

AGATHA CHRISTIE
THE VEILED
LADY



COOLTURA

I had noticed that for some time Poirot had been growing increasingly dissatisfied and restless. We had had no interesting cases of late, nothing on which my little friend could exercise his keen wits and remarkable powers of deduction. This morning he flung down the newspaper with an impatient:

‘Tchah!’ -a favourite exclamation of his which sounded exactly like a cat sneezing.

‘They fear me, Hastings; the criminals of your England they fear me! When the cat is there, the little mice, they come no more to the cheese!’

‘I don’t suppose the greater part of them even know of your existence,’ I said, laughing.

Poirot looked at me reproachfully. He always imagines that the whole world is thinking and talking of Hercule Poirot. He had certainly made a name for himself in London, but I could hardly believe that his existence struck terror into the criminal world.

‘What about that daylight robbery of jewels in Bond Street the other day?’ I asked.

‘A neat coup,’ said Poirot approvingly, ‘though not in my line. *Pas de finesse, seulement de l’audace!* A man with a loaded cane smashes the plate-glass window of a jeweller’s shop and grabs a number of precious stones. Worthy citizens immediately seize