# Diamond Cut Diamond

By JANE BUNKER

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CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

—15—

She told me—as she had on the steamer—how she'd gone abroad to hunt new psychics for her seances and the circle meeting at her house, of which she was a sort of priestess, and how she had thus come in contact with the Duval girl. This girl had a "wonderful gift of prophecy," and at a private sitting with her had gone into a trance—and had given out that Mrs. Delario was "one of the chosen"—one of the disciples-elect of the Mystic Cult of the Crystal Sphere, whose headquarters were a lamasary in Tibet, and had then predicted that she was shortly to receive the "mystic sign of initiation" and a gift—conveyed through space by spirit influences—of seven blood-red gems, which she was at liberty to dispose of and convert into cash if she desired—the sacred masters not dealing in lucre but only its sublimated equivalents—and apply to her personal needs and the furtherance of her work for spiritualism.

On being pressed by Mrs. Delario to tell more—name the time and place of the gift—the girl had declared that the stones would be in a small oblong box which Mrs. Delario would "discover among her things when the time came," and that she would "receive them suddenly—secretly—without mortal knowledge of how they got there"—and they would probably be given to her in Paris. Beyond this the girl was unable to go.

But Mrs. Delario accepted the prediction and, greatly elated and excited, watched for the hour that was to mark her initiation into earthly wealth and occult glory. The hour did not come in Paris, and she returned to America a trifle disappointed but still expectant.

She unpacked. She found a slipper. Where could be its mate? Absentmindedly she thrust her hand into it and found—her gift!

"And you see the prophecy was fulfilled," she told me. "I had been chosen—as the Duval girl said. Everything came out precisely as she predicted—the diamonds really came to me in Paris, though I didn't know it at the time; there were seven; they were worth enough to make me financially independent, so I can go on with my work for spiritualism; they came without human knowledge; I found them among my things—every detail was correct."

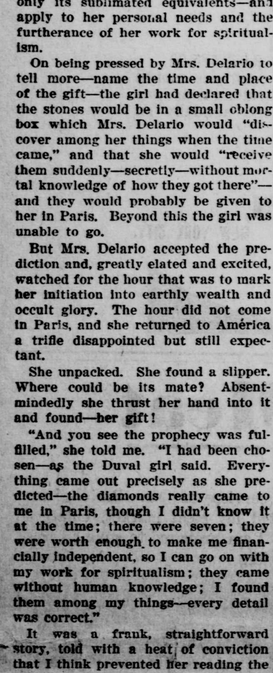
It was a frank, straightforward story, told with a heat of conviction that I think prevented her reading the astonishment that must have kept growing in my face all the time.

It was amazing every way I looked at it; the thing that struck me most was how her memory had slipped one little cog and allowed her belief to roll smoothly off and land her—in Tibet! She thought the box had been sent to her in Paris, but she had worn her slippers on the steamer! I was about to remind her of this as the first step to what I saw was going to be a very painful revelation, when she burst out, "But how could he have known about the diamonds?—that I had them in Paris. The only way I can explain it is that either the Duval girl told him—and she was in a trance and wouldn't have remembered her prophecy—or he's a wonderful psychic himself. . . . But the audacity of the man—saying he put them in my slipper!"

"Claire did," I corrected, by way of beginning.

"It's the same thing. What a lie—to say they're his!"

I hurried on: "Claire did it on the steamer—the night before we landed. That was how she had been set to



It Was Amazing.

smuggle them through the customs house. She didn't know what was in the box—she thought it a cipher on tissue paper to save her father's life, and if it was found on her he'd be put to death; but if it was found on you or me—all right—we couldn't explain, for we didn't know anything."

"And do you believe that?" Mrs. Delario demanded, her face a picture of amazement—at me!

With that I went through the whole story of my experiences with monsieur, adding no comments on her story, but telling only his and Claire's—and the legend of the diamonds.

It took a long time—it took a long nerve. While I talked I did not once look at her—I would not witness the defeat of her deep religious convictions and the dissolution of her hopes. I ended apologetically, "So you see, according to that, the diamonds really belong to the Emperor William," I could not bring myself to come out with it flat-footedly and say they positively did.

"Well?"

Her tone was so peculiar that I looked up quickly. And her face was a study. She was obviously puzzled, but amazement still held its ground—amazement at me; pity at me, too, for my credulity. And a moment before I had been almost ready to shed tears over her!

"He's cleverer than I thought," she commented. "Much. Oh, very much cleverer—if he can deceive you like that.

"And he's much more dangerous than I thought—he must have very powerful occult influences working with him, or very remarkable psychics on the earth plane who can get names and dates. And it all shows how careful I've got to be. . . . I'm glad you told me. I see how I must guard myself."

I experienced a strong revulsion of feeling toward her—her manner of taking what I'd told her gave me a positive shock. I'd wasted both my sympathy and my reasoning powers on her. And I saw the machinations she'd be the center of—the wrath of the Emperor William, that I'd been threatened with, hounding her, perhaps to death. I must save her from her own folly—I must convince her in spite of herself and for her own good. If I didn't De Ravenol would before he got through with her, and I hated to think what he'd do: he had too much at stake himself to care what happened to her.

"But wait a minute," I struck in boldly; "you're forgetting that you wore the slippers on the steamer—that knocks Paris: the diamonds could not have been in the slipper when you bought it—or while you were in Paris."

"Why, so I did," she admitted. And I thought for a second that she wavered—that I had given her belief a serious blow. But if I did it rebounded immediately. "And that makes it only the more wonderful!" she cried, and repeated it with delight at the clenching discovery. She did not notice my dry and somewhat disgusted, "It certainly does," but bubbled on: "It only goes to show their powers—their all-seeing, all-helping powers! They made me the gift in Paris, and then, seeing it might be discovered too soon—at a time the knowledge I possessed such wealth and was smuggling it—though I didn't know I was smuggling it—but I should have felt I ought to say something at the customs house if I had known it on the steamer—"

I cut in with positive violence: "You mean they—whoever they are—put the box in your slipper in Paris, then took it out on the steamer so you could wear the slipper—and then put it back after you had worn the slipper? You mean that?"

"Certainly. Why not?" she answered calmly.

I declare I could almost have sworn at her! "Why not!" I gasped.

"Why—not?" she repeated, looking at me darkly. "If they can put it there they can take it out—that is simple every-day reason. Why!—you yourself gave me the proof!—you told me it was once in the other slipper—the one you carried off!"

In the face of such arguments, seriously put, I was helpless.

"If they didn't, who did?" she demanded. "Remember—Claire never told you she did—that's what he says—and he's a consummate scoundrel, capable of any fabrication of the truth to gain his ends and rob a defenseless woman."

Her question and her face both challenged me—demanded the blow direct; but I ducked the issue in a general protest.

"But really, Mrs. Delario, you know—a million dollars' worth of diamonds don't—just happen."

"That's what makes it so wonderful that it did happen—and to me!—to humble little me, who never could have expected it." Her eyes glowed with mystic fire.

"To suspect would have been to doubt God's providence—his promises—everything. How could I? How dared I? I had prayed—the prayer had been answered—" she spoke very solemnly, and added: "I would not let myself doubt."

"But you hadn't prayed for diamonds."

"God—and the masters who carry out the supreme plan—answer prayers in their own way." She said it as if she were admonishing a child, and then snatched the next argument out of my mouth.

"Don't millions of Christian people pray every day, on their bended knees, 'Give us this day our daily bread'—believing they will get it from a divine source, and is it any harder for God to give the diamonds than a crust?"

I was defeated. She went on—in a rather unsteady voice—and told me what she'd thus far held back—the end of the prophecy, not yet fulfilled and that she nightly anticipated: the ultimate revelation and ordination: one of the masters was to wing an invisible flight through the air, straight from Tibet to the room where we sat, and to place upon her bosom the mystic seal—seven blood-red stains, in symbol of seven bleedings of the contrite heart purging itself of its seven deadly sins.

And this, in the last word, is what the diamonds meant to her—the fulfillment of the most passionately cherished aspiration of her life.

"He will come—he will follow his gift—it will draw him like a magnet," she finished joyously.

I was put to rout. The very unreasonableness of her belief constituted for it a sort of dignity. It commanded respect by its isolation and the storms of argument it had withstood.

I got out the box of diamonds and handed it to her. She came out of the inner light in which she'd been silently basking. A shadow crossed her face. She started back—but I thrust them into her hand. And with that I rose.

"You don't mean—" she began.

"I can't discuss it any further today," I said, and I hastened out of the house. It was absolutely the only thing I could do.

CHAPTER XV.

An Important Ownership.

When I left her house this was my situation with Mrs. Delario—she'd given birth to the incorrigible belief that a million dollars' worth of diamonds had been presented to her by an unknown lama in Tibet; sent her through the air; glued into the toe of her slipper, and this in answer to prayer. And I had to reckon with it as a fact—a fact that yelled me off the straightforward course I'd been about to pursue and bullied me into taking devious ways.

"No!" I replied to myself ten dozen times. "The Emperor William didn't consult me about what he should do with his old diamonds; why should he expect help from me now? He's got his own machinery to work with—let him get his diamonds back himself. I'm no detective—I'm not his tool."

Billy was an hour late in reaching the house and I interrupted his petulant explanation as to why he wasn't two hours late, or three, to communicate rapidly—knowing that monsieur would be there in a minute—my decision that Mrs. Delario was to keep the diamonds and the Emperor William might twiddle his thumbs and whistle.

"You took 'em back to her?"

"Yes, and she's to keep them."

"But—what did she say—"

The elevator was rumbling, and I knew who was coming.

"But what are you going to tell monsieur?"

The bell rang—I hadn't decided what I was going to tell monsieur.

I opened the door. Standing behind Claire, his glance to me under his obsequiously lifted hat and across her head, monsieur rapidly prowled my face for the sniff of a hint that I had everything arranged and my diplomacy had been successful. Which hint I'm positive he didn't get. Claire gave a little cry on seeing me, flung herself into my arms and hid her blushes on my shoulder. I ducked my face to hers and bade my visitors enter. I carried Claire forward, leaving monsieur to dispose of his hat and coat in the hall.

I presented Billy to Claire, and she shot him dead with one glance and brought him back to life with the next. At the sound of her lovely voice uttering a thrilly "How do you do?" Billy didn't know his own name—the only name he could at the moment have articulated was Claire de Ravenot.

Claire forgot him as soon as he stammered out his "awfully glad to meet you," and dropped her little hand. I was the magnet of those lovely eyes! Being middle-aged and proper does sometimes have its compensations!

I motioned us to chairs. What was I to tell monsieur! Claire gave me a moment's respite by hurriedly beginning, "Papa says to tell you everything I know—"

She glanced at him and he nodded. "Yes—everything—from ze beginning."

"You remember Vevey?"

I nodded and said "Yes."

"Well, papa came to see me there—while I was at school, you know—and he brought me a little box to keep for him—so big."

"What was in that little box?" I questioned.

Claire's eyes mutely appealed to her father.

Monsieur had evidently been waiting for this question and hastily interposed, "She does not know—it was my wish she should know nossing of ze contents—to zis day she does not know—" and his whole face was filled with appeal to Billy and me.

I granted the appeal with a jerk of my head that I hoped told him, "All right—I'll keep your secret from her," and he replied to this with, "Tres bien," and a relieved look. But that didn't mean I was through with my questions to Claire.

"What did you think was in the box?" I went on.

"Papers—very valuable papers."

"Valuable in what way? Title deeds to property, for instance? Or a will? Anything of that kind?" I wanted to know what sort of a yarn he'd told her.

"Oh, no—much more valuable than that! A cipher on tissue paper. Papa said his life depended on it—and the life of the emperor of Russia," she hastily added, and blushed and cast down her eyes.

"Ze emperor of Germany," corrected monsieur quietly.

"Yes—I forgot—I thought it was the emperor of Russia."

"It is of no consequence—continue, my child, wis ze narrative."

She seemed a little off the track and I helped her on with another question: "What were you to do with those papers?"

"I was to help papa get them to America—so they wouldn't be found. So I hid the papers while I was at school—I wore them in a little bag around my neck that papa bought for

Monsieur Rapidly Prowled My Face.

me, and it was all arranged with madame that she was to bring me to Paris when papa telegraphed. And she couldn't, you know, so you brought me."

"So that was why you were so afraid of being searched at the customs house on the frontier?"

"Yes. Papa told me they might—and if they found the papers he would be handed over to the government. But they didn't find them!" She smiled in childish delight. "I got them to Paris with you all right, and then I ran on ahead and told papa and said how kind you'd been, and I said you were just going to America, and he said the governess he'd engaged had been taken sick and couldn't go to America, but the Russian spies were after him and he was afraid he'd be killed, and perhaps you would take me with you."

Billy glared at monsieur. Monsieur answered him with a shrug as much as to say, "Well, what would you?"

Claire went on, "And then papa asked you to let me go with you, and you—you—couldn't."

She was too exquisitely polite to remind me of that stern, uncompromising refusal.

"Well, papa found Mrs. Delario, and it was all right."

"And now, Claire, what was precisely the plan about that little box? What were you to do with it?"

She blushed and grew so embarrassed she could hardly go on, but her father helped her by telling her, "Conceal nossing, my child—you have done only what your fazer have commanded you to." Thus encouraged, she confessed, "I was to put it in your slipper—if you had one you weren't wearing, because you know you told papa that your baggage wasn't examined—your cousin was an inspector, or something like that. And if I couldn't get it into your baggage I must put it in one of Mrs Delario's slippers—"

"I remember now!" I suddenly exclaimed. "That time I caught you in my cabin—at my suitcase—you were trying to do it then?"

Tears came to her eyes.

"Yes," she almost whispered. "I was going to put it in one of your slippers—I found you had a pair just like Mrs. Delario's."

"Oh!" I said. And at this, monsieur interposed. "It was my plan—ze slipper—if one could be found not worn on ze steamer."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## SUGAR INSTEAD OF BULLETS

How American in Japan Won the Heart of Those Among Whom He Came to Dwell.

In a word, the civilization of Korea was and is a reality. Japan is now on trial before the world, to show whether her annexation of the old treasure land means a blessing or a curse—to either or both the Korean or the Japanese people. She may well consider whether her own existence does not depend upon a righteous treatment of the people whom she expects to assimilate. Perhaps in personal experience lies an allegory. Fifty years ago a call came to America from Japan's far interior for a young man "to organize schools on the American principle." The writer accepted the call, but no insurance company would, except at a very high premium, take the risk and issue a policy on his life. Friends thought him a fool for "trusting himself among such a people," where a brace of swords formed part of the daily costume of gentlemen, and in which joi (alien-expellers and foreigner-haters) were sufficiently numerous, and where assassinations of Europeans was common—two taking place during the first month of the writer's arrival. A revolver kept in the left breast pocket, whence, for urgent need, it could be drawn quickly, seemed very necessary, and certainly was comforting. However, when settled down in the interior city of the Happy Well, his eyes were opened. The American teacher laid away his six-shooter, nor did he take it up again while in Japan. Instead, he kept his pockets stored with lumps of sugar for the children he met on his walks, and won all hearts by living the normal life of a decent American.—William Elliott Griffis, in Asia Magazine.

### No Softness There.

"Last night," remarked the rhapsodist, "all the village was bathed in soft moonshine."

"Friend," rejoined Uncle Bill Bottletop, "you've got it wrong. I'll admit the presence of copious moisture. But I've got to remind you that moonshine is about the hardest liquor produced."

### Where Politicians Err.

Politicians think by stopping up the chimney they can stop its smoking. They try the experiment, they drive the smoke back, and there is more smoke than ever.—Borne.

## WHEN SPRING SEWING OCCUPIES YOUR TIME

© Western Newspaper Union

Among many other things that absorb the attention of home dressmakers, busy with spring sewing, there are negligees to be provided for hours of leisure. Now is the best time for making these luxurious and inspiring frivolities of the wardrobe. Gay new spring materials are here, and the business of sewing is in hand. January and February ought to see underthings for the family and negligees, housedresses, service clothes for the housewife, about disposed of. Certainly the pretty negligees should not be overlooked.

Negligees are usually in two garments, that is an underslip and a coat, or trousers and coat. These styles are about equally popular and the trousers are like those worn by Chinese women or patterned after those of India. Sometimes a long skirt is so draped as to suggest trousers and in any case these picturesque suits are fascinating. In the picture trousers of crepe-de-chine have double frills of narrow knife plaiting about the ankles. The coat is much like a short kimono and it is edged with wide lace. A silk cord and tassel is suspended from the coat at each side, falling from a small bow of ribbon. These tassels and cords have no particular reason for being where they are, except to look pretty; they do add to the grace of the coat by weighting it. There is no attempt to follow the style that inspires a negligee with fidelity to the original. The Chinese cord and tassel idea is used along with very pert little ribbon bows having an American flavor, and ribbon rosette with long ends at the front.

Such sensible things as the combination undergarment for a little girl, shown in the picture, must share attention with beautiful negligees in the spring sewing. The body and knickers are cut in one, the former gathered into an elastic band at the knee or on a straight band that buttons. Neck and short sleeves are finished with button-hole stitching over the edges of small scallops, and the same garment is made with lower neck and sleeveless for midsummer wear. The weight of the muslins used varies, too, according to the season for which the combinations are made.

## Coats Stylish and Practical

It used to be that, to call a garment "practical" was about equivalent to calling it "commonplace," but that day has gone by. More and more the intangible element of style is demanded and commands a very tangible and substantial return in money.

The two coats shown in the picture above will first catch the eye because of their smart style and then will bear study as thoroughly practical. The suppleness of the season's coatings makes it easy for designers to do unusual things, as in the coat shown at the left of the picture, where odd capelike extensions are set in at the sides and the body of the coat is joined to a deep yoke with many rows of machine stitching. Everything in the model is on a generous scale, even the handsome buttons are extra large. The very wide muffler collar wraps about the throat in the coziest manner possible. In a less flexible material these ideas could not be carried out.

At the right of the picture there is a very smart bloused model, cut with kimono body and sleeves joined to a full skirt under a wide, crushed belt. The wide collar is gathered in at the neck and turns over. The cuffs, collar and bottom of the skirt are embellished with large disks, about the size of a silver dollar, which appear to be made of French knots in silk floss, set thickly together. The body blouses considerably and the entire design is novel and chic. Any of the soft coatings will serve for coats like those shown here, the velours, bolivias, silvertones, and similar weaves that have distinguished this season's wraps make garments that are both practical and stylish.

Julia Bottomley

### Weaving Ribbons.

Many ribbons are woven of as many as 12 colors on looms which turn out only about two and a half yards in a day. These ribbons are seen in the most interesting designs, frequently of ancient and barbaric inspiration. Those showing the human figure are really considered by far the smarter. Egyptian figures, heads intermingled with lotus leaves and other historic and entertaining little scenes, are cleverly shown. The brocaded ribbons are fashioned more or less on the same lines as the brocades, in brilliant shades, overlaid with swirls of the metal, either gold or silver.

### Lovely Lingerie.

"All white" is the latest decree as to the color of the lingerie for the bride's trousseau. Mull, net, lace are the materials most in vogue now. Embroidery is much in demand.

The new silhouette forecasts something new in the way of corsets. Lacy, ruffly "undies" are to be had, delighting many a feminine shopper.


## Chronic Cough--Poor Appetite--Sleepless

Montrose, W. Va.—"Thirty-one years ago I took cold which brought on my old trouble, a cough. I had one every winter for years, but always before with the return of spring and warm weather it would leave me, but this time everything failed to help me, and with the return of spring I did not gain any or find any relief. I was thin, had poor appetite and spent restless nights. We became discouraged as some had already expressed themselves by saying they thought the cough had gone so far there was little chance of my recovery. But a neighbor had all this time been advising me to use Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, stating how far gone her husband was with a cough and when everything had failed he began to use the 'Golden Medical Discovery,' which restored him to health. That was several years ago and his health is still good, so my husband got me a bottle of the 'Discovery.' I left it at my bedside that night and just took a little sip from the bottle often, and it soon allayed the irritation in my throat and I got some sleep. I continued its use and the change was great indeed. I began to gain in flesh, my appetite returned and by the time I had completed two or three bottles I was sound and well, and that dreadful cough that I had endured so many winters has, since that time, only been alight when I have a cold. My weight then was about 125 pounds and now after 12 years I am enjoying good health, weigh about 170 pounds, the mother of 12 children, and I am doing my own housework. I thank the good Lord that there is such a medicine as the 'Golden Medical Discovery' which was the means of restoring me to health when I seemed to be going hastily to the grave."—Mrs. Elizabeth S. Anson, Route 1, Box 28.

Richmond, Va.—"I can highly recommend Dr. Pierce's Anuric Tablets to anyone troubled with excess of uric acid and, also, those who have any sort of bladder weakness. I have had greater relief from Anuric' (anti-uric-acid) than any kidney remedy I have ever taken, and it is a pleasure to recommend it."—Mrs. J. J. Lyons, 22 Maiden Lane.

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### Was Leaving, Anyway.

Sentry—Halt, or I fire.

Recruit—Fire away. I was just goin' up to the captain to resign, anyhow.

### RECIPE FOR GRAY HAIR.

To half pint of water add 1 oz. Bay Rum, a small box of Barbo Compound, and ½ oz. of glycerine. Apply to the hair twice a week until it becomes the desired shade. Any druggist can put this up or you can mix it at home at very little cost. It will gradually darken streaked, faded gray hair, and will make harsh hair soft and glossy. It will not color the scalp, is not sticky or greasy, and does not rub off.—Adv.

### Still Left.

"Is there anything about here with a kick?" "Sure; there's Bill Jones' ex-army mule."


### Cuticura Comforts Baby's Skin

When red, rough and itching with hot baths of Cuticura Soap and touches of Cuticura Ointment. Also make use now and then of that exquisitely scented dusting powder, Cuticura Talcum, one of the indispensable Cuticura Toilet Trio.—Adv.


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