

July 4, 1915

THE DIAMOND FROM THE SKY

By Roy L. McCardell

\$10,000 for 1,000 Words or Less
for an Idea for a Sequel to
"THE DIAMOND FROM THE SKY"
The American Film Manufacturing Company's Picturized
Romantic Novel in Chapters.

This contest is open to any man, woman, or child who is not connected directly or indirectly with the Film Company or the newspapers publishing the continued story. No literary ability is necessary to qualify as a contestant. You are advised to see the continued photoplay in the theaters where it will be shown—to read the story as it runs every week, and then send in your suggestion.

Contestants must confine their contributions for the sequel to 1,000 words or less. It is the idea that is wanted.

The most interesting situations will be pointed out from time to time in the synopsis of the story which will precede the chapters after the opening.

By following the narrative in print and observing the action on the screen, one will be given a splendid opportunity to supply a suggestion for a sequel. A board of three judges will decide which of the suggestions received is most acceptable. The judgment of that board will be absolute and final.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

A bitter feud has existed between Col. Arthur Stanley and his cousin, Judge Henry Lee of Fairfax. The feud has been engendered in family jealousy over an inheritance. "The diamond from the sky" that was found in a fallen meteor by an adventurer. The feud is further augmented by the fact that the diamond was found in the Stanley mansion in England may come to an American Stanley. When a daughter is born to Col. Stanley of the eldest branch of the Stanleys in America, and the mother of the child dies at her birth, the child is named after her mother, and is given the name of the diamond. Three years later the gypsy mother, having had no part in this bargain, sends the child's little daughter, being reared in secret, and leaves her own son undetected as the rightful heir of Stanley hall in Virginia. "The diamond from the sky," and the prospective heir to the estate in England. The gypsy mother has also obtained possession of "the diamond from the sky" and a document that holds the Stanley secret of the false heir. She rears the little girl, Esther, as her own, and grows to love her. When Esther is grown a beautiful young girl, Hagar, now gypsy queen, returns to Virginia with her son, and may right the wrong that has been done her by the Stanleys and the wrong she has done the Stanleys in turn. She has a wild plan that Dr. Lee, the late Col. Stanley's old friend, may now adopt Esther, as originally intended. Her hope also is that her son, the supposed Arthur Stanley II, will fall in love with Esther, and thus the innocent girl may become by marriage what she is by birth—mistress of Stanley hall. In all this Hagar, the gypsy queen, sees a fulfillment of all her hopes—her own master of Stanley hall, possessor of "the diamond from the sky," presumptive heir to a proud English title, and also the sweet girl, Esther, cheated of her inheritance, sharing all this good fortune and great honor. Dr. Lee readily agrees to adopt Esther, but also demands that Hagar turn over to his custody "the diamond from the sky." Dr. Lee also informs Hagar that her son, the supposed Arthur Stanley II, is a prodigal and not worthy of Esther. But Hagar hopes for the best and with her people departs. Arthur Stanley does fall in love with Esther, and so does his boon companion, Blair Stanley, the cousin who would be the rightful male heir of Stanley were the diamond secret known. Blair, in endeavoring to steal the diamond from Dr. Lee, causes the death of the old doctor. In escaping from the doctor's house at midnight with the diamond Blair encounters Arthur, who has come to surround Esther. To escape, Blair is forced to fight a duel at close quarters, and although Blair treacherously attempts to flee before the signal Arthur is the victor and takes Blair into an open grave. Before he goes, however, he searches Blair and finds on his breast "the diamond from the sky," which the latest Blair is only stunned, and when he gains consciousness he makes an effort, with the connivance of his mother, to place the blame for the murder of Dr. Lee upon Arthur. The sheriff attempts to take Arthur into custody on suspicion of the murder, but after a thrilling drive in a high powered motor car he eludes his pursuers, only to be thrown from his car into the river after a tragic smashup. His body is last seen floating down the river. Arthur is taken from the river and revived by Hagar, who reveals to him his true identity and upbraids him for his conduct. He goes to Richmond, where, while out of funds, he determines to pawn the diamond from the sky. Blair, too, is in Richmond gambling and living riotously and he, too, is forced to visit the pawnshop. The two meet and after explanations agree to stand by each other. At a ball to which Blair has invited Arthur and at which a supposed New York society lady is the guest of honor, Blair and Arthur are stunned to find that the diamond from the sky gleams upon the breast of the New York visitor. The fair visitor in reality is an adventuress who has secured the loan of the diamond for the evening through the notorious gambler, in whose dire Blair has lost his money. Hagar attends the ball as a fortune teller, accompanied by Luke Lovell. While Hagar is telling the New York "bella's" fortune the latter is choked by a hand from behind the curtains and the diamond from the sky is snatched from her breast.

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"FOR THE SAKS OF A FALSE FRIEND."
HAGAR'S hands almost touched the diamond from the sky as she clutched at it over the shoulder of Vivian Marston as it disappeared through the velvet window curtains clinched in a strong, dark fist.

As for Vivian Marston, she caught her breath with a great gulping sob, and she shrieked in wild alarm and pain, for the hands that had so mysteriously throttled her fair neck and snatched from her breast the great borrowed jewel had been no gentle ones.

In an instant the ballroom was in an uproar, and a frightened fink had run at the first wild report there had been a jewel robbery to the front doorway and had blown three long, right quavering blasts upon a police whistle.

Outside the Randolph mansion Luke Lovell was scuttling through the darkness with the diamond from the sky.

Idling on the outside and waiting for his mistress, Hagar, the gypsy queen, and Esther, Luke had glanced through the low window only to have his gaze fall upon the blazing jewel.

Never overcautious, he always remembered the whispered gypsy gossip that Matt Harding, the dead husband of Hagar, had made his fortune, now possessed by Hagar, by some bold coup among the wealthy gentle folk, a coup of great daring, but one the exact way and why of which no living gypsy now, save Hagar, knew.

But here, thought the desperate Luke, was his chance for fortune. He was quick to follow out the evil impulse. The deed was easy, and, another poor gypsy, had a fortune in his grasp, perhaps by such a chance as the dead Matt Harding had taken advantage of.

He gained the street with the wild idea to hide the diamond in the first safe nook or cranny, and then to return as quickly as he could to bear the brunt of suspicion and of search.

Inside the ballroom all was confusion and alarm; women screamed and fainted, and the men, foremost among them Arthur and Blair, soon surrounded the hysterical Vivian Marston, listening to her broken story of being strangled and robbed by two strong hands belonging to an unseen thug in the twinkling of an eye.

On the doorstep the frightened fink blew the police whistle again and again.

One policeman who had been at the portals for some time, but had sauntered away to give an eye to his beat, was heard returning with rapid footsteps in the dark. Far off, in the other direction, another policeman could be heard rapidly approaching and sounding his right stick on the sidewalk as he came.

Luke saw the gleam of brass buttons under a gas lamp not a hundred yards away; he turned, his booty clasped in his strong, bronzed right hand, to flee in the opposite direction. But coming in this direction was the other accused policeman, making the night hideous with the pounding of his club, on the pavement. Luke realized he was trapped. To throw the diamond into the street might mean its finding and his subsequent conviction for its theft. His hand struck something cold. It was an iron mail box on a lamp post. Beneath the lamp post was a circle of shade that masked his action. Quick as thought he dropped the jewel, with its lock and chain, into the mail box and ran toward the policeman pounding the sidewalk, crying excitedly: "He crossed over here and went through that hedge and lawn!"

"O, no, he didn't," said the puffing policeman, giving the sinister looking Luke a glance of quick suspicion. "He ran right into my arms. I got him, Brady!" he added to the other policeman, who now drew near.

Together they halted the protesting Luke to the portals of the Randolph mansion on the front street, and they dragged him in among the excited guests of the ball.

Here Luke told his story with many vehement asseverations as to his own honesty. He said he had strolled to the corner of the house from the front doorstep, and had been astounded to see a tall, dark man leap from the ground floor balcony of a side window, dart across the street and through a hedge and across the lawn on the opposite side, and disappear in the dark. He was making after this fleeing marauder when the policeman grabbed him, he added sullenly.

Hagar vouched for her man and Luke insisted on being searched. This being only fair, the search was made and the missing jewel was not found. But the police insisted on holding the gypsy and he was being led away when his fatherly voice, an even greater contempt was to occur, an even more unenviable notoriety was to attend Richmond's most fashionable function, Mrs. Burton Randolph's annual ball.

Sheriff Sam Swain of Fairfax appeared in the doorway, accompanied by Detective Tom Blake.

"I want Arthur Stanley over there for the murder of Dr. Henry Lee of Fairfax," cried the sheriff.

The face of Blair Stanley blanched. "Remember your promise, Arthur," he whispered.



AT SUNSET A GOOD-LOOKING YOUNG TRAMP STOPPED IN THE DOORYARD AT ALEX SMITH'S FARM

pered. "You cannot go to the gallows for me. You must tell the truth. If you are tried, but you can save me if you escape." Arthur nodded and broke loose from the grasp of Sheriff Swain. Blair fought as best he could to aid his supposed cousin, but his now hysterical relative, the charged Mrs. Randolph, threw her arms wildly about him and so held and hampered him as she shrieked, "They will kill you, Blair!" that he could do but little. Then, too, Vivian Marston added her efforts to restrain him. It was no time for Hagar

to speak. She realized that it were better that Arthur escape, if he could, even under the onus of unjust suspicion.

One of the policemen released his hold on Luke Lovell and came to the aid of the sheriff. Arthur fought like a madman and the struggle surged from the ballroom to the hall and out down the steps to the sidewalk. Arthur was slowly but surely overpowered when Hagar, who hovered near the fighting men, plucked Detective Blake by the sleeve and gave him a significant sign. Such was the mastery of that look and sign that the detective relaxed his efforts in aiding his more official brethren of the law.

Arthur wrenched himself loose and fled the sheriff and the policeman, broke through the ring of cabmen and flunkies, and was gone!

Hagar now realized she should have taken Blake more into her confidence, for all the the private detective knew his client had been seeking Arthur Stanley with no good intentions to the fugitive. So, when later on the same day he had located Arthur with Blair, he had given the same information as to where Arthur might be found that night to Sheriff Sam Swain, freshly arrived from Fairfax.

Down the street, the quiet, deserted residence street of Richmond's fashionable residential neighborhood, fled Arthur. Behind him the sound of the police whistles and the pursuit grew fainter. Arthur, in splendid physical trim and spurred by excitement, ran like a deer. He slipped down an obscure alley, crossed by the backs of a half score of mansions, and found himself in a mean street that led down to the railroad tracks. The pursuit was left far behind or else it had gone off in a false scent in another direction.

Arthur slackened his pace and regained his breath. He looked down at himself and saw that he was in evening attire. True, in the struggle his clothes had received some rough handling. His dress coat was torn, his shirt and his trousers were waistcoat flapped apart, bereft of its buttons. And Arthur gave a little laugh as he saw his shadow under a dim street lamp and realized that despite the strenuous encounter through which he had just passed, his silk hat, somewhat ruffled and battered, as examination proved, was still upon his head.

"How will I ever escape in these togs?" he said to himself ruefully. "They'll have my description broadcast in an hour." Yet



LUKE INSISTED ON BEING SEARCHED

him to be the murderer of a kind and gentle old man who had never harmed him, but on the contrary had been his friend and had been one of the agencies by which he, a hedge born gypsy, had been reared in a mansion under a high name never his.

The glamour of his self-sacrifice in shielding Blair and thus making himself a voluntary murderer suspect passed from Arthur. He saw now that in saving Blair he had only done so to save himself from the open shame and humiliation that would come to him when the searching inquiries of a murderer possessed—evidence he felt sure she would produce to save the life of her son—would result in his acquittal of murder, but would leave him stripped of the peacock feathers of the Stanley heritage that he, the gypsy jackdaw, had worn so long.

He saw in the dust and darkness the helpful gleam of the diamond from the sky. He saw the accusing, fierce gaze of his gypsy mother, and then, like a benediction and a saving grace, he saw, in the dust and gloom, the sweet face and the sad, wistful eye of Esther! He grasped the cold iron rod stanchly now. Let destiny deal him what it might, he would stand the buffets and fight on for Esther's sake!

And what of the diamond from the sky? Torn from the fair throat of Vivian Marston, it lies in a mail box, with no light to gleam upon it and be reflected back intensified. With letters and packages and newspapers folded tight lies the diamond from the sky without a stamp to make it mail of any class.

Then comes the busy mail collector, with his mail collecting car. There is some excitement at the Randolph mansion close by. Police whistles are blowing and a thundering light is going on the sidewalk.

But Bob Adams is one of Uncle Sam's mail men. Way for the U. S. mail, which has no time to stop for police, police whistles, or shindies on the street. But it attracts his attention, as do some hurrying passers by, and he opens the mail box and mechanically drags its contents into the open mail of the drawing regulation canvas mail bag. Into the sack, while Bob Adams, mail man, looks with averted head toward the "elegant scrap" goes the mail from box 413, and with it goes the diamond from the sky.

Bob Adams sets back from his collection

the jolting, creaking brake boom. Cramped and bruised from the position in which he lay on his narrow, perilous perch above the grinding wheels, a dreadful impulse seized upon Arthur to let go his straining grasp and end the now stifling fever of his life beneath the clanking wheels that ground and groaned beneath him.

What was he after all but a living falsehood and a cheat? Not a Stanley of Stanley hall, spending with a free hand as became a reckless gentleman, but a gypsy impostor, a cheat, wasting substance that was not his! A fugitive from justice and a bankrupt—believed by all who had known of him.

Mesmerized on the sorting tables at the postoffice the local collections are being dumped from the mail bags. The clerk looses the drawstrings and holds the bags up from their bottom corners and shakes out the mail with deft and practiced rapidity. On the floor the emptied mail bags



IN AN INSTANT THE BALLROOM WAS IN AN UPROAR

pile. They see hard service and some are rent and frayed.

The inspector comes on his rounds and goes over the empties, marking briskly with a large piece of chalk "Repair" on those that need mending and renovation.

Out to the loading platform go, for the time being, the condemned mail bags, and there all night they lay in the air light, with only the eye of the night watchman upon them occasionally.

Dawn breaks at a small way station forty miles from Richmond. Here the freight train halts for orders, and here Arthur, so cramped and sore that every fiber of his being aches, crawls from his perilous perch and creeps from under the car into the dusky daylight. Choked with dust, meeked and grunted with grates and dirt, disheveled and pitiful in what was his masculine finery of the night before, Arthur limps to a small pool of water between the tracks and is not too dainty to throw himself down beside it and suck up its refreshing coolness to his cracked lips and parched and feverish throat.

The trainmen are busy with their own concerns at water tank and telegraph station, far up the track and on the other side of the train. Across from him is a freight, going out on a branch line. The open door of a freight car seems to call him to a sheltering haven of escape. Arthur darts across the track, realizing what a ridiculous figure he must seem in his stained and disheveled dress suit, a marked and battered silk hat still clamped tightly on his head.

The outgoing freight is gaining momentum as Arthur flings himself half into the open doorway, but he misses his hold and would have fallen under the wheels but that two strong and dirty hands seize him by the shoulder and another pair as dirty and as strong grasp him also, and he is hauled into the car like a grain sack to find himself safe on his side and looking up into the countenances of three grinning, grimy knights of the road.

"You had a close shave of it, ho," wheezes the whiskey voice of the first tramp to seize him. "But I gotcher, Steve!"

"It's a plain, Strap," cautions a little rat faced fellow who has skulked in the back of the car and has given no hand in hauling Arthur from the jaws of death.

Whatever mean a plant? asks the one addressed as Strap.

"Can't you see? It's a railroad bull," retorts the rat faced tramp. "Would any gay cat be wearin' the soup and fish?" And he points at Arthur's now dirty and disheveled evening attire.

"Maybe de gink got it handed to him," suggests the other tramp who had assisted Arthur into the "side door Pullman."

"Aw, can't ye see dem glad rags is hissen? Why, dey are dolly, but dey fits him."

"You're right, Scotty!" said the leader of the trio, and without ado he struck Arthur a terrific blow behind the ear that stunned him for the moment, and the next instant Arthur felt himself fighting wildly with the three strong and active outcasts.

Meanwhile, what of the diamond from the sky? Where was it?

Bob Adams had swept it into the mail bag without feeling it, the mail sorter at the postoffice had given no cry to see it fall upon the sorting table and blaze back its sinister gleams to the incandescent light above. Where was the diamond from the sky?

The watchman relieved at dawn on the loading platform outside might have known as he stepped across the mail bags marked "Repair!" But the side of his right brow, again just grazed it. The truck driver might have known as he loaded the bags to be repaired, for like many a poor man he held a fortune in his hands for once at least in his poverty stricken life and never knew it.

Held by its clasp in the ravellings of the service worn old mail bag, the truckman held it in his arms and tossed it on top of his load. But his fingers just missed the feel of it, and so he threw away his fortune, perhaps an evil one, and drove on, with his mind upon other matters than fortunes or missing gems of price.

Down the city street from his humble

route to the postoffice an hour later. His work is through and he stops in to see his friend, the sergeant at police headquarters, to learn what the row was all about that caused such a commotion and evidently put a crimp in the swell ball given by that grande dame of Richmond, Mrs. R. Burton Randolph.

Mesmerized on the sorting tables at the postoffice the local collections are being dumped from the mail bags. The clerk looses the drawstrings and holds the bags up from their bottom corners and shakes out the mail with deft and practiced rapidity. On the floor the emptied mail bags

lodging place, in the poorest part of the town, came Quabba, musician and a traveler. And he traveled not alone. With him was his orchestra and his collector of external revenue. True, his orchestra was but a barrel organ and his collector of external revenue a monkey, but the organ was a fairly good one, sweet of tune, and the monkey was a simian of sorts and his name was Clarence.

So it was that Quabba was gay of heart and sung to himself as he trudged along. Only a poor hunchback organ grinder, with his monkey, was Quabba. But his heart was light, his conscience untroubled, and his appetite, alas! only too good. The whole wide world was his and no man was his master, and so Quabba, the hunchback, sang and winked at the monkey, Clarence, as if to say: "We haven't a penny, Clarence, but what an appetite we'll have for breakfast—as soon as we pick up the price of one!"

"Hi there, get out of the way!" shouted a rough voice, and Quabba, roused from his reflections, stepped aside just in time to avoid being struck by a passing truck. A jolt of the vehicle threw an empty mail bag marked with chalk "Repair!" from a pile of those at the back of the truck.

The hunchback picked up the mail bag and called after the driver. But that worthy failed to hear the cry and Quabba waved the old mail bag after him. Then he felt something the size of an English walnut in his hand and under the dirty canvas of the bag. His sensitive fingers felt along the side seam of the bag and he could feel, even through the thickness of the canvas, that the object in the bag was a chain and lock.

The hunchback wheeled into a nearby alley, between two warehouses. No one had seen the mail bag fall from the truck, none noticed him turn up the deserted alley. It was only the work of an instant to loosen the drawstring and turn the mail bag inside out. There, on the inside out, strung the diamond from the sky, its upper clasp engaged in the seam of the bottom of the bag!

The itinerant musician thrust the diamond and its chain into his bosom and stepped the mail bag in a garbage can, and then, his heart beating high, Quabba winked to the monkey and ceased to whistle to whisper: "We are rich men now, Clarence!"

And soon out from the alley came a hunchback organ grinder with his monkey, and a hunchback was the possessor of the diamond from the sky.

In the empty freight car as it bowed along the combat was over. Spent, worn, and battered, Arthur lay bound on the floor of the freight car, his hands pinioned behind his head by the dirty leather belt of Mr. Strap McGee, gentleman of leisure.

"He ain't no bull in plain clothes, if dem is plain clothes," panted Mr. McGee as he nursed a swelling eye; "he ain't no railroad dick either, he's a welterweight champion."

This also was the opinion of Scotty, the rat faced little tramp whose suspicious had arrested his combat, and likewise was the opinion of Chicago Pete, the bulbous nosed third member of the trio of travelers. For all these gentlemen bore many signs of the conflict through which they had passed. They had conquered Arthur, but at a frightful cost to the allies.

"He busted me anoot," moaned Chicago Pete, "an' jest for dat I'll hand him a shoe full of feet," and, standing over Arthur, helpless and pinioned, the gentleman from Chicago gave him a brutal kick in the ribs.

"An' jest for dat we'll frisk young John L. an' swipe his glib rags, too," asserted Mr. Strap McGee.

They took some \$20 they found upon Arthur, for in addition to having lent Blair money to hold in Mr. Abloom's gambling establishment, Arthur had generously given him almost all of the rest of the proceeds from the pawning of the diamond from the sky.

Then the tramps stripped Arthur and proceeded gravely to shoot craps for his clothes. They were won by the more fortunate Mr. Strap McGee, more fortunate in the fact that the dice were his and not how to manipulate them. Bruised and battered as he was, Arthur could not restrain a laugh at the ludicrous aspect the tramp leader presented in the dirty and disheveled evening clothes, with Arthur's broken silk hat perched jauntily on his head.

The freight stopped at a water tank and the three tramps withdrew with many caustic remarks at parting. Arthur freed himself from his bonds and with some repugnance donned the frowsy garments of the tramp. Then he, too, sprang from the freight car and made through a cornfield across the country. He reflected, with a smile, that the actions of the tramp would be his salvation. He was right in this, for shortly afterward Mr. Strap McGee, despite his indignant protests and explanations, was seized by railroad detectives and held on a telegraphic description of his attire as Arthur Stanley, wanted for murder.

At sunset a good looking young tramp stopped in the dooryard of Alex Smith's farm and asked for work. The farmer put him to chopping wood for his supper, and so well did he acquit himself and so soon did he gain the good graces of the farmer's wife and the farmer's little baby girl that despite the rags of his attire John Powell—

for such was the name Arthur gave—was greeted on the barn floor in the morning after a restful night in the haymow, with a proffer of steady employment.

That same night, by the wayside, Quabba and his external revenue collector, the monkey, Clarence, camped beneath a tree. Again Quabba showed his companion the diamond from the sky and again he said to the monkey: "We are rich men now, Clarence!" Then he placed it in his breast and the monkey snuggled close to him, and they fell asleep and had such dreams as man and monkey may.

But in the dawn Clarence awoke and gained the diamond without awaking his master, and climbed the tree, at the long end of his tether, to examine his find undisturbed. But an owl in the hollow above the lower branches annoyed Clarence, and when he felt the jerk of his string he stole an egg from the owl's nest and left the diamond from the sky in its place. In Clarence's monkey mind it was a fair exchange and not a robbery.

His irate master on the ground, now wide awake, yanked at Clarence viciously and the indignant monkey dropped the owl egg down into his master's upturned face. Nor would he help the frantic Quabba search high and low upon the ground for the missing jewel of price, so soon found, so soon lost again.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)
At the Allen Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

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