Diamond Cut Diamond

By JANE BUNKER

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CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.
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"Billy, dear, do listen to reason for half a second. What are we going to tell the president? We haven't got the whole story even yet out of him"—I pointed in the direction of the dining room—"and there mustn't be any gap in it. We've got to see Mrs. Delario and get her evidence—we've got to see Claire—"

"He'll make her say anything."

"You and I can break her down under cross-examination. You see, we haven't a thing but his word—"

"And the diamonds," Billy interrupted. "I'm taking your word for those—you didn't see fit to show 'em to me."

His tone was a trifle sarcastic, indicating that there might still be some legitimate doubt as to the existence of the stones in question, in spite of all the adventure over them; but I ignored it and went on: "He made one slip—I saw it at the time, and now I can't remember what it was. It went slap out of my head and it was important—something about . . . No, I can't remember. It was a sort of key to something else—"

"Can't you think?" urged Billy. "Every little detail's important now. And lordy-lord—what a story, and my scoop!"

The reporter was romping around in Billy's inside, determined to push the story to a finish; while romping around in my insides was my natural caution. Why should we do anything to warn the Emperor William? He might deny everything and say he never even heard of the diamonds! Yes, one false step would make Billy and me the laughing-stock of diplomatic circles throughout the world. We must get all our proof before we divulged the secret on which the fate of our nation depended.

The net result of our hurried colloquy was that we returned to the dining room and silently relieved the still-sorrowing monsieur of his handcuffs. Which done, Billy presented him with leave of absence from our society in the words:

"Monsieur, you are free to go," and added a courtly bow.

I bowed also. Thus we signified with all the manners we possessed that the interview, pleasing as it had been, was at an end.

Our action—simple enough to us and in line with the plan we'd just mapped out for getting at the truth—left monsieur as dazed as anything we'd done; inexplicably, we had abruptly set him adrift, without threats or explanations and without—the diamonds. I smiled and said, quite as though he'd been drinking tea with me: "I'll say good night to you, monsieur." With that, I held out my hand.

Monsieur did not rise. He did not take my offered hand. He stared—a really frightened, childish stare, first at me, then at Billy. He had been dismissed—every second he longer remained marked him a trespasser. Yet he remained, glued to his chair and dumb. Speech seemed to have deserted him. Twice he essayed it, but the words stuck in his throat and he looked to us to help him out.

The clock chimed the four-quarters to nine and then the hour. Monsieur spoke.

"I have place myself in your position as American and I appreciate your feeling," he began, and he went on to tell us as a man he grieved for us; how as a would-be friend he grieved for us; how as the emperor's

"Billy Dear, Do Listen to Reason."

messenger he grieved for us; and how I—in the innocent carrying off of a slipper from the customs house—one of a pair in which his daughter had, at his command, secreted a box of diamonds belonging to the emperor—had brought myself within the circle of implacable, all-seeing, all-avenging and never-ending wrath, whether the diamonds were lost, strayed, stolen from me, or drowned in the sea; wrath that would follow me and my name forever, world without end, amen.

"All right, let it," I replied curtly.

"But would it not be better to consider?" urged monsieur. "Ze wrass of ze emperor is terrible. Consider, madame, I beg you to consider. Zoze diamonds zat you have found in zat slipper you have ze misfortune to carry off. Consider to give zem back."

"They were not in the slipper I carried off."

Monsieur positively jumped. "Zey were not in zat slipper?"

"No—on my word of honor as a gentlewoman, monsieur, I tell you those diamonds were not in the slipper I carried off."

"Mon Dieu!" he said under his breath. "Madame Delario must have zem—in spite of her denial—in spite of zat I search ze entire house—and herself—and find also ze slipper in her wardrobe as she would not leave it if she find zoze diamonds."

"But she may not have found them—they may have fallen out and got lost—"

"Impossible—impossible," he interrupted. "I have examine bose zoze slippers—you see it is zis way: My daughter have glue ze box in one, safe, and on an evening you tell Madame Delario to wear zoze slippers and Claire have but just time to remove ze box and she returns it to ze uzzer slipper. It is zat little accident—and some words from yourself—zat convince me it is yourself who has found zoze diamonds—"

"No, monsieur. When you accused me of robbing Claire of jewelry I hadn't the least idea what you meant. I suppose you accused Mrs. Delario of the same thing? Didn't you accuse her of taking jewels from Claire—just as you did me—without specifying what kind of jewels?"

"Oui—yes. Naturally, I do not specify, for ze reason if she find ze diamonds, she know to what I refer; but if you have find zem, I do not tell for what I seek."

"Well, that's it, I do believe!" I exclaimed in the tone of having discovered the key to the whole difficulty. "You said jewels and she thought you meant what we should mean by it—as we use the word, we think of pins, bracelets, pendants, made-up articles, you understand."

"Ah, so zat is ze way of it!" he cried, popping off his chair in a hurry. "I see it is some error of idiom of ze language znt cause all ze trouble. I go immediately to ze estimable Madame Delario and explain all to her."

He took up his hat, which Billy had picked up off the floor after the scrimmage and laid on the dining-room table.

"Oh, monsieur—you a diplomat!" I flipped off. "And you think you can go to an American citizen after such accusations as you've made and say: 'It was all a mistake,' and settle everything?"

"But I apologize for ze mistake," he urged, as though his sweet apology paid for everything he'd done and brought forth a box of diamonds on a salver, here-they-are-thank-you-for-taking-them.

I laughed. "Suppose she won't accept your apology?" I asked, and before he got a reply, I added: "She probably won't even see you—not after the way you treated her."

"I bet she doesn't even see you," Billy supported, seeing my drive. "What are you going to do?" He was anxious to make monsieur commit himself.

Monsieur twisted his hands nervously and I kept the ball rolling by observing slyly: "You have just told us that the most profound secrecy must be maintained, so you cannot call in the police. But there is one thing you can do—" I paused.

He asked breathlessly, "And zat is—?"

"Go straight to the president and lay the whole case before him."

Monsieur looked as if he'd fall in a faint at my feet.

"Ze president—mon Dieu!" He used his handkerchief over his face. "Madame—in pity—out of ze kindness of your so kind heart—I srow myself on your mercy—I, De Ravenol—and I ask you to help me in ze recovery of zoze diamonds in secret. I ask it for ze sake of Claire. I ask on my knee—"

And the man was actually preparing to do it, too! But I, not being used to that sort of demonstration and seeing it as anything but a compliment that he felt he had to go such lengths to propitiate me—for I like to think myself at least decently approachable on common humane grounds—responded to his near-kneel with a peremptory, "Don't do it!" and a look and gesture that showed him he could save the histrionics. "How can I help you?" I questioned.

"It is a case for—diplomacy—in dealing wiz ze lady; and I ask—as a so great favor—zat you see Madame Delario and discover ze truse from her, if she have find ze little box—and persuade her to her duty to return it."

The net result of the remainder of the interview was that monsieur promised to relieve both Mrs. Delario and me of all espionage immediately—dismiss his solitary detective who was shadowing me—bring Claire to the house the next evening for a full confession of her part of the smuggling; while I promised to see Mrs. Delario the first thing in the morning and use all my influence with her.

"I think that is all—this evening," said I sweetly, giving him the hint to go.

I at once got Billy's coat and hat from my wardrobe, where they were hidden, and coming through the hall I managed to signal him to go along with monsieur.

They left together—apparently on the best of terms.

"Tomorrow I'll decide about going to the president," thought I, turning out the lights. "I've got everything all my own way now and nothing is going to happen tonight—that's one thing to be thankful for." And with these and similar fatuous maunderings and self-congratulations I tumbled into bed without even bothering to lock the kitchen door.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The Jewels Are Mine."

To this day I've never quite recovered from the astonishment and chagrin when on waking up in the morning I reviewed the case with a refreshed mind and realized with what ease De Ravenol had imprisoned both Mrs. Delario and me in our own homes and had us quaking in our boots in fear of our very lives!

Monsieur had managed Mrs. Delario even better than he had me—he had merely left a detective in her house to watch her by day and lock her up by night. In fact, she'd actually invited the detective in proof of her innocence; for when monsieur had accused her of stealing jewels she saw in her mind's eye—just as I did—trinkets, jewelry; and the idea that he was referring to seven unset diamonds caged in her slipper never entered her head.

"You have accused me of a shocking crime—a crime that offends every principle of decency as well as morals," she told him with spirit, "and I now insist that you convince yourself of my innocence before you leave the

They Left Together.

house. Here is the key to my bedroom—here is the passkey to all the other rooms. Have your man watch me while you examine everything—everything—and then you must get a woman to search me."

This unsolicited action, her flat denial and his finding the slipper where she'd carelessly dropped it in her wardrobe threw the scent on me. In two hours monsieur convinced himself that she did not have the diamonds and knew nothing about them, and he then requested her—as the proof of her noncomplicity—to let him lock her in her room and send for me! And she didn't dare to refuse!

And there you have, simple as simple could be, the whole of it. I had her side of the story when I saw her Sunday morning as monsieur's messenger. But I had enough of the story before I went to her to feel pretty well chagrined; yet sad, too, as I thought of the disappointment I had in store for her when I told her that Emperor William owned her "find" and how the diamonds came to be in her slipper.

I confess I didn't like very much the way she'd lied to me about the uncle abroad who had left them to her. Still—it was an understandable lie: since she'd found the diamonds and didn't know who owned them she felt they belonged to her as much as if they'd been left her in a will.

Mrs. Delario herself admitted me; gave a gasp when she saw who it was, and whirled me into the seance room and locked the door on us before we exchanged a syllable.

We sank into chairs. I felt as if a tidal wave had swept from under me and left me not even hanging up in a coconut tree but sitting still in peaceful security. It was she who got us down from the high peaks to the levels where conversation can go afoot without falling off, by asking, "And how are you—after it all?" to which I replied, "But how are you—after it all?" and we both laughed.

Her laugh died away into an indignant frown. "You never heard anything like it," she cried. "He came here with a detective—and it wasn't five minutes after you got out of the house, Monday—and accused me—me!—of stealing Claire's bracelets!"

"Bracelets?" I echoed.

"Yes—me."

I said "Oh," slowly. I hadn't expected she'd grind the word jewels quite so fine.

"Did you ever hear anything quite so outrageous?" she rushed on. "To come here and say I robbed his child of jewelry! I don't believe she had any jewelry, anyway—it was all a trumped-up story to get something out of me; but I was so indignant—" and she poured out the whole tale.

"Well, it's all over," she concluded. "I didn't care how much monsieur searched—I knew I hadn't robbed Claire, and I knew that so long as you had my diamonds they were safe. I didn't worry after the first day or so."

She said "my diamonds," and now I had to tell her!

"Mrs. Delario there seems to be a misunderstanding about those diamonds," I began suavely.

She gave a start and asked, "How, misunderstanding? You mean they're not worth all you said? Well—you didn't tell me positively they were worth—that." She seemed to hesitate at "a million dollars," which is what I said.

"Oh, yes—I still stick to that—that's the worst of it: they are worth it—that's what made them shining targets for that thief."

"Thief!" she cried. "You say 'thief,' too! Then he was, after all!" She was very much excited, and repeated the word several times with a kind of joy and ran on rapidly: "I wouldn't tell you what I thought about him, but I knew he was a thief. I knew it in Paris—I knew it in Antwerp—it was in Antwerp—after I'd made all the arrangements to bring Claire over—that I heard it clairaudiently, 'De Ravenol is a thief.' I knew it here—in this very room—the first time he came." And then she smiled at me benignantly: "And thanks to you he didn't get my diamonds, so we're safe—Claire's safe—she'll never know the truth about her father from me.

"Claire never had any jewelry—the whole accusation was trumped up to get the chance to rob me. But how under the sun did he know I had those diamonds?"

"He says he put them there—or at least Claire did—in your slipper," I blurted.

Her hands flew to her heart. "Never!" she cried. "Never in the world!"

"And he says they're his," I persisted, feeling I'd got my opening at last. I put it that way partly to disabuse her mind of the idea that monsieur was a thief; partly to save her from the too sudden shock of the Emperor William. I saw I'd have to let her down gradually.

"They're mine," she returned vehemently. "I swore to you they were mine. I swear to you again—now—here—in the sight of God—they are mine. Consider—" her tone was all appeal now, "if they had not been mine—if I had stolen them from Claire—would I have shown them to you? Would I have asked you to help me dispose of them?"

I was forced to admit. "No—of course not"—I had already taken that into consideration.

"Yes—I grant you that you honestly believe they're yours," I admitted. "But what I've got to know is, how they came to be yours."

She told me then, hesitating no longer, the unbelievable story—unbelievable by every modern standard and from every scientific point of view, explaining why she'd prevaricated in the first instance about her uncle. It wasn't, after all, quite what you'd call by so harsh a name as lying.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

GIRLS HELPED BY DANCING

English Medical Officer of Health Makes Significant Statement in a Recent Report.

That twice as many girls as boys squint is one of the conclusions arrived at by Dr. W. H. Hamer, medical officer of health.

In his report on London school children, he attributes girls' poorer eyesight to sewing classes in school in the late afternoon while the light is at its worst, and when, in the winter months, artificial light has to be used.

Girls, however, according to Dr. Hamer, have better teeth than boys due to the fact that it is easier to persuade the former to use a toothbrush than the latter. Girls suffer, because of lack of outdoor games and sports, more than boys from heart defects and anaemia.

But, in spite of all these disadvantages, the poise and deportment of London girls is superior to that of boys. Country boys and girls both fall short of the London girl in this respect.

Particularly noticeable is the graceful arch of her instep, due to her love of dancing. This, and the teaching of dancing, is said to have greatly helped, if it has not saved, the situation in regard to physical development.—London Tit-Bits.

Abyssinian Likes American Styles.

"I would like to see Abyssinian women dress like American women," is a remark credited to Prince Nadoa, the head of the Abyssinian mission in this country. This may be merely a bit of oriental flattery or it may be an indication of the prince's bravery. It should be remembered, first, that the sovereign of Abyssinia is a woman, and a descendant of the queen whose elegance and beauty of costume dazzled King Solomon's court, and in the next place that in Abyssinia style does not change more than once every thousand years, and that for that length of time the life of a man is free from all pecuniary worries incident to changing fashions and new dresses. Without any intention of forecasting trouble for the prince, it might be suggested that if this story should precede him he will have some explanations to make either to the queen or to the husbands and fathers of Abyssinia.

Best Preparation for Writer.

"Read the Bible for illumination, knowledge and power," said Dana; "'Gulliver's Travels' for detail, and Robert Louis Stevenson for style." Any man or woman who will make a study of the Bible, and who will analyze "Gulliver's Travels" and sing Robert Louis Stevenson into his heart, will become a good writer, provided there is also natural talent to start with.

A railroad in England supplies toys for children taking long journeys, to relieve the monotony of riding.

SHORT COATS HAVE MANY VOTARIES

As pelts are becoming more and more precious, and even those that are considered ordinary and plentiful, continue to advance in price, the owner of a fur coat looks upon it as an investment that increases constantly in value. It is hard to predict anything about the future prices of furs, but people who are well informed say there is no chance of their falling for some time to come; the chances are that they will continue to go up. In view of this, short fur coats have advantages over all others because they cost less, are very smart and present a chance to remodel partly-worn long coats into something that is stylish and new.

Some furs are difficult to make up or to remodel because the skins must be "matched," that is put together so that the joining is hardly perceptible on the fur side. These require a professional furrier's services when coats are to be changed or remodeled. Other furs that do not require "matching" can be handled by the average dressmaker or good needlewoman quite successfully. The furrier's tools are few and simple. They include a short, very sharp knife for cutting the fur on the skin side, special triangular needles for sewing, chalk for marking and strong thread. Home dressmakers use razor blades for cutting and buy needles and thread of the right sort.

When the fur is to be cut, it is marked with chalk on the skin side and cut with the razor blade along this marking. Pieces are joined by holding the edges together evenly and sewing them by overcasting the thread and drawing it tight so that the edges are firmly held.

Before making a fur coat one should cut and fit an interlining, if one is to be used, or take a cheap cambric and cut and fit it by the pattern selected, making any alterations necessary. The fur is to be cut by this lining so as to avoid waste and alterations. Experimenting must be done in the lining and not in precious furs. For the silk lining, crepe-de-chine, certain taffetas, and Japanese silks prove very durable.

A short coat of striped fur and one of sealskin are shown in the picture, as good models to copy in making over furs. Squirrel, either natural or dyed, kolinsky, mink or muskrat might be made in this fashion. The coat has a wide collar with dark stripes vertical and is finished at the bottom in front with a wide border of skins running horizontally. The coat at the right might be of beaver, moleskin and other short-haired furs with collar of marten or skunk or of the same pelts as the coat. It has a narrow belt that matches it, but that is not essential; there are as many beltless coats as others.

Valedictory of Winter Millinery

There is some midwinter millinery that says "hail and farewell" almost in the same breath—appearing as the last development of winter styles and disappearing to make way for the demiseason hats that precede those for spring. The different types of millinery are represented in these last exponents of the season's ideas, as street hats, dress hats and picture hats.

A hat that will prove equal to almost any sort of wear appears in the very elegant street model at the top of the group pictured above. It has a stiff, smoothly covered crown of tan satin and an uneven brim, turned sharply up at the left side, faced with black velvet. There are folds of satin forming a band about the crown, and jet motifs applied at the front and sides. The shape and colors used in this hat proclaim it a street model made of materials that will place it in the ranks of dressier hats and allow it to be very useful.

The soft hat of crepe georgette, with extended brim facing of velvet, can be developed in any good combination of two colors. It is a background for a splendid rose and beautiful foliage, or any other gorgeous flower that may be used as the star performer in the production of a distinguished dressy hat. It is a bit of fine art in millinery that will pass under the most critical of eyes and compel their approval—and more.

The wide-brimmed hat at the right betrays the fancy of its designer, unhampered by any thought of utility, disporting itself with airy and fine fabrics, to make a thing whose mission is simply to be lovely. Its crown is of narrow moire ribbon, placed row after row. The brim is made of layers of malines, and between these appear silk applique clusters of grapes and foliage.

Julia Bottomley

A Wealth of Girdles.

A great deal of attention is paid to the waistline now and some of the new sashes, belts and girdles are very costly affairs. Many of the winter frocks have a straight line from shoulder to hip and a rather heavy girdle of some sort must be used to draw in the soft fabric and give a graceful outline to the silhouette. For evening gowns there are jeweled girdles in the moyen age style, the "jewels," really colored stones embedded in metal disks that are sewed to gold braid. Heavy silk cord girdles are used on afternoon frocks, the cord knotted in intricate ways that even a Jack Tar would have difficulty in untying. Jet bead and crystal bead girdles for wear with black gowns are especially rich and stunning.

Skirts With Suspender Straps.

Many of the skirts shown on the latest French spring suits have jumpers, sleeveless boleros and even suspender straps.

DADDY'S EVENING FAIRY TALE

BY MARY GRAHAM BONNER

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THE WORKERS.

"They don't speak correctly," said Wenna Work.

"Who don't speak correctly?" asked Willie Work. "You don't really speak correctly yourself, if you will pardon my saying so."

"And why not?" asked Wenna Work.

"Because you do not tell me who you mean when you say that 'they' don't speak correctly," said Willie Work.

"But I don't speak incorrectly in not telling you," said Wenna. "I merely leave out something that I might tell."

"All right," said Willie, who was afraid he might get into an argument which would make him appear far more stupid than Wenna. "All right," he repeated, "we'll leave that end of the subject alone.

"But now, pray tell me, whom do you really mean by 'they?'"

"I mean that people don't speak correctly," said Wenna.

"What do they say that isn't correct?" asked Willie.

"They say that they have work on their hands," said Wenna. "Oh, often I've heard some one telling some one else: 'Gracious me, my dear, I have so much work on hand that I don't know when I will be through.'

"Now, that is entirely incorrect," said Wenna. "We are two of the workers of the world. We are two of the little creatures who make people work, who put work before them or behind them, or at the side of them, which they know they should do.

"We let them know that they should be busy and not idle. We let them know in so many, many ways, of so many, many different kinds of work for them to do.

"But we do not put the work right on their hands. That is incorrect. So when they speak of having so much work on their hands they really mean that there is a great deal of work which isn't on their hands but which they should put their hands upon and their time and their minds.

"So, I've been trying to whisper to some of my workers to tell other workers and have all tell the people that we would like it if they spoke correctly."

"Still," said Willie, "the work is often on their hands, fancy work, needle work, all kinds of sewing, lots of things!"

"I'm speaking," said Wenna severely, "of the work which is not on their hands but which is all around them and which they have to do, or should do."

"I see," said Willie, in an obedient little voice.

"You always were far better natured than I was," said Wenna. "That is, I

"Often on Their Hands."

am good-natured enough, but you are easier with folks than I am.

"You are the little creature who will whisper to them: 'Yes, leave that until tomorrow. That will be all right. Why tire yourself out today when there is tomorrow and all the tomorrows ahead of you? Why work so hard; life isn't worth it.'

"But I say: 'Work, work, work, and the more you work the happier you will be, for you will work for great things, and you will work to be fine and famous.'

"Still," said Willie, "as we are the creatures who make folks work and who put work before them, sometimes it is nice to give them a holiday, don't you think so?"

"To be sure," said Wenna, "but you would give them holidays oftener than I would."

"You would hardly ever give any," said Willie.

"Oh, yes," said Wenna, "I'd give Thanksgiving day and Christmas day and the Fourth of July and quite a number of other times."

"Nonsense," said Willie. "You're the sort who is always seeing work for people to do. If it weren't for me they'd be all tired out."

"That's why we're a good pair," said Wenna. "I'm one of the creatures who make folks work hard, and you're one who makes them work but who also tells them to stop before they're all tired out."

"Yes, we are a good pair," said Willie. "Folks are safe in our hands, or, guided by what we say and what we tell them to do."

What the Epistles Are.

Sunday School Teacher—Now, Hazel, can you tell me what the epistles are?

Small Hazel—Yes, ma'am; they are the wives of the apostles.

Double Up.

An urchin of five was told to say "double" when two vowels came together, as in the word "sheep." Shortly after he surprised his father by reading the sentence "Up! up! Lucy, the sun is in the west," like this: "Double up, Lucy, the sun is in the west!"

Days Before the War.

"What are you sighing for, Bobbie?"

"I was just thinkin' of the good old days before the war when ye used t' gimme a nickel once in a while."