

ANZA PUBLISHING

The Mystery of the Vanishing Servant Who Possesses a Powerful Secret in Late 19th Century New York

A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE by Anna Katharine Green

A woman who had a successful professional career, Anna Katharine Green not only was skilled at her craft, she also provided a voice for society's victims in her fiction — Mystery and Suspense Writers: The Literature of Crime, Detection, and Espionage.

Her powers of invention are so remarkable--she has so much imagination and so much belief (a most important qualification for our art) in what she says —Wilkie Collins

Anna Katherine Green is often referred to as “mother of the detective novel” — Contemporary Authors Online

Green's originality, the tightness of her plots, the attractiveness of her characters, and her astonishing consistency over a forty-five year span make her an author well worth a second look—Audrey Peterson

A young woman working as a domestic servant disappears from a wealthy household in [New York City. The police investigating the disappearance have few clues, and the other servants working in the mansion, which is owned by a Mr. Blake, seem to know little about the woman in question. Did she leave voluntarily or was she kidnaped? The police suspect the well-to-do owner of the house, and conduct a surveillance of his activities. From this, they realize the connections between the missing woman and Mr. Blake are closer than first thought. What then were the true relations between employer and servant? We learn that the woman had years earlier saved Mr. Blake's life, and this led to a secret liaison that eventually became the motive for blackmail. Such is the exciting story of **A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE** (Hambleton Hill Press). Set in the late 19th century, it takes us from the highly privileged and sumptuous surroundings of Fifth Avenue, to the dangerous backstreets of downtown Manhattan, and into the forests and isolated cottages of upstate New York. After the shocking truth about the participants is revealed, the police move to prevent a murder. Part of their plan involves a young detective disguising himself as a consumptive French artist!

The author of **A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE**, Anna Katharine Green, excels in her ability to convincingly portray villains as well as heroes. In her dramas, characters struggle with lost opportunities, vengeful motives, hidden agendas, and complex family relationships. This was the second book written by Green after her famous Leavenworth Case, and was originally published in 1880 by New York firm, A.L. Burt. **A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE** is truly a fabulous piece of writing, well-constructed, dramatic and involving.

When **A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE** was first published a reviewer remarked about Green: “We have a Gaboriau in our own tongue.” The Frenchman Gaboriau is considered by many to be the inventor of the detective/mystery genre, and such comments could only have considered extremely

flattering. Green does resemble Gaboriau to a certain extent in that she has a strong grasp of plot and characterizations. However, she has been less fairly compared to other contemporary authors, whose main goal was producing works for mass consumption, and whose books are distinctly inferior to Green's.

Anna Katharine Green (1846-1935) was born in Brooklyn, NY. As a child, she used to overhear discussions her father, a prominent defence lawyer, had with colleagues about cases he was handling. This no doubt spurred an early interest in crime and intrigue. Green was also from an early age very much committed to literary pursuits, and produced over her lifetime some thirty detective novels that were widely read and appreciated. Despite her success, she avoided media scrutiny, and preferred a quiet home life. Nonetheless, at times she jumped into the center of controversy, such as when she voiced her conservative views on female suffrage. She married Charles Rohlf (an actor and furniture designer), in 1884, and had three children. Although generally credited with excellent imagination and logical plots, Green's books had trouble receiving unqualified critical acceptance due to the general discrimination against mystery writing at the time. However, she had a wide-ranging influence on later writers of mystery, most notably Agatha Christie. Some of her other notable works were: *The Leavenworth Case* (1878); *XYZ* (1883); *Hand and Ring* (1883); *The Mill Mystery* (1886); *Dr. Izard* (1895); *Agatha Webb* (1899); *The Circular Study* (1900); *The Filigree Ball* (1903); *The Millionaire Baby* (1905); *The Chief Legatee* (1906); *The Woman in the Alcove* (1906); *The Mayor's Wife* (1907); *The Millionaire Baby* (1905); *The Mayor's Wife* (1907); *Dark Hollow* (1914).

Paul Dennis Sporer (editor) is the author of *The Dimensions of Companionship*; *Liberating Love*; *The Concept of Family*; and *Equal but Different*. He has also served as editor on more than 30 culturally and historically significant books, including *Painting Explained*, by Thomas Gullick; *Is Secession Treason?*, by Albert Bledsoe; *The Heart of Aryavarta*, by Lawrence Dundas; *Beauty and Art*; by Aldam Heaton; *The French at Home*, by Albert Rhodes; *From Slave Cabin to Pulpit*, by Peter Randolph; *Newer Ideals of Peace*, by Jane Addams; *Views of Old Europe*, by Bayard Taylor; *Gentle Measures*, by Jacob Abbott; *Parental Influences*, William Bacon; *Finding a Way Out*, by Robert Moton; *The New Birth*, by Austin Phelps; *Tupelo*, by John Hill Aughey; *An Incident of Travel*, Arthur Jerome Eddy; *End of an Era*, by John Sergeant Wise; *The Missionary*, by Samuel Mazzuchelli; *Half a Century*, by Jane Swisshelm; *Born Three Times*, by Thomas L. Johnson; *Dark Hollow*, by Anna Katharine Green; and *1492: Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, by Mary Johnston.

For further information about **A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE**, or to arrange an interview with the editor, Paul Dennis Sporer, please contact Cassandra Foxton, [inform_at_anzapublishing.com](mailto:inform@anzapublishing.com). The publisher's website address is AnzaPublishing.com.

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