, and say all you know about them. Have it ready by the first of the month."

"That's the murderer," he remarks on the sheet of paper he has just written. "That's all. I shall have a good deal more to ask you tomorrow. Good night."
"Good night. Oh—er—I say, Mr.—er—"
"Darrent."
"Er—Mr. Darrent. Don't you think that the sheriff may find it worth while to offer a reward for the murderer?"
"It is the second time that Dobson has mentioned the chance of a reward being offered, and Darrent pauses for a moment, then suddenly confronts him.

"Now, look here, Dobson," he says gently. "You're simply placing the foot, that you've given the whole game away. Twice you've asked after a reward."

"That means you know something more than you have told me and expect to be paid for your knowledge. Well, you're wrong. You won't be. You ought to know even if a reward is offered it is not paid to those in the service, whose duty is to do their duty. Come now, Dobson. Own up all you know and not half of it."
"I know nothing except what I've told you."
"Very well, then, Mr. Dobson, you'll never get any promotion from your major or any reward, which your soul so hankers after."
"Then you will never know."
"Ha, ha! I've got you! So you do know who committed the murder! Very well, Mr. Dobson, very well. You are what the law calls an accessory after the fact. It's a very unenviable position, Mr. Dobson. Good night!"
"Half a minute."
"Good night. I think an accessory after the fact gets about ten years."
"Step!"
"Well!"
"I'll tell you all I know."
"That's better. I would rather reward than punish. Now show your knowledge by telling me everything you know, every iota, and your mayor may probably look over your indiscretion and remember you when the proper time comes."
Without answering, Dobson goes over to a desk, unlocks it and takes out a stained and crumpled sheet of paper, hands it to Darrent.

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"Crumpled up in Marsden's hand."
"Murdered by Astray!"
"By Astray, don't you see? He had no strength to finish it. The 'y' is missing."
"Hum! So Astray Marsden is the murderer, and you intended to hold this for the reward or else blackmail Astray Marsden, eh?"
"I put it by and forgot it."
"That's a lie, Dobson," he answers as he carefully folds the paper and places it in his pocketbook. "You could not have forgotten it in a couple of days. Have you shown it to any one?"
Dobson shifts uneasily and tries to avoid the fixed gaze of the detective.

"Well, answer up."
"Only to young Marsden—to Astray."
"When and where?"
"The day after the murder, at the Palace hotel, where he had put up."
"Well, what did he do?"
"Said he'd come round and see me later."
"Well, did he?"
"No; he skipped."
"I see. Well, Mr. Dobson, whether he committed the murder or not, I should advise you to be very careful, my friend. You may find that you've got yourself into serious trouble. Tomorrow morning I go over The Grange. I shall wait you. Send your patrolman to meet me there at 9. Don't forget. Good night."
Darrent turns on his heel and leaves Mr. Dobson to his own reflections, which, to judge from that gentleman's expressions as he sits beside the fireplace at his pipe as he sits before the fire, are not of a very enviable description.

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"It is the second time that Dobson has mentioned the chance of a reward being offered, and Darrent pauses for a moment, then suddenly confronts him.

"Now, look here, Dobson," he says gently. "You're simply placing the foot, that you've given the whole game away. Twice you've asked after a reward."

"That means you know something more than you have told me and expect to be paid for your knowledge. Well, you're wrong. You won't be. You ought to know even if a reward is offered it is not paid to those in the service, whose duty is to do their duty. Come now, Dobson. Own up all you know and not half of it."

"I know nothing except what I've told you."
"Very well, then, Mr. Dobson, you'll never get any promotion from your major or any reward, which your soul so hankers after."
"Then you will never know."
"Ha, ha! I've got you! So you do know who committed the murder! Very well, Mr. Dobson, very well. You are what the law calls an accessory after the fact. It's a very unenviable position, Mr. Dobson. Good night!"
"Half a minute."
"Good night. I think an accessory after the fact gets about ten years."
"Step!"
"Well!"
"I'll tell you all I know."
"That's better. I would rather reward than punish. Now show your knowledge by telling me everything you know, every iota, and your mayor may probably look over your indiscretion and remember you when the proper time comes."
Without answering, Dobson goes over to a desk, unlocks it and takes out a stained and crumpled sheet of paper, hands it to Darrent.

"That's the murderer," he remarks as the detective takes the sheet.

er man, ready to commence his investigations, to piece together every tiny scrap, every minute fragment, until the whole puzzle was complete, the mystery solved, Josiah Marsden avenged and justice satisfied.

Mine host, who waited upon the stranger from Chicago himself, was of a communicative turn of mind. Oh, yes, he knew the Marsdens, father and son—at least they called him his cousin, and he had a French newspaper or a chess magazine. Young Marsden—ah, he was always a nice, affable young gent. he was Many's the bottle he'd had in the room where they were now, and many more bottles he hoped to open for her. Yes, Astray Marsden sat there at the Palace on the night of the murder, and in the morning, after Dobson had called and seen him, he left for Barnstable.

"Bless your heart, sir," said mine host as he went, buttoning up his coat and prepared to start for The Grange. "There are some people who suspect Astray of the murder, but they might just as well suspect me, sir—just as well."
The irritating church clock chimed the hour of 9 as Darrent reached the gates of The Grange and found awaiting him, erect as a soldier on parade, the patrolman he had seen the previous night.

"Good morning. I am glad to find you are punctual."
"Good morning, sir."
"Any message from Mr. Dobson?"
"He hoped you would call upon him again this morning."
"Right. Have you the keys?"
"Yes, sir," answered the policeman, unlocking the gate as he spoke.

"I suppose you didn't see the ghost who committed the murder?" Darrent hazarded, with a smile.

"Not much. There's no ghosts in Norcombe. I've heard the fairy stories about ghosts and The Grange being haunted, but I don't believe any such nonsense, sir."
"Indeed!"
"No, sir, not a bit of it. There was flesh and blood on this job, sir, and it looks like a case of revenge."
"What makes you think that?"
"Well, sir, as far as we can make out, nothing in the house has been disturbed and no robbery committed."
"Well, let's get inside."
The policeman unlocked the heavy door and pushed it open.