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And Durand and Blair, cursing his stubbornness, escorted him back into the house and to Arthur.

Vivian, realizing the diamond was recovered, had ceased her rixenish resorting to wiles and cajolery.

But Arthur, shaken with shame and wholly unversed that they had deceived him as regards Esther's presence in the city, his shame augmented by the realization that Esther knew now how he had fallen in his drug addiction, took the diamond and staggered from the room, with a few muttered thanks to the gardener.

Beaching his side, he locked the diamond in an ornate cabinet by the great rear window of his bedroom and then, paching up and down, fought the devil of drug desire for Esther's sake—and lost again.

The English lawyer Smythe, a knight in armor in all sooth, escorted the shaken Esther to her hotel, having picked up the watchful and waiting Quabba in front of the Powell mansion and taken him with them in the taxicab. The next day she consulted him about her affairs.

"I will see you safely back to Richmond," said Smythe gently. "Your mother, you say, has recovered and you wish to return to her. I am going back to England resolved to let the American heir or heirs to the Stanley earldom claim the title when he or they may choose."

"But what shall I do about Luke Lovell?" asked Esther. "All his life



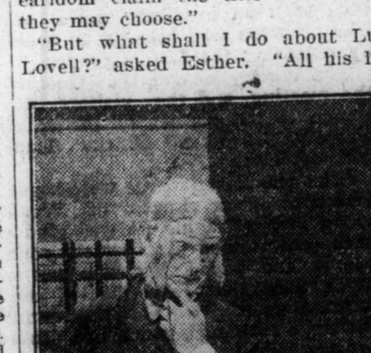
Vivian Shook Arthur by the shoulder.

The diamond is later picked up by a died of heart disease. Becoming very rich he buys Stanley hall, sold at auction, through Blake, and also provides for Hagar. Esther, Luke Lovell buys the diamond from the squaw, but loses it in a fight. Vivian, desiring to ensure Arthur, sends for Blair.

Vivian is saved from drowning by Powell, who is infatuated by her. Smythe finds the diamond and gives it to Esther as Arthur's right and finds Esther there.

Esther and Quabba escape while Blair and Luke battle. Durand, in a meeting with Vivian in Los Angeles. Durand, "king of diamonds," a crook known to Vivian, goes to a saloon where the bill poster, one of whom murders the other for it. Arthur is "doped" by Durand, De Vaux and Vivian, although Blair, who has taken charge of Arthur's business affairs, protests.

The diamond passes in dice play from the bill poster to Smithe, circus owner, who is killed, and the diamond is put up at auction as part of his estate. Blair and Vivian falsify a telegram from Blake to Arthur, making Arthur believe he suffered from hallucination in thinking he saw Blair. At the auction is Homer Graydon, an aged admirer of Vivian, who has promised to buy the diamond for her. He is outbid by Arthur. The latter gives a costume ball at which Esther appears. Vivian insists that he choose between them. Esther smatches the diamond from him and buris it through the window.



She Consulted Smythe About Her Affairs.

CHAPTER XLIX.  
**Plot and Counterplot.**  
THE miracle of dawn crimsoned all the east. The best boisterous revelers were departing from the fete of the mad millionaire.

Only the butler, as major domo, had speeded the parting guests, but the guests had revelled and gorged and swilled and cared nothing at heart for host or mansion that had entertained them with a Belshazzarian feast.

And it was as a Belshazzarian feast, and the handwriting of destruction was on the wall.

In the small reception room upstairs the unhappy wretch once called the golden man sobbed over his arms like the drug weakling he was. Vivian, hot with in disorder and rixen-like in her anger and grief, shook Arthur by the shoulder and cried, "Where is the diamond?"

Blair, noting the open window, left Durand and Vivian by Arthur and crossed over to it.

There, down below, was Angelo, the

But in her steadfast heart Esther resolved to say nothing to Smythe the morning Hagar later regarding Arthur's drug addiction.

"Well," suggested the English lawyer, "your friend Quabba here can keep up the matter, and we may be able to take up the matter, and we may be able to secure Lovell's release from this unjust incarceration after we return to Richmond. No doubt he chafes fearfully in his prison cell."

The next day Esther, accompanied by Smythe, left Los Angeles for Richmond. Quabba, placed in funds by Smythe, stayed behind.

Quabba was an Italian gypsy, and his new friend and compatriot, the gardener at the Powell mansion, was at the train with him when he bade his respectful adieus to his young mistress and to Smythe.

On the way back from the depot the gardener, deeming Quabba needed cheering, led him to the garden restaurant La Bella Napoli. It was a humble place, an arboreal resort frequented by Italian working people. Signora Solari made them welcome.

"She has no good looks," whispered Quabba's friend, "but you should see her daughter Rosa! Ah, Rosa is a charmer, and how she will smile at you if you pay for the better wine! You should see her!"

It was fated that Quabba was to see the ravishing Rosa. De Vaux, a lady killer, to his way of thinking, had also seen the ravishing Rosa.

She had sniled at De Vaux in passing, and he had followed her to the garden La Bella Napoli. A citizen of the world, the dapper count, who spoke Italian charmingly, knew well how to ingratiate himself into the favor of the landlady's daughter and the landlady. De Vaux ordered the high priced chianti on which there was the good profit.

From their distant table in the garden Quabba and the Powell gardener noted all this, but kept their distance unseen and unnoticed by the languishing De Vaux. Fate was playing into the hands of Quabba and his friend at their table in the corner. He had a grievance, had Cesare, the contractor. He proclaimed it.

"Reaching you," he said, "I get a contract—a good contract—to fix a roof,

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"I am sure I don't know, ma'am. She says it was on something like a orange-peel or a banana-skin, but I saw nothing of the sort about. I expect she missed the step. However, there's no great harm done. I hope your sleep has done you good. I don't think it has. I feel very queer, but I will get up presently and try what will do. I never slept like this before, I cannot understand myself."

CHAPTER XII.

There was the usual bustle at Charing Cross Station before the departure of the Continental boat train for Dover. Sir Everard, an attendant at the station, saw the young man with very little luggage, and he presently found himself seated in a first class carriage. No one but the girls at Weyland Manor knew of his journey, and they were bound not to speak of it. When he quitted England no letters could reach him, he had left no address behind.

The carriage in which he was seated began to fill up. First came the young widow, deeply veiled, who entered unnoticed and subsided in a corner without casting a glance at the right or left; next, a foreign-looking man, with blue spectacles, wearing a German newspaper, in which she was speedily immersed; another then another, until the train started. After that every one ceased to feel an interest in the outside world, and books and papers were produced to pass the time until the train began again on embarkation.

At Dover Sir Everard caught a glimpse of some of his company, passing on to the boat. The young man was passing the Customs at Calais, and noticed that she carried almost as little baggage as himself, having his seat in the train, she entered the last moment, and, brushing her hair, took the only empty place in the carriage. As he glanced toward her he noticed that she was young, and the blue spectacles was beside him. Sir Everard found himself interested, he saw why, in his opinion, her veil was so thick for a lady. Her hair was not too thick for to see her features, but he could not read or look out of the window, and she remained silent and motionless. He had a little business in his mind, and he had intended to stay the night in London, but he was so tired when he reached it, he had to sleep through the crowd, and disappeared.

"So ends that little adventure, and, stepping back, some one behind and turned to apologize to him. He was a man of the middle or old, neither very young nor old. His accent, when he spoke, was German. Sir Everard wondered in a passing way if he should be travelling first-class on the journey and his companion had-ed out of his seat when she drove in when he reached the station. Nevertheless the next moment he looked idly round to observe if of the two persons who had had his attention was visible. He wished to see the young widow, but he did not see her. He had taken his seat when she entered the carriage, a fresh sheet of papers in his hand. There were not many other passengers in the night train—merely an old man who arranged herself with

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