

# DIAMONDS AND RUBIES

## CHAPTER II.

They reached home again before three the next morning. Mills was surprised, as he never expected Lady Heatherblom, when the season was at its height, before live.

Lady Heatherblom addressed quickly; she said she was tired to death, and she would not let Mills stay to put anything away.

"Go to bed," she said, "and don't wake me till noon."  
Mills was accustomed to obey her mistress to the letter. So it was twelve o'clock when the maid came again to her ladyship's room, carrying a cup of strong tea. Lady Heatherblom was sound asleep, but she roused herself.

"What a blessing sleep is!" she said, as she drank the tea. "We should soon grow old but for sleep. Do I look very tired this morning, Mills?"

Mills knew her cue very well, and solemnly assured Lady Heatherblom that she looked perfectly fresh, all the while thinking to herself the very opposite of what she said.

"I must keep quiet to-day," Lady Heatherblom went on, relinquishing her cup, and lying back on the pillows. "I really do want to be fresh for the reception to-night. White velvet and diamonds, remember, Mills; and put the old cushion lace in the velvet. I believe that dress will suit me. I know Dulce expects it to be a triumph."

When Lady Heatherblom descended for luncheon at two o'clock, she found Floss already down; she had been up a long while, and had looked at the papers and read half a volume of a novel, and tried to understand something Lord Heatherblom had told her about an astronomical discovery he believed himself to be on the verge of making. He was explaining it to Floss and to George—when George had come in to luncheon—when Lady Heatherblom appeared.

"We must only have a little drive in the Park to-day," Floss said to Lady Heatherblom, as they sat down to the table. "This season is wearing me dreadfully; I feel so tired!"

Lord Heatherblom looked at his wife more carefully than he had done for some time.

"You are looking worn," he said, "and you've got a new wrinkle. Take care, or you'll no longer be the handsome woman in London. If you would only keep down your hunger for excitement and take life placidly, you might retain that position for many years."

Lady Heatherblom moved impatiently in her chair. Two years ago the Earl had accidentally discovered that she was "making a look" at Asot. This was a form of gambling which he thought poor enough for his own sex—in a woman he hated it. And Lady Heatherblom knew well enough what he referred to when he spoke of her "hunger for excitement."

Though he had never found her out again, he had not forgotten that incident two years ago; and this keenness of memory offended Lady Heatherblom exceedingly.

George stayed all the afternoon with the two ladies, drove in the Park with them, and came back to drink tea in the flower-scented drawing room. Then he went away reluctantly. He had to go out to dinner, and to-night he was not lucky enough to dine at the same table as Floss.

When he was gone, there was an hour of quiet. Floss sat thinking, her hands crossed upon a book which she had taken to read, and her eyes soft with happiness. Lady Heatherblom went away to her own bright sanctum, and stretched her shapely form upon a wide low couch, cushioned with velvet.

Presently there was a knock at the door, and Mills entered. There was a strange look on her face, and it was perfectly white.

"What's the matter, Mills?" exclaimed Lady Heatherblom.

Mills tried to speak, but failed.

"What is it?" cried Lady Heatherblom imperatively. "Speak, and don't frighten me!"

Then Mills gasped—  
"My lady, the diamonds are gone!"  
"Gone!" echoed Lady Heatherblom. In an instant she was on her feet. "What do you mean?" she said. "I do not understand."

"They are gone, my lady!" repeated Mills. "That is all I know. I never looked this morning when I put away the opals. I don't know if they were gone then," she went on, in a bewildered sort of way.

"Go and fetch Lord Heatherblom at once," was all the answer—"at once, mind! If he is at his club, send one of the men in a cab for him."

Mills went away, without attempting to speak again. Lady Heatherblom, when she was gone, went to the door of her dressing-room and looked in. She advanced a few paces and glanced at the open door of the safe where her jewel case was kept. But she did not touch it or go near it; she returned to her sitting room and began to walk restlessly up and down.

Very soon the door opened, and Lord Heatherblom came in quickly. He was visibly agitated.

"What is it Mills tells me? The Heatherblom diamonds gone? She must be mad or dreaming! Have you looked into it, Cordelia?"

"I was waiting for you," answered Lady Heatherblom.

"That is true," replied Lord Heatherblom. "Then any one might come in here and do what they choose without your hearing them from your bed room. But there is one thing we must not forget; whoever stole those diamonds knew where the key was hidden. The lock has not been tampered with."

At this Mills lost her self-control entirely, and burst into tears. Sobbing pitifully, she made her way to the door and went out of the room.

"It is very extraordinary," said Lord Heatherblom. "I can't suspect that woman after trusting her for so many years. Why did she not take them before? And if she has taken them now, why hasn't she run away?"

He had anything to say? I must get a detective to make inquiries about the other servants."

Lady Heatherblom had been sitting, since she entered the room, her eyes absently fixed upon the empty safe. Something new attracted her attention.

"What is that white thing that seems to have been crushed by shutting the door?" she said.

Lord Heatherblom went and took the white thing up in his hand.

"Only a crushed rose," he answered.

"How should it be there?" said Lady Heatherblom. "Mills does not wear roses."

Lord Heatherblom looked more closely at it, and seemed to find a great deal to look at. As he said—  
"I don't know what it is, but it is not a rose. I recognize it!"

"It is a one of those roses George gave to Floss," he said—"One of Kennedy's choice. How did it get here? Did she give you any of them?"

"Don't you know," said Lady Heatherblom, "she does not give away George's flowers? But she may drop them accidentally."

"Good heavens, Cordelia! What do you want me to think?"

"I don't know what to think myself," declared Lady Heatherblom.

"How is it Mills did not notice this flower thimble?" asked Lord Heatherblom after a moment.

"I think I can tell you," she answered.

"It was because she did not open the left hand door at all. The opals are just inside."

"That is true," and Lord Heatherblom put the crushed rose down upon the table and began to walk restlessly round the room.

Presently he stopped, took up the rose, and looked at it again.

"Cordelia," he said, "we must keep this quiet for a little while. Tell Mills to say nothing. It cannot be what it seems to be! If it is, we must soon find it out."

"It seems impossible," said Lady Heatherblom.

"You said yesterday she did it with the key," he said.

"Why should she say that?" questioned Lord Heatherblom.

"Surely we have not made her feel her poverty?"

"I cannot tell," his wife answered; "but certainly she did say so. I know before that her poverty distressed her. I ought not to have dazzled her eyes with these stones; stronger people have been unable to resist such a temptation. I noticed her watch Mills shut the safe and put away the key."

"Hush!" exclaimed Lord Heatherblom. "Don't say any more! I will keep this rose; I must think a little before I can go anything. Cordelia, I would stake my life on that girl's truth and innocence; I believe in her as I believe in you."

# The Camel Corps of the British Army.

Among the curious features of the British military expedition which is now slowly proceeding up the river Nile, for the relief of Gordon at Khartoum, is a camel corps. It is composed of several thousand of ungainly camels, each carrying a trooper. This body of men and stalking animals is said to present an extraordinary spectacle, especially when in motion.

The uniform consists of a red fannel tunic, corduroy knee breeches, and serge leggings, with white put helmet covered by white cloth. The accoutrements are heavy, and include a rolled cloak on the right shoulder, a leather cartridge belt on the left shoulder, a tin mess trap, a water bottle, a brown leather ammunition bandolier, with fifty rounds of ammunition, and a rifle pocket in which the butt of the rifle is supported. The arms are the Martini-Henry rifle and bayonet, instead of the ordinary cavalry carbine. Each camel also carries the second half of a tent, with pole and guides, besides three days' provisions and water for his master, and food for himself.

These tents afford cover for two men each; a tarpool sheet forms the floor and on the pole of the tent hangs a leathern water bottle with filtered water, while outside on a tripod is slung a skin containing well or Nile water for ordinary purposes. One end of the tent is closed by a lace curtain, which can be shifted to either end for protection against sand storms.

A good load for a camel is about 600 pounds, though for short journeys it can carry 1000 pounds. It can travel more than three miles an hour, and the swiftest dromedaries do not exceed ten; but the former rate of travel can be kept up for twenty hours without rest. The hump upon its back affords practically a storehouse for food, as it is slowly reabsorbed during long marches. Its stomach or pouch has a division (which may be closed by muscular action) whose walls are provided with a system of large cells, capable of considerable distention, which the animal can fill with several quarts of water, and thus carry with itself a supply which it occasionally yields with its life to save that of his master. Its strength, power of endurance, ability to subsist on the coarsest food, to go without water, and to travel over the roughest and most arduous ground, have earned for it the title of the "ship of the desert." The justness of this cognomen is strongly attested by the British soldiers, one of whom writes that he never felt "more at sea" than when first taking a camel ride, the motion producing such sensations as most people feel at sea in rough weather, the peculiar swaying and jerking being but pleasant, unattended in any way with anything but pleasant.

The height of the Arabian camel at the shoulder is between six and seven feet, and the colour of the rather coarse hair is of various shades of brown. The first attempt to mount one calls for no little dexterity, as the usual mode is to bestride the animal while he is on his knees, and then to rise and sit astride, holding on to the neck by the "center of gravity" when the camel rises. The British soldiers, however, seem to have entered this novel service with considerable enthusiasm, and have been disposed to make pets of their new companions, although they report that thus far it seems to be a most "unsuccessful business."

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# About Horses.

Robert Bonner, the well known publisher of the New York Ledger is one of the greatest horse fanciers in New York and said to own some of the best horses in the United States. During a recent interview with a reporter he gave his views as follows:—

"I do not think Mr. Bergh understands what he is talking about, when he states that clipping is a cruel and senseless practice—the device of lazy rogues. There is not a horseman who does not know directly to the contrary. Professor William Williams, a professor in the Edinburgh Veterinary College, and one of the best known authorities on the horse, advocates clipping, and says:—

"I have seen the lives of many valuable horses saved by timely clipping."

"Clipping is unnecessary to a horse with a fine light coat, if he has been kept to work all summer and autumn, and has been well groomed. If, however, he has been allowed to run on grass a few weeks, and has not felt the curry-comb, he needs clipping, and his coat will become heavy. Some horses never were clipped, neither was Edwin Forrest. They did not need it."

"Mr. Bergh begs horse-owners not to tick the tails of their horses," said the interviewer. "Do you object to nicking?"

"I know very little about it. It was seldom done in my time, being considered to saddle backs and cabs. It has grown entirely out of fashion. No man with a valuable horse would nick him. But I know a little about it that I can hardly venture an opinion. You may rest assured of one thing, however, and it is this: No man owning a valuable horse is going to risk him through a nick or a cut on the head, neck, or tail. It is worth \$10,000 for a good horse, the most valuable horse in the world, \$30,000 for a stallion, \$16,000 for a gelding, and \$10,000 for a mare. Do you think I would have any one of these horses clipped if I was not sure that clipping was good for him? It is a question of money to a man."

"You have noticed, don't you," said the reporter, "that Mr. Bergh declares nicking is cruel and inhuman?"

And he denies that horses enter into the spirit of the sport?"

"All bosh! A horse, if he is not a lazy beast, takes much interest in his own performances. If you are driving a three-mile horse and a 2:40 animal comes up alongside to pass you, you will not be able to hold your head, but you will stretch your neck out in an endeavor to keep ahead. That is ambition. No sensible man, assuredly no horseman, gives his horse more than he can do. Take Maud S., for instance. Last week Bair put her in training again. He didn't push her of course. That would be dangerous for any animal. Every one knows that the more you push a horse, the more he will exertion suddenly. Well, the first day the mare trotted a mile in 2:44, and another in 2:28. Two days later she did a mile in 2:37 and another in 2:25, and on Friday a mile in 2:31, and another in 2:25, and a third in 2:13. When Bair drove up, he said that he could easily have made a fast mile with Maud S., but that he didn't want to risk her."

Hubbard, of the Hartford Courant, was with me, and witnessed her performance. She was not distressed after her trot. She can do her 2:00 in comparative comfort, and it is not cruel to put her to it."

The Science Museum gives the following interesting information in regard to the great buildings of the present exhibition in New Orleans.

The main building, a building, which was at first supposed to cover all requirements, is of the enormous size of 1,378 by 905 feet, or embracing an area of 33 acres, while the area of the main building at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876 was only 20 acres. In this New Orleans building there are no partitions, and the interior is surrounded by wide galleries, 25 feet high, supported by 100 pillars which also support the roof, the latter being mostly of glass. The machinery department occupies a space 300 feet wide for the whole length of the main building, but this has been found insufficient, and large extensions have been made necessary by the great number of applications for space in this section.

The music hall, a building, which was at first supposed to cover all requirements, is of the enormous size of 1,378 by 905 feet, or embracing an area of 33 acres, while the area of the main building at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876 was only 20 acres. In this New Orleans building there are no partitions, and the interior is surrounded by wide galleries, 25 feet high, supported by 100 pillars which also support the roof, the latter being mostly of glass. The machinery department occupies a space 300 feet wide for the whole length of the main building, but this has been found insufficient, and large extensions have been made necessary by the great number of applications for space in this section.

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