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"It will not harm you," said Luke, as superstitious as the hunchback. "The diamond from the sky is only evil to those who think or do evil. Your heart is good. Take it!"
But Quabba was loath to do so. He was not so sure—poor fellow—that his heart was good. But Luke forced the great jewel upon him. Then Quabba had further objections to the plan proposed by Luke. "It is well what you say," he ventured—"all except, except, we could not be parted, Clarence, we, Clarence, my son? We were parted once for a short while and his little heart nearly broke by reason of it." And the monkey, as if he sensed his master's words, whimpered and clung to him.
"Well, take the monkey with you, then," said Luke. "It may be all the better, for the monkey is known as your other self, while as for the pony and the piano cart, what does it matter? One pony cart and one pony of the sort is much like another, but a monkey—there is something that people will remember!"
So at dawn Luke, in the guise of a limping itinerant musician, drove the pony and the street piano cart out from Los Angeles to a distant place, and in time shipped the outfit back by express to Quabba at Fairfax, near where was the gypsy rendezvous. Then Luke hid out in the wilds as a tramp workman, known to the confraternity as "a blanket stiff," and worked at such jobs as he could get, biding his time till the search for him as an escaped jailbird would have ended and he could return to Los Angeles for his revenge.
When Quabba took the train his being accompanied by Clarence, the monkey, necessitated his traveling in the smoking car. Fate takes us separate ways, yet sometimes we travel closely with those whose concerns are ours, and we never know. In the Pullman journeyed the dapper and furtive De Vaux. For the most part he kept his face behind a newspaper and hoped to be unseen, so he saw not. And for several thousand miles De Vaux, formerly accomplice and jackal to Durand, traveled in fear of the police and the vengeance of John Powell and the while the priceless diamond for which he and his dead master had risked so much traveled on the same train in the rags of a poor hunchback with a monkey.
So the months passed. To keep Arthur from thinking, to keep him engaged that they might further enmesh

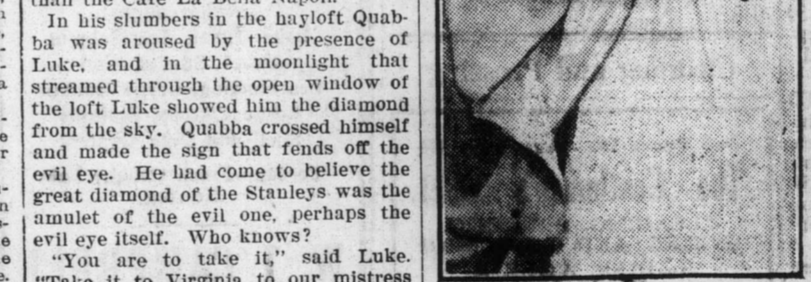
the Solari establishment the signora had quieted at the counsel of her more composed daughter. They explained to the police that there had been a quarrel between two of the patrons, a quarrel that had greatly alarmed the signora and her daughter, since that, as the gentlemen of the police knew, was a most respectable place!
They were not regular patrons who had caused such an unseemly disturbance, the signora further explained. Happily, as the gentlemen of the police knew so well, the Cafe La Bella Napoli would not tolerate custom of this kind. The disturbers were gone. They had



The Signora Solari Explained to the Police.

ded at the first coming of the so brave police when she had cried out, the signora added.
It was midnight, and their relief was waiting for them. The police were glad to escape from a morning in court with offenders and accepted the explanations.
It was fated that the ill starred jewel would lose two guests for the Cafe La Bella Napoli, for, roused to his danger were he caught and being irked at his confinement and feeling sure the evil repute of the diamond was well founded, De Vaux had hurriedly cast off the clothes he had been wearing in hiding for the last several weeks, and donning his usual and more pleasing attire, the diamond thief, the last of "the pack," dropped from a back window of the lodging and made off down a deserted alley through the night and registered later at a hotel that pleased him better than the Cafe La Bella Napoli.

In his slumbers in the lofty Quabba was aroused by the presence of Luke, and in the moonlight that streamed through the open window of the loft Luke showed him the diamond from the sky. Quabba crossed himself and made the sign that forbids the evil eye. He had come to believe the great diamond of the Stanleys was the amulet of the evil one, perhaps the evil eye itself. Who knows?
"You are to take it," said Luke. "Take it to Virginia to our mistress



Hagar Pleaded With Esther.

and despoil him, Blair and Vivian led the so-called John Powell from one dissipation and wasteful luxury to another. He strove to overcome his addiction and the other dissipations more or less successfully. But his will had grown weak and his better by his loyal manservant Parker, the one faithful friend remaining to him, with much misgiving and foreboding.
At Stanley Hall, Lawyer Smythe gone about his affairs to England, Esther stood with Hagar. Hagar never fully recovered in health from Blair's murderous blow, though her mind was again clear and unclouded. She pleaded day by day with Esther that all Fairfax and all the world might know the truth at last. Fairfax shunned the two lone women at Stanley Hall. They were regarded as strangers and interlopers. Blair's mother had died after a paralytic stroke, and there was none now in that part of Virginia who even suspected the truth concerning Esther.
Mystery clung around Stanley Hall as some evil thing. The murder of Dr. Lee after Esther had been his ward, the flight of Arthur Stanley, believed to be the old doctor's murderer, the disappearance of Blair Stanley—all these things made food for the gossips and caused the gentry of Fairfax to keep aloof.
Hagar realized that this was a cruel injustice to the fair young girl she so dearly loved. With Esther ostracized in a community where she should have been envied and sought after and Arthur, the son for whom she had sacrificed and Esther had sacrificed a prodigal and a wastrel under another name not his own, the devoted Hagar reaped a harvest of heartaches, until she at last determined that Esther at least should be spared further ignominy.

"We could not be parted, could we, Clarence, my son?"
Hagar and our little mistress Esther. It belongs to them. I do not want it now; I only want revenge. When I and serve Hagar faithfully again. Till then you take the diamond and be gone. You have money the English lawyer gave you for your return and the shipment of the pony back. Give me the price to ship back the pony and while you are gone I can for awhile be a simple organ man with his monkey, as you were. And who will think to look for me as such?"
"No, no!" shrieked Quabba. "I do not wish to have the evil diamond."
The British Red Cross Society has received a further sum of £1,700 from the Trinidad branch of the Society.

(To be Continued)

THE DIAMOND FROM THE SKY

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

A feud has existed between Colonel Arthur Stanley and his cousin, Duke Lee, since the death of their father, the diamond from the sky, found in a fallen meteor by an ancestor. Arthur, the successor to the Stanley earldom in England may come to an American. When a daughter is born to the colonel and the mother dies, the colonel buys a gypsy boy and substitutes him. Three years later the gypsy mother, having had no part in this bargain, steals the girl, Esther, reared in secret, and leaves her son undetected as the heir. The gypsy has obtained possession of the diamond from the sky, and a document with the Stanley secret. Years later Hagar, a gypsy queen, returns to Virginia with Esther. Dr. Lee, the late Colonel Stanley's friend, adopts Esther, Arthur Stanley's friend, and cousin, Blair Stanley, rightful male heir of the gem, steals the diamond. Blair causes the death of the doctor and tries later to put the blame on Arthur, who takes the gem. Arthur Stanley eludes his pursuers and joins Hagar, who reveals his identity and upbraids him for his wife's death. In Richmond, he pawns the diamond in money, he pawns the diamond in Richmond. At a ball, at which an adventurer, Vivian Marston, wears the borrowed gem, Luke Lovell, Hagar's gypsy guard, steals the diamond. Arthur leaves Richmond and goes to the west. Quabba, organ grinder, befriends Esther.

Tom Blake, a detective of Richmond, who is hired by Hagar, produces finger prints convicting Blair. Hagar proposes silence to Mrs. Stanley as the price of Blair's and Esther's being received in Fairfax society. Blair strikes down Hagar and steals the finger prints. Vivian Smythe, the gypsy queen, denounces Marmaduke Smythe, the lawyer, arrives to announce Arthur is heir to the deceased Blair. Arthur is hired by Hagar to investigate and seeks Blair instead. To win Vivian, Blair steals the diamond, later marrying her and leaving for the west. Their train is robbed, Vivian losing the diamond, which Blair takes to the desert. The \$100,000 he stole is found by Arthur, now known as John Powell, sheep herder. Luke Lovell, driven to the coast of Virginia, learns Hagar's secret, leaves to seek Blair. Hagar is under treatment and dies in Richmond society. A New England gambler, knows Blair's guilt and covets the diamond.

The diamond is later picked up by an Indian woman. Dr. Lee, Arthur learns, died of heart disease. Becoming very rich, he buys Stanley Hall, sold at auction, through Blake, and also provides for Hagar and Esther. Luke Lovell, driven to the coast from the squaw, but loses it in a fight.

Vivian is saved from drowning by Powell, who is infatuated by her. Smythe finds the diamond and gives it to Esther to deliver to Arthur. Blair joins Vivian in Los Angeles. Durand, "king of diamonds," a crook known to Vivian, goes to a saloon to try to discover the diamond. There he meets Luke Lovell. Esther and Arthur appear on the scene. The diamond is lost in a riot. Esther saves Arthur, who is injured, and goes to Los Angeles in care of the physician-crook Durand. Esther follows and is refused admittance to see him. In the meantime the diamond is found by Blair, who kills him. Esther and Smythe other for it. Arthur is "doped" by Durand. De Vaux and Vivian, through Blair, who has taken charge of Arthur's business affairs, protest.

Blair makes Arthur believe he suffered from hallucination in thinking he saw Esther. Luke is "trailed" to prison by Blair, Arthur buys the diamond, and later gives a costume ball at which Esther appears. Vivian insists that he choose between Blair and Esther, and takes the diamond from Durand, who steals it from Arthur, hurls Durand from the balcony, kills him. Esther and Smythe return to Virginia, the girl rejoining Hagar at the sanitarium. The diamond is stolen by De Vaux, who assumes the name Lancia, and hides with it. He is struck down and the diamond taken after Luke, aided by Quabba, escapes. Esther will not leave Hagar and takes her rightful place in society. Smythe examines a curious old parchment bearing Hagar's pedigree.

CHAPTER LIII.

Again at Stanley Hall.

LUKE LOVELL, forgetting his recent hurts in the jail delivery, forgetting his limp which he had favored to further disguise him, fled out of the Italian boarding house and through the deserted vine garden with the diamond from the sky. Even after she had brought another lamp to the so charming Signor Lancia's room Signora Solari was in excitement. In fact she broke out into loud cries of "Assassini!" "Robbers!" and "Police!" and ere she could be restrained had rushed to the doorway overlooking her vine garden and made the night hideous with her cries.

Luke Lovell, pausing under a light in the empty street some distance off to reassure himself he had the diamond again, heard her screams and hid the precious jewel once more beneath his rags and slipped off through the shadows.

In the opposite direction, two blocks away, Policeman McCarthy and Policeman Schultz, pausing to wait for their midnight relief, also heard the signora's cries. But when they reached

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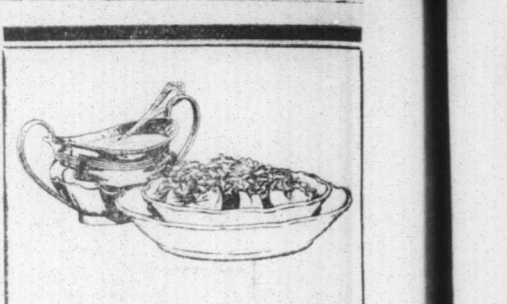
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