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# 月亮宝石

THE MOONSTONE  
WILKIE COLLINS

英语经典世界文学名著丛书

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## THE MOONSTONE

*Wilkie Collins*

With an Introduction by Anthea Tread &

Notes by Chen Dezhong

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### **月亮宝石**

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威廉·科林斯 1824 年生于伦敦，其父是一位通俗风景画家。1846 年他进入林肯学院攻读法律，1851 年成为律师，同年结识狄更斯。在狄更斯的指导下，科林斯在人物刻画、诙谐幽默、通俗易懂等方面都有所长进，而狄更斯在《双城记》和《远大前程》等长篇小说中显然也向他学到情节紧凑、布局严密的技巧。1860 年他在狄更斯主编的《一年到头》杂志上刊登《白衣女人》，书中白衣女人的原型是卡罗琳·格拉夫斯夫人，科林斯大半生都与她生活在一起。科林斯虽定居于伦敦，但常在法、意等国游历，还曾在美国作过巡回演讲。1889 年逝世。

科林斯是第一位写长篇侦探小说的英国作家，他在叙述技巧上做过许多有益的探索。其模式被人效仿长达 1 世纪之久。他刻画人物有时草率从事，但在小说中也创造了一些生动的值得同情的残疾人形象。在晚期的一些作品里，他还抨击了各种社会弊病。现代批评家对他有褒有贬，但他的叙事才能得到公众的肯定，其小说被译成各种文字。科林斯的主要作品除了《白衣女人》和 1868 年发表的《月亮宝石》之外，还有《罗马的陷落》(1850)、《巴西尔》(1852)、《无题》(1862)和《阿玛达尔》(1866)等。

## 内容简介

月亮宝石原产于印度，光辉夺目，硕大无朋，后被一名英国军人盗走。英国姑娘米雪尔·凡林达18岁生日那天，得到了被当作礼物的这块宝石。但当夜宝石即不翼而飞。受嫌疑的不只一人，其中有从前曾是小偷的驼背使女罗莎娜·斯皮尔曼；几个印度来的流浪艺人；米雪尔的表兄弗兰克林·布莱克，甚至米雪尔本人。侦探卡夫警官被请来破案，得到管家卡布里尔·彼特瑞奇的帮助。可米雪尔拒绝合作，罗莎娜也自杀身亡，案情毫无进展。

后来米雪尔承认曾在当夜看见布莱克走进她的外屋拿走了宝石，但大家都不知道，布莱克只是在鸦片的作用下无意识的夜游，真正盗走宝石者是米雪尔的一位求婚者哥德弗雷。后来哥德弗雷被追踪而来的印度人杀死，宝石重归印度圣庙，在那里再放异彩。

在破案的过程中，一位医生的助手起了关键作用。正是这位医生在生日晚会上因为与布莱克争论问题而故意在他的饮料中放了鸦片酊。归家途中，适逢大雨，医生一病不起，丧失了记忆。是助手记下他昏迷中说的话，分析后方才解开谜团。

# **THE MOONSTONE**

## **IN MEMORIAM MATRIS**

## PREFACE

IN some of my former novels, the object proposed has been to trace the influence of circumstances upon character. In the present story I have reversed the process. The attempt made here is to trace the influence of character on circumstances. The conduct pursued, under a sudden emergency, by a young girl, supplies the foundation on which I have built this book.

The same object has been kept in view in the handling of the other characters which appear in these pages. Their course of thought and action under the circumstances which surround them is shown to be (what it would most probably have been in real life) sometimes right and sometimes wrong. Right or wrong, their conduct, in either event, equally directs the course of those portions of the story in which they are concerned.

In the case of the physiological experiment which occupies a prominent place in the closing scenes of *The Moonstone*, the same principle has guided me once more. Having first ascertained, not only from books, but from living authorities as well, what the result of that experiment would really have been, I have declined to avail myself of the novelist's privilege of supposing something which might have happened, and have so shaped the story as to make it grow out of what actually would have happened—which, I beg to inform my readers, is also what actually does happen, in these pages.

With reference to the story of the Diamond, as here set forth, I have to acknowledge that it is founded, in some important particulars, on the stories of two of the royal diamonds of Europe. The magnificent stone which adorns



## PREFACE

the top of the Russian Imperial Sceptre was once the eye of an Indian idol. The famous Koh-i-Noor is also supposed to have been one of the sacred gems of India ; and, more than this, to have been the subject of a prediction, which prophesied certain misfortune to the persons who should divert it from its ancient uses.

GLOUCESTER PLACE, PORTMAN SQUARE,

*June 30th, 1868.*

## PREFACE TO A NEW EDITION

THE circumstances under which *The Moonstone* was originally written have invested the book—in the author's mind—with an interest peculiarly its own.

While this work was still in course of periodical publication in England and in the United States, and when not more than one-third of it was completed, the bitterest affliction of my life and the severest illness from which I have ever suffered fell on me together. At the time when my mother lay dying in her little cottage in the country, I was struck prostrate, in London—crippled in every limb by the torture of rheumatic gout. Under the weight of this double calamity, I had my duty to the public still to bear in mind. My good readers in England and in America, whom I had never yet disappointed, were expecting their regular weekly instalments of the new story. I held to the story—for my own sake as well as for theirs. In the intervals of grief, in the occasional remissions of pain, I dictated from my bed that portion of *The Moonstone* which has since proved most successful in amusing the public—the 'Narrative of Miss Clack.' Of the physical sacrifice which the effort cost me I shall say nothing. I only look back now at the blessed relief which my occupation (forced as it was) brought to my mind. The Art which had been always the pride and the pleasure of my life became now more than ever 'its own exceeding great reward.' I doubt if I should have lived to write another book, if the responsibility of the weekly publication of this story had not forced me to rally my sinking energies of body and mind—to dry my useless tears, and to conquer my merciless pains.

## PREFACE TO A NEW EDITION

The novel completed, I awaited its reception by the public with an eagerness of anxiety which I have never felt before or since for the fate of any other writings of mine. If *The Moonstone* had failed, my mortification would have been bitter indeed. As it was, the welcome accorded to the story in England, in America, and on the Continent of Europe was instantly and universally favourable. Never have I had better reason than this work has given me to feel gratefully to novel-readers of all nations. Everywhere my characters made friends, and my story roused interest. Everywhere the public favour looked over my faults—and repaid me a hundredfold for the hard toil which these pages cost me in the dark time of sickness and grief.

I have only to add that the present edition has had the benefit of my careful revision. All that I can do towards making the book worthy of the reader's continued approval has now been done.

W. C.

May, 1871.

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# THE MOONSTONE

## PROLOGUE

### THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM (1799)

*Extracted from a family paper*

#### I

I ADDRESS these lines—written in India—to my relatives in England.

My object is to explain the motive which has induced me to refuse the right hand of friendship to my cousin, John\* Herculastle. The reserve which I have hitherto maintained in this matter has been misinterpreted by members of my family whose good opinion I cannot consent to forfeit. I\* request them to suspend their decision until they have read my narrative. And I declare, on my word of honour, that what I am now about to write is, strictly and literally, the truth.

The private difference between my cousin and me took its rise in a great public event in which we were both concerned—the storming of Seringapatam, under General\* Baird, on the 4th of May, 1799.

In order that the circumstances may be clearly understood, I must revert for a moment to the period before the assault, and to the stories current in our camp of the treasure in jewels and gold stored up in the Palace of Seringapatam.

#### II

One of the wildest of these stories related to a Yellow Diamond—a famous gem in the native annals of India.

The earliest known traditions describe the stone as having been set in the forehead of the four-handed Indian god who typifies the Moon. Partly from its peculiar colour, partly\* from a superstition which represented it as feeling the influence of the deity whom it adorned, and growing and lessening in lustre with the waxing and waning of the moon,

it first gained the name by which it continues to be known in India to this day—the name of **THE MOONSTONE**. A similar superstition was once prevalent, as I have heard, in ancient Greece and Rome ; not applying, however (as in India), to a diamond devoted to the service of a god, but to a semi-transparent stone of the inferior order of gems, supposed to be affected by the lunar influences—the moon, in this latter case also, giving the name by which the stone is still known to collectors in our own time.

The adventures of the Yellow Diamond begin with the eleventh century of the Christian era.

- \* At that date, the Mohammedan conqueror, Mahmoud of Ghizni, crossed India ; seized on the holy city of Somnauth ; and stripped of its treasures the famous temple, which had stood for centuries—the shrine of Hindoo pilgrimage, and the wonder of the Eastern world.

- Of all the deities worshipped in the temple, the moon-god alone escaped the rapacity of the conquering Moham-medans. Preserved by three Brahmins, the inviolate deity, bearing the Yellow Diamond in its forehead, was removed by night, and was transported to the second of the sacred cities of India—the city of Benares.

- Here, in a new shrine—in a hall inlaid with precious stones, under a roof supported by pillars of gold—the moon-god was set up and worshipped. Here, on the night when the shrine was completed, Vishnu the Preserver appeared to the three Brahmins in a dream.

- The deity breathed the breath of his divinity on the Diamond in the forehead of the god. And the Brahmins knelt and hid their faces in their robes. The deity commanded that the Moonstone should be watched, from that time forth, by three priests in turn, night and day, to the end of the generations of men. And the Brahmins heard, and bowed before his will. The deity predicted certain disaster to the presumptuous mortal who laid hands on the sacred gem, and to all of his house and name who received it after him. And the Brahmins caused the prophecy to be written over the gates of the shrine in letters of gold.

One age followed another—and still, generation after

generation, the successors of the three Brahmins watched their priceless Moonstone, night and day. One age followed another until the first years of the eighteenth Christian century saw the reign of Aurungzebe, Emperor of the Moguls. At his command havoc and rapine were let loose once more among the temples of the worship of Brahmah. The shrine of the four-handed god was polluted by the slaughter of sacred animals; the images of the deities were broken in pieces; and the Moonstone was seized by an officer of rank in the army of Aurungzebe. \*

Powerless to recover their lost treasure by open force, the three guardian priests followed and watched it in disguise. The generations succeeded each other; the warrior who had committed the sacrilege perished miserably; the Moonstone passed (carrying its curse with it) from one lawless Mohammedan hand to another; and still, through all chances and changes, the successors of the three guardian priests kept their watch, waiting the day when the will of Vishnu the Preserver should restore to them their sacred gem. Time rolled on from the first to the last years of the eighteenth Christian century. The Diamond fell into the possession of Tippoo, Sultan of Seringapatam, who caused it to be placed as an ornament in the handle of a dagger, and who commanded it to be kept among the choicest treasures of his armoury. Even then—in the palace of the Sultan himself—the three guardian priests still kept their watch in secret. There were three officers of Tippoo's household, strangers to the rest, who had won their master's confidence by conforming, or appearing to conform, to the Mussulman faith; and to those three men report pointed as the three priests in disguise.

### III

So, as told in our camp, ran the fanciful story of the Moonstone. It made no serious impression on any of us except my cousin—whose love of the marvellous induced him to believe it. On the night before the assault on Seringapatam, he was absurdly angry with me, and with others, for treating the whole thing as a fable. A foolish



\* wrangle followed ; and Herncastle's unlucky temper got the better of him. He declared, in his boastful way, that we should see the Diamond on his finger, if the English \* army took Seringapatam. The sally was saluted by a roar of laughter, and there, as we all thought that night, the thing ended.

\* Let me now take you on to the day of the assault.

My cousin and I were separated at the outset. I never saw him when we forded the river ; when we planted the English flag in the first breach ; when we crossed the ditch beyond ; and, fighting every inch of our way, entered the town. It was only at dusk, when the place was ours, and after General Baird himself had found the dead body of Tippoo under a heap of the slain, that Herncastle and I met.

We were each attached to a party sent out by the general's orders to prevent the plunder and confusion \* which followed our conquest. The camp-followers committed deplorable excesses ; and, worse still, the soldiers found their way, by an unguarded door, into the treasury of the Palace, and loaded themselves with gold and jewels. It was in the court outside the treasury that my cousin and I met, to enforce the laws of discipline on our own soldiers. Herncastle's fiery temper had been, as I could plainly see, exasperated to a kind of frenzy by the terrible slaughter through which we had passed. He was very unfit, in my opinion, to perform the duty that had been entrusted to him.

There was riot and confusion enough in the treasury, but no violence that I saw. The men (if I may use such an expression) disgraced themselves good-humouredly. All sorts of rough jests and catchwords were bandied about among them ; and the story of the Diamond turned up again unexpectedly, in the form of a mischievous joke. ' Who's got the Moonstone ? ' was the rallying cry which \* perpetually caused the plundering, as soon as it was stopped in one place, to break out in another. While I was still vainly trying to establish order, I heard a frightful yelling on the other side of the courtyard, and at once ran towards the cries, in dread of finding some new outbreak of the pillage in that direction.