

# The Moving Scene

## A PIECE OF RIBBON

20 Sec lead in - then start

START. THEME MUSIC.. ~~2/5 SECS~~

It was rosy satin, a pretty piece of colour in a dark grey period of British history when Australia was hardly more than a nasty gleam in the eyes of criminal court judges.

It lay in a roll on a back hall table of the fashionable house, and it caught the eye of Martha, the cook, as she passed through in the early morning on her way to the kitchen. Somehow suddenly it was in her apron pocket; a touch of kleptomania--nothing to take too seriously.

(If the Mistress notices it has gone and starts a hue and cry it can turn up again as suddenly--but why should she miss a little roll of ribbon from all the finery she has?) And indeed apparently the

Mistress didn't miss it, for nothing was said for days, and Martha eventually slipped it away into the little secret box where she hoarded the few ornaments of her life. And then one day she wanted something to make a little gift to show her gratitude to Margaret, the good-natured, helpful new housemaid: Margaret, the conscientious, innocent, earnest, girl, lately arrived from the country.

The cook presented it to Margaret and Margaret was delighted. She used some of it to trim her Sunday bonnet. But on her way to church the very next day Margaret met her Mistress, who recognised the rose satin ribbon and demanded to know where the girl had found it. Margaret explained. They confronted the cook. The cook denied any knowledge of the ribbon. Margaret was charged with theft, arrested, committed for trial, found guilty. Margaret, friendless in London, was sentenced, to death. For six weeks she lay in the condemned cell expecting, hour by hour, to be led out to the gallows.