

XXIII -The woman in the Alcove

Enough for him to reach New York and return, they agreed to meet in Boston instead; Mr. Grey to carry away the diamond if produced, and Fairbrother, his life and liberty. But Fairbrother had not expected to fulfill this bargain. His plan was to elude Grey in the thick fog and reach the launch, where with the pistol he held ready, he would make his final stand, secure in the belief that Grey would not risk notifying the police and so revealing his presence in this country. But he miscalculated Grey's courage and the Englishman's shot went home, and with a well-aimed bullet, he won back his diamond.

Fairbrother's career was over; he fell, a victim to his ambitions and avarice. Yet, in his fall, he preserved that mixture of bravado and cunning which had marked his amazing, though criminal, career. For when found, it was discovered he had hidden his worst mutilations under a cloak drawn closely about him—a last effort to maintain the dignity he had lost forever.

Grey's diamond was restored to him, but both men ended tragically. Grey went back to England, a broken man, grieving over the loss of his daughter, who succumbed to illness amidst his legal struggles to reclaim his treasure. Fairbrother, meanwhile, met a darker fate, ending his life with his ambition unfulfilled, leaving behind a legacy of crime that overshadowed his previous achievements. His cleverness and cunning, remarkable as they were, could not save him from the consequences of his actions, nor could they procure him the serenity or safety he sought through deceit and violence.

This tale serves as a poignant reminder of the perils of unchecked ambition and the inevitable downfall that accompanies a life of crime. Despite their differing paths, both men were ultimately undone by their desires, leaving behind a tale of passion, deceit, and tragedy—a stark portrayal of human nature's darker facets.