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## The Sign of Four.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

"You see," he said, with a significant raising of the eyebrows.

In the light of the lantern I read, with a thrill of horror, "The sign of the four."

"In God's name, what does it all mean?" I asked.

"It means murder," said he, stooping over the dead man. "Ah? I expected it. Look here!"

He pointed to what looked like a long dark thorn stuck in the skin just above the ear.

"It looks like a thorn," said I.

"It is a thorn. You may pick it out. But be careful, for it is poisoned."

I took it up between my finger and thumb. It came away from the skin so readily that hardly any mark was left behind. One tiny speck of blood showed where the puncture had been.

"This is all an insoluble mystery to me," said I. "It grows darker instead of clearer."

"On the contrary," he answered, "it clears every instant. I only require a few missing links to have an entirely connected case."

We had almost forgotten our companion's presence since we entered the chamber. He was still standing in the doorway, the very picture of terror, wringing his hands and moaning to himself. Suddenly, however, he broke out into a sharp, querulous cry.

"The treasure is gone!" he said. "They have robbed him of the treasure! There is the hole through which we lowered it. I helped him to do it! I was the last person who saw him! I left him here last night, and I heard him lock the door as I came down stairs!"

"What time was that?"

"It was ten o'clock. And now he is dead, and the police will be called in, and I shall be suspected of having had a hand in it. Oh yes, I am sure I shall. But you don't think so, gentlemen? Surely you don't think that it was I? Is it likely that I would have brought you here if it were I? Oh dear! oh dear! I know that I shall go mad!"

He jerked his arms and stamped his feet in a kind of convulsive frenzy.

"You have no reason for fear, Mr. Sholto," said Holmes kindly, putting his hand upon his shoulder; "take my advice and drive down to the station to report the matter to the police. Offer to assist them in every way. We shall wait here until your return."

The little man obeyed in a half-stupefied fashion, and we heard him stumbling down the stairs in the dark.

### CHAPTER VI.

SHERLOCK HOLMES GIVES A DEMONSTRATION.

"Now, Watson," said Holmes rubbing his hands, "we have half an hour to ourselves. Let us make good use of it. My case is, as I have told you, almost complete; but we must not err on the side of overconfidence. Simple as the case seems now, there may be something deeper underlying it."

"Simple!" I ejaculated.

"Surely," said he, with something of the air of a clinical professor expounding to his class. "Just sit in the corner there that your footprints may not complicate matters. Now to work! In the first place, how did these folk come, and how did they go? The door has not been opened since last night. How of the window?" He carried the lamp across to it, muttering his observations aloud the while, but addressing them to himself rather than to me. "Window is sniobed on the inner

side. Framework is solid. No hinges at the side. Let us open it. No water-pipe near. Roof quite out of reach. Yet a man has mounted by the window. It rained a little last night. Here is the print of a foot in mold upon the sill. And here is a circular muddy mark, and here again upon the floor, and here again by the table. See here, Watson! This is really a pretty demonstration."

I looked at the round, well-defined muddy disks.

"This is not a footmark," said I.

"It is something much more valuable to us. It is the impression of a wooden stump. You see here on the sill is the boot-mark, a heavy boot with a broad metal heel, and beside it is the mark of the timber-toe."

"It is the wooden-legged man."

"Quite so. But there has been some one else—a very able and efficient ally. Could you scale that wall, doctor?"

I looked out of the open window. The moon still shone brightly on that angle of the house. We were a good sixty feet from the ground, and look where I would, I could see no foothold nor as much as a crevice in the brickwork.

"It is absolutely impossible," I answered.

"Without aid it is so. But suppose you had a friend up here who lowered you this good stout rope which I see in the corner, securing one end of it to this great hook in the wall. Then, I think if you are an active man you might swarm up, wooden leg and all. You would depart, of course, in the same fashion, and your ally would draw up the rope, untie it from the hook, shut the window, snib it on the inside and get away in the way that he originally came. As a minor point it may be noted," he continued, fingering the rope, "that our wooden-legged friend, though a fair climber, was not a professional sailor. His hands were far from horny. My lens discloses more than one blood-mark, especially towards the end of the rope, from which I gather that he slipped down with such velocity that he took the skin off his hand."

"This is all very well," said I; "but the thing becomes more unintelligible than ever. How about this mysterious ally? How came he into the room?"

"Yes, the ally!" repeated Holmes pensively. "There are features of interest about this ally. He lifts the case from the regions of the commonplace. I fancy that this ally breaks fresh ground in the annals of crime in this country—though parallel cases suggest themselves from India, and, if my memory serves me, from Senegambia."

"How came he, then?" I reiterated.

"The door is locked; the window is inaccessible. Was it through the chimney?"

"The grate is much too small," he answered. "I had already considered that possibility."

"How, then?" I persisted.

"You will not apply my precept," he said, shaking his head. "How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth? We know that he did not come through the door, the window, or the chimney. We also know that he could not have been concealed in the room, as there is no concealment possible. Whence, then, did he come?"

"He came through the hole in the roof!" I cried.

"Of course he did. He must have done so. If you will have the kindness to hold the lamp for me, we shall now extend our researches to the room above—the secret room in which the treasure was found."

He mounted the steps, and, seizing a rafter with either hand, he swung himself up into the garret. Then, lying on his face, he reached down for the lamp, and held it while I followed him.

The chamber in which we found ourselves was about ten feet one way and six the other. The floor was formed by the rafters, with thin lath and plaster between, so that in walking one had to step from beam to beam. The roof ran up to an apex, and was evidently the inner shell of the true roof of the house. There was no furniture of any sort, and the accumulated dust of years lay thick upon the floor.

"Here you are, you see," said Sherlock Holmes, putting his hand against the sloping wall. "This is a trap-door which leads out on to the roof. I can press it back, and here is the roof itself, sloping at a gentle angle. This, then, is the way by which Number One entered. Let us see if we can find some other traces of his individuality."

He held down the lamp to the floor, and as he did so I saw for the second time that night a startled, surprised look come over his face. For myself, as I followed his gaze, my skin was cold under my clothes. The floor was covered thickly with the

prints of a naked foot—clear, well-defined, perfectly formed, but scarce half the size of those of an ordinary man."

"Holmes," I said, in a whisper, "a child has done this horrid thing."

He had recovered his self-possession in an instant.

"I was staggered for the moment," he said, "but the thing is quite natural. My memory failed me, or I should have been able to fortell it. There is nothing more to be learned here. Let us go down."

"What is your theory, then, as to those footmarks?" I asked eagerly, when he had regained the lower room once more.

"My dear Watson, try a little analysis yourself," said he, with a touch of impatience. "You know my methods. Apply them, and it will be instructive to compare results."

"I cannot conceive anything which will cover the facts," I answered.

"It will be clear enough to you soon," he said, in an off-hand way. "I think that there is nothing else of importance here, but I will look."

He whipped out his lens and a tape measure, and hurried about the room on his knees, measuring, comparing, examining, with his long thin nose only a few inches from the planks, and his beady eyes gleaming and deep-set like those of a bird. So swift, silent, and furtive were his movements, like those of a trained blood-hound picking out a scent, that I could not but think what a terrible criminal he would have made had he turned his energy and sagacity against the law, instead of exerting them in its defense. As he hunted about, he kept muttering to himself, and finally he broke out into a loud crow of delight.

"We are certainly in luck," said he. "We ought to have very little trouble now. Number One has had the misfortune to tread in the cresote. You can see the outline of the edge of his small foot here at the side of this evil-smelling mess. The carboy has been cracked, you see, and the stuff has leaked out."

"What then?" I asked.

"Why, we have got him, that's all," said he. "I know a dog that would follow that scent to the world's end. If a pack can track a trailed herring across a shire, how far can a specially-trained hound follow so pungent a smell as this? It sounds like a sum in the rule of three. The answer should give us the— But hallo! here are the accredited representatives of the law."

Heavy steps and the clamor of loud voices were audible from below, and the hall door shut with a loud crash.

"Before they come," said Holmes, "just put your hand here on this poor fellow's arms, and here on his leg. What do you feel?"

"The muscles are as hard as a board," I answered.

"Quite so. They are in a state of extreme contraction, far exceeding the usual *rigor mortis*. Coupled with this distortion of the face, this Hippocratic smile, or '*risus sardivicus*,' as the old writers called it, what conclusion would it suggest to your mind?"

"Death from some powerful vegetable alkaloid," I answered. "Some strychnine-like substance which would produce tetanus."

"That was the idea which occurred to me the instant I saw the drawn muscles of the face. On getting into the room I at once looked for the means by which the poison had entered the system. As you saw, I discovered a thorn which had been driven or shot with no great force into the scalp. You observe that the part struck was that which would be turned towards the hole in the ceiling if the man were erect in his chair. Now examine this thorn."

I took it up gingerly and held it in the light of the lantern. It was long, sharp, and black, with a glazed look near the point as though some gummy substance had dried upon it. The blunt end had been trimmed and rounded off with a knife.

"Is that an English thorn?" he asked?

"No, it certainly is not."

"With all these data you should be able to draw some just inference. But here are the regulars: so the auxiliary forces may beat a retreat."

As he spoke, the steps which had been coming nearer sounded loudly on the passage, and a very stout, portly man in a gray suit strode heavily into the room. He was red-faced, burly, and plethoric, with a pair of very small twinkling eyes which looked keenly out from between swollen and puffy pouches. He was closely followed by an inspector in uniform, and by the still palpitating Thaddeus Sholto.

"Here's a business!" he cried, in a muffled, husky voice. "Here's a pretty business! But who are all these? Why, the house seems to be as full as a rabbit-

warren!"

"I think you must recollect me, Mr. Athelney Jones," said Holmes quietly.

"Why, of course I do!" he wheezed.

"It's Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the theorist. Remember you! I'll never forget how you lectured us all on causes and inferences and effects in the Bishopgate jewel case. It's true you set us on the right track; but you'll own now that it was more by good luck than good guidance."

"It was a piece of very simple reasoning."

"Oh, come, now, come! Never be ashamed to own up. But what is all this? Bad business! Bad business! Stern facts here—no room for theories. How lucky that I happened to be out at Norwood over another case! I was at the station when the message arrived. What do you think the man died of?"

"Oh, this is hardly a case for me to theorize over," said Holmes dryly.

"No, no. Still, we can't deny that you hit the nail on the head sometimes. Dear me? Door locked, I understand. Jewels worth half a million missing. How was the window?"

"Fastened; but there are steps on the sill."

"Well, well, if it was fastened the steps could have nothing to do with the matter. That's common sense. Man might have died in a fit; but then the jewels are missing. Ha! I have a theory. These flashes come upon me at times. Just step outside, sergeant, and you, Mr. Sholto. Your friend can remain. What do you think of this, Holmes? Sholto was, on his own confession, with his brother last night. The brother died in a fit, on which Sholto walked off with the treasure? How's that?"

"On which the dead man very considerably got up and locked the door on the inside."

"Hum! There's a flaw there. Let us apply common sense to the matter. This Thaddeus Sholto was with his brother; there was a quarrel; so much we know. The brother is dead and the jewels are gone. So much also we know. No one saw the brother from the time Thaddeus left him. His bed had not been slept in. Thaddeus is evidently in a most disturbed state of mind. His appearance is—well, not attractive. You see that I am weaving my web round Thaddeus. The net begins to close upon him."

"You are not quite in possession of the facts yet," said Holmes. "This splinter of wood, which I have every reason to believe to be poisoned, was in the man's scalp where you still see the mark; this card, inscribed as you see it, was on the table, and beside it lay this rather curious stone-headed instrument. How does all that fit into your theory?"

"Confirms it in every respect," said the fat detective, pompously. "House is full of Indian curiosities. Thaddeus brought this up, and if this splinter be poisonous, Thaddeus may as well have made murderous use of it as any other man. The card is some hocus-pocus—a blind, as like as not. The only question is, how did he depart? Ah, of course, here is a hole in the roof."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

What is lacking is truth and confidence. If there were absolute truth on the one hand and absolute confidence on the other, it wouldn't be necessary for the makers of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy to back up a plain statement of fact with a \$500 guarantee. They say—"If we can't cure you, (make it personal, please), of catarrh in the head, in any form or stage, we'll pay you \$500 for your trouble in making the trial." "An advertising fake," you say. Funny isn't it, how some people prefer sickness to health when the remedy is positive and the guarantee absolute. Wise men don't put money back of "fakes." And "faking" doesn't pay.

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A countryman recently went into a store in Chicago where there was a phonograph which he started by putting a nickel in the slot. When he put the rubber tubes to his ears he heard the "Star Spangled Banner" playing an orchestra; and with a startled cry, "Jewhittaker, an' I left my team untied!" he rushed out to see that they did not get frightened by the music.

Impure blood is the cause of innumerable maladies. Hence one of the greatest benefactions to humanity was the discovery of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which, more than any other medicine, has saved America from becoming a nation of invalids.

**Minaud's Liniment cures Colds, etc.**

**Point Sapin.**

June 27, '92.—The past week has not been any better in the lobster catch. Salmon show a slight increase. The crops are looking fairly well, but are in much need of rain. Our young and popular friend from the shire town paid us a visit in the interest of his factory, and for a time we had hoped he had left his companion in Richibucto, but e'er the sun went down behind the western horizon, we could hear the onward wash of peculiar noise along the beach, and on the morrow, the white topped billows lashing with fury upon the reefs, echoed the presence of a perfect northeaster. But while the watery elements without were boiling with rage, there was a storm raging on terra firma, between labor and capital, which for severity and fierceness surpassed the boisterous elements without, and as the sun was shining forth, a thing of beauty, giving light and heart to this sin-cursed world of ours, the frail bark stranded on the rock of labor, and before the shade of evening had gathered in the sea-tossed fisherman was seen with all his worldly goods tied up in a red handkerchief and slung across his back, wending his weary steps up the portage, there to unburden all his difficulties and dangers to his dear pater. And thus has it been all the season, storms without and fierce struggles within. But kind experience has taught some of us a very good lesson, and when the frail piece of humanity is ready to burst, we just use a little of Wizard's Oil, and the whole surface becomes a perfect calm. A season or two like the present and our young, popular but impetuous friend will know somewhat of the difficulties to be overcome by those whose living is down by the sea, and then he will be gentle, docile and as calm as a cucumber.

Postmaster Daigle is erecting a fine barn.

Mr. Harry and Miss Edith Fleiger, son and daughter of Thos. H. Fleiger, of Escuminae, paid Sapin a visit last week. Your correspondent X

Less than half a bottle of SCOTT'S CURE FOR RHEUMATISM entirely cured me of a very severe attack of Rheumatism. I applied it on cotton batting, and obtained almost instant relief. I take great pleasure in recommending Scott's Cure to any who suffer from Rheumatism or pains in the limbs, of any description.

Yours truly,  
Z. ADAMS, West St. John, N. B.  
January 29th, 1891.

**Origin of a Phrase.**

"The wind blew through his whiskers" is an expression which my town can justly claim," said Anson Tailbot, of St. Joseph, Mo., at the Lindell. "It happened this way: Ten or twelve years ago a maniac escaped from the State Lunatic Asylum, near St. Joseph, in the night, and the early risers the next morning were startled by the presence of a man on the roof of the Tootle Opera house, one of the tallest buildings in the city. Before the day was far spent he was identified as an inmate of the lunatic asylum, and the officers of that institution, together with a squad of police set about to induce the maniac to come down from the roof. Every harmless device known was exerted to get the man down, and finally the officers realized that they would have to go up, overpower him and bring him down. There was only one opening to the roof, and the lunatic stationed himself there and kept the officers back by pelting every head with a big club as it was poked through the hole. At last three men gained the roof, and after a terrific struggle that was witnessed by thousands of excited people that blocked the streets, the lunatic was bound hand and foot and brought to the ground. When he cooled off somewhat from the tussle with his captors the man gave as a reason for going to the roof that his whiskers being so thick he had gone up there to cool his face. The local papers wrote the affair up in elaborate style, and accounts were telegraphed all over the country. The headlines made the most of the incident, and in the blackest type announced that 'The Wind Blew Through His Whiskers.' The expression was so catchy that it flew all over the country like wild fire, and that is the way it originated.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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**THE SWORDSMAN.**  
A MILITARY NOVEL.  
BY FORTUNE DU BOISGOBEY.  
(Translated by H. L. Williams.)

CHAPTER XXXII.—Continued.

Don Inigo de Barrameda, Marquis de Santa Cruz y otros locos was no longer costumed like Figaro as on the day when he had much against his will lodged sub-lieutenant Paul Fontenay in his dilapidated palace. He was clad like a guerillero, though his age would hardly allow him to wage irregular warfare. But the captain had not forgotten his features, and he would have identified him by his noble manners.

Montalvan also wore the costume of the Aragonese peasant insurgents; a red and yellow handkerchief rolled up into a loose rope and wound round the head, short buff leather breeches held up by a violet sash, and blue woollen hose coming down into those hempen sandals called *alpargatas* by the Spanish.

Thus equipped, the Count de Montalvan was fit to scour the mountains with his hands, and no doubt he waited for the chance to join them for his weapons lay on the table on which he rested his elbow, namely two brace of pistols, a blunderbuss—that used at Somo Sierra—and a *cuchillo de Pamplona*, or Pampluna knife, which might be the one sharpened for the Emperor Napoleon and used upon the West Indian in the Rue Saint Nicaise. This arsenal indicated that he did not intend prolonging his stay in Teruel and would not have been here now only for failure to break out.

All seen by the creole confirmed the duenna's sayings. After receiving her thirty pieces, the female Judas had conscientiously delivered the master whom she sold. She had not mentioned the Marquis de Barrameda—throwing him into the bargain.

What was he concerning with Montalvan?

Teruel is far from Aranda, and he certainly had not left home to fight.

He spoke slowly and gravely in that fine Spanish tongue seemingly created for invoking God. Montalvan replied to him in pure Castilian which he enunciated "with open mouth"—*con los labios, caimios o ore rotundo*, as the ancient Romans said.

Fontenay took pleasure in hearing it, although he stood upon burning ground. The state of things could not continue, though nothing pressed him to act, retreat being open through a doorless passage; but by prolonging it, he hoped to learn many things, the personal one most interesting to him who was an American first, and after that, a French soldier. What had become of Marquerite's cousin, Inez de Molden? There was as yet no allusion to her.

"Those dolts would not to hearken to me," said Uncle Blas. "They gave the French time to fortify themselves in the monastery, when they ought to have attacked them on the first day, carried the house at any price and exterminated them. When our fellows made up their mind to finish with them, it was too late. They lost some more hours in summoning them to surrender, so that Suchet came up. I had warned them."

"And now heaven only knows how we shall get out of Teruel!" sighed the old marquis. "These fiendish French are likely to search your mansion. One blunder will be enough to ruin us. Are you sure of Carmen?"

"Yes! well, as much as one can be sure of any of the sex. The Aragonese proverb is true: 'Trust alpargatas and women, and you will go barefoot to the grave.'"

"But, in short, my dear count, if the French should come to our door, would we have time to flee?"

"There is another way, a secret one, on that side, reached by the back of this room. If they appear, I will at least hold them in check till you get the start of me in flight. I am going to be killed rather than be taken by these *garachos*. Here is the means of sending some of them to the undying flames. I think you will imitate me, Senor el Marquez."

"Rely upon me, my lord," said the old noble, drawing himself up to his full height. "I know how to die, and at my age, it costs but a faint pang to lay down life. Yet it is hard—hard to leave Spain in its dying state."

"Spain is immortal. Her sons will defend her as long as one remains, and the day will come when they will drive the invaders from her."

"It is their Emperor who should be cast down."

(Continued on page 4.)