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THE DIAMOND FROM THE SKY
CHAPTER LIV.
"Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee!"
Esther had steadfastly refused to permit Hagar to avow to all the world that the missing Arthur Stanley was but a gypsy changeling and that Esther was the true heir of Stanley Hall. Hagar determined to proclaim the truth and flee to her gypsy people. Once Esther's true status was known Hagar realized there could be no social communion for the gypsy and the mistress of Stanley Hall.



The Mad Millionaire Is Now an Aviator!

ther, throwing herself into the arms of Hagar, while the tears welling from these two loving, steadfast hearts gave bitter savor to the parting. But Hagar was resolved.
"This dreadful lie, this living lie of twenty bitter years and more must die!" said Hagar resolutely. "Our ways lie different. The wrong of years I can undo at the breaking of my heart, my darling child!"
"And at the breaking of mine?" cried Esther. "What are the Stanleys to me? What have they done for me? What will they do for me? I would rather beg my bread by your side throughout the world than dwell without you here or anywhere in every luxury that could be proffered me. I swear you shall not leave me!"
But Hagar sobbed, yet was resolute. "You are my mother, in place of her who died when I was born. A tender mother through all the happy years we dwelt together before ambition and desire for things that are vain parted us and brought the sorrow to our hearts that now we feel," continued Esther. "I will not let you go, or if you go I shall go with you!"

Again she flung herself into the arms of Hagar, who, though her own tears blinded her and her own sobs choked her, endeavored to calm the shuddering, heartbroken girl.
In the struggle the Bible fell from the table beside them. Hagar picked it up as it fell open upon the floor.
"It shall be an omen and a portent," she whispered brokenly. And, lo, her hand was upon the book of Ruth and her finger at the sixteenth verse of the first chapter. With eyes scarce seeing, the woman chanted that old, sweet inspired message from one loyal woman's heart to another:
"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."
A deep hush fell upon them. Then Hagar spoke. "It is God's will," she said.
And so that night these two, never again to be parted in this life, closed the great door of the stately house behind them and journeyed on in a deep, silent happiness to where the humble gypsy people awaited them.
"Strike camp!" was Hagar's command when the wild and happy clamor of the wandering folk at the return of their beloved queen and princess had calmed. She pointed westward. No further word was said, but day by day, month after month, the caravan moved ever westward, and Esther knew they journeyed to seek Arthur and to save his soul and bring him back from the living hell wherein he dwelt.

In far Los Angeles the mad millionaire John Powell has a new toy. It is an aeroplane of the latest, most com-

plete and costliest type. Drink and drug crazed, the new toy fills the mad millionaire with wild, insensate delight. Speed! He drives it like a demon, flying like the lost soul he is at maddening pace down the slopes of the wind.
"It will fall with him and break his neck some day," says Blair to Vivian philosophically. Blair is a true prophet, so far as that the machine will fall. He will take good heed that something breaks when all is ready with his other plans. Then, he can announce and prove that John Powell, the mad millionaire, shattered to death by his aeroplane's fall, is Arthur Stanley, fugitive from justice in Virginia and sometime heir to the Stanley earldom in England and Arthur Stanley dead and out of the way, then he, Blair Stanley, possesses these honors as next of kin.

Blair keeps to Arthur's business affairs while John Powell keeps to his wild pleasures. Already Blair has diverted funds in secret that will mean the wreck of the Powell enterprises at the death of Powell. Blair only waits, as Vivian waits, for the reappearance of the diamond from the sky.
Hagar could tell and Esther and Quabba. Better still, John Powell knows, for he has it safe and hidden. The one cunning thing he does is to keep this secret, for it is more than all else the cause of his present more desperate evil courses. Quabba delivered it safely to Hagar and Esther in due time. But these two fell back from it as a thing accursed. They returned it sealed and carefully marked. With it Hagar transcribed and sent the prayer that Esther's dying mother had penned and placed within the locket—a mother's prayer that the Stanley "charm against harm" should be doubly so.

"Oh, child of my heart, not a diamond, but a loving mother's prayer is the true 'charm against harm'."
Locked in the library, Arthur had read this message. Unmanned and weakling as he now was, he felt that the diamond was sanctified by this prayer of a heartbroken mother of whom he was unworthy. Though Vivian had worn a spell around him, he felt in his secret soul it would be sacrilege to place the diamond around her fair white throat after it had been blessed by a prayer, even though he was lost too far to heed it.
It was then that the first wild idea of self destruction crossed Arthur's disordered mind. He secured a deadly and sudden poison and hid it in the safe in the library together with the diamond and its wrappings, and the message from the heart of his mother, the heart he knew he had broken. Knowing he had wronged Blair and kept him from his birthright, a deep regard for Blair, wicked as he knew him to be, had grown in Arthur's heart—like a weed where there should have been flowers. Dimly, loyally, he trusted Blair, trusted and loved him because he knew he wronged him and was not man enough to tell the truth now that the truth had grown a living lie through all the years.

Vivian, such times as she languished over him, endeavored to dissuade him that Blair was but her friend, their



Vivian's Throat Was No Place For the Diamond Blessed by a Mother's Prayer, Arthur Thought.

mutual companion. Blair, constrained, submitted to this scheme, though he little knew in his jealous heart how far the false Vivian carried it.
And ever westward the gypsy caravan journeyed, bearing the two devoted hearts that sought to save Arthur's soul. The gypsies worshiped Esther, and the children, whom she petted, were her devoted followers. The caravan was within a few hundred miles of Los Angeles when matters came to a tragic crisis for the mad millionaire. Vivian and Blair were motoring when John Powell's secretary came to his employer's mansion bearing with him the irrefutable proofs of Blair's treachery and showing beyond dispute, by the doctor's accounts and canceled checks, how Blair by devious ways had

Princeton University is to have a course in military instruction next year.

the Powell properties on the point of ruin and that Blair had waxed rich in his own name.
Another friend brought more ill tidings, as is the wont of friends. Parker, Arthur's devoted man servant, viewing with deep concern the machinations of both Blair and Vivian, had won the confidence of Vivian's spinstery maid. This mature female had cast longing eyes on the dignified and reserved Parker. She had hinted at a secret she held over her mistress's head, Parker, affecting to succumb to the wiles of the none too prepossessing femme de chambre of Vivian, had been given the secret. It was the marriage certificate of Vivian and Blair, dated in Richmond the year before. This filled the cup of bitterness for John Powell, some time Arthur Stan-



Esther Petted the Gypsy Children.

ley of Stanley Hall. False friend, false woman, and he a weakling, disowned and dishonored—a weakling who had betrayed the love of sweet Esther and broken the heart of his anguished mother.
He takes all these proofs of perfidy, his own and others'—his own being the diamond from the sky and his mother's message—and lays them out before him. He is locked in his library alone. The clock nears 12. At midnight he will drain a poisoned cup and drink a toast to death!

At this hour Hagar and Esther have drawn ahead of the gypsy caravan in Hagar's van to hasten on to the end of their journey. A storm breaks upon them, and Quabba, who drives the van, guides the horses beneath the shelter of a great live oak by the wayside. There is a blinding crash—a bolt of lightning hits the tree, and the van is in flames.
A hundred miles away Hagar's son raises his glass to drain the bitter cup of his life to the dregs and drink his toast to death. The rain beats upon the window, the lightning flashes, and then the window opens, and from the lawn the drenched figure of Luke Lovell steps into the room.
"You gypsy renegade, look at me!" cries Luke. And then he bends low, his eyes glisten all the fiercer, and he reaches forth a coarse and brawny hand and grasps again, and for the last time, the diamond from the sky!
[TO BE CONTINUED.]

For Art's Sake.
More technical skill the piano did not go very far, with the late Rafael Joseffy. There is a story related by one of his pupils which touches on that point. She was playing, as she thought, very correctly, but the great instructor, so like a dynamo, seemed like a dynamo about to burst.
"Get out of here," he stormed, "and do not return until you have been in love!"
This particular pupil must have had "temperament." Anyway, she managed the order very expeditiously. Out she went into the hall and sat down for fifteen minutes and thought with concentration of her latest love affair. Then she returned to her lesson and sat down at the piano.
Joseffy did not speak until she had finished the nocturne. Then—
"Ah, that is it! Never play that nocturne again without the proper preparation!"—New York Post.

Her Husband Was Not In.
"Husband in?" asked the gas collector cheerfully.
"No," answered the woman; "he isn't at home."
"Expecting him soon?" asked the collector.
"Well," the woman replied thoughtfully, "I don't know exactly. I've been looking for him seventeen years, and he hasn't turned up yet. You travel about a good deal, and if you see a man who looks as though he'd make a pretty good husband tell him I'm still waiting and send him along."

(To Be Continued)

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