The Case of the Slashed Satchel

Arthur Cameron is slumped in a chair at the Leave-you-A. Loan Company when you arrive. A doctor has just finished bandaging a huge cut on his forehead. On the floor is a leather bag with its side slit wide open.

"This was the most brazen robbery I ever heard of," says the company's manager, Martin Phelps. "The first robbery we've had, and in broad daylight, too."

You ask Cameron to tell his story. "Well," he begins, "I make regular trips to the bank to deposit our cash. I've been doing it for two years. I carry it in this leather bag." He points to the slashed bag on the floor.

"This afternoon," he goes on, "I was on my usual route—first over Main Street, then north on Chestnut, which is a side street. Suddenly, as I was passing an alley, I was hit on the head from behind.

"I must have passed out for a while. When I came to, I was lying in the alley. The bag was next to me— empty! I came right back to the office, and Mr. Phelps phoned you."

"You didn't get a look at the assailant?" you ask.

"No. I didn't see him and I didn't hear anything. Evidently no one saw the robbery either, because I was all alone when I came to."

"Of course, we're insured for the loss of the $5,000," puts in the manager, "but I hope you'll catch the thief."

You examine the leather bag. "It must have been a very sharp knife," you say. Then you inspect the lock on the top catch of the bag. It is still intact.

"It was a good try," you say to Cameron. "Now suppose you tell us what you did with the money!"

Why do you suspect Cameron?

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