

# The KING of DIAMONDS.

By Louis Tracy,

Author of "Wings of the Morning," "The Pillar of Light," Etc.

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## CHAPTER XI—(Continued.)

Philip loved his mother on the compensating principle that persons of opposite natures often have an overpowering affinity for each other. He remembered her neither in features nor in the more subtle traits of character.

After a dinner the excellence of which was in nowise diminished by lack of appreciation on his part he undertook a pilgrimage of curiosity to which he had previously determined to devote the evening.

He wondered incessantly to whom he was indebted for the good meals he had enjoyed in prison. Now he would endeavor to find out.

A hansom took him to Holloway, but the first efforts of the driver failed to discover the whereabouts of the Royal Star hotel.

At last Philip recollected the warder's added direction—"Opposite."

He dismissed the cab and walked to the prison entrance. Directly in front he saw a small restaurant called the Star. Its titular embellishments were due to the warder's gift of humor.

He entered. A woman was knitting at a cash desk.

"Until yesterday," he said, "you sent food regularly to a boy named Anson—was he confined in the prison?"

"Yes," interrupted the lady. "I only heard this mornin' that he was let out."

"Would you mind telling me who paid the bill? I suppose it was paid?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, it was overpaid," was the reply. "You see, the pore lad was remanded for a week, and Mr. Judd, a man 'oo lives in the Farrington road, kem 'ere an' arranged for 'is week's board. Hav' ye heard wot 'appened to 'im?"

Philip's heart was in his mouth, but he managed to answer that the boy was all right; there was no charge against him. Then he escaped into the street. The one man he had forgotten was his greengrocer friend, who had indeed acted the part of the good Samaritan.

There was some excuse for this, but the boy's abounding good nature would admit of none. He hastened to Farrington road with the utmost speed and found his fat friend putting up the shutters of his shop.

The restaurant next door was open. Philip approached quietly.

"Good evening, Mr. Judd," he said, holding out his hand.

"Good evenin', sir," said the greengrocer, his eyes revealing not the remotest idea of the identity of the smart young gentleman who addressed him so familiarly.

"Don't you know me, Mr. Judd?"

"Well, sir, I can't exactly bring to mind."

"I suppose the good fare you provided for me at Holloway has so altered my appearance that you fail to recognize me again?"

"Wot! Ye don't mean to s'y—'Ere, Eliza, this young gent is the lad I was a tellin' you of. Remanded till Saturday, you was. I saw in the paper last night. Well, there, I'm done!"

By this time Philip was inside the shop, and the stout greengrocer and his equally stout spouse were gazing open-mouthed at this well-dressed

gentleman who had stepped in at the moment he had closed his eyes.

"You were the one man out of many, Mr. Judd, who believed in me and even stuck up for me when you saw me led through the street by a policeman to be imprisoned on a false charge. I did not know until an hour ago that I was indebted to you for an abundance of excellent food while I was remanded in prison. I will not offer to refund you the money you spent. My gratitude will take another form, which you will learn in a few days. But I do want to pay you the ninepence I borrowed. Would you mind asking the proprietor of the restaurant to step in here for a moment? Don't say I am present. I wish to avoid a crowd, you know."

Judd had time to collect his scattered ideas during this long speech.

"Blow the ninepence!" he cried. "Wot's ninepence for the treat I've 'ad? People I never set eyes on in my life afore kem 'ere an' bought cabages or taters or mebbe a few plums, an' then they'd stave, Mr. Judd. Wasn't it you as stood a dinner to the boy king of diamonds? That's wot they christened yer, sir. Or it's 'Mr. Judd, can't yer tell us w'ere that young Morland lives? Surely yer know summat abah't 'im or yer wouldn't hev paid 'is bill! Oh, it 'as bin a bean! Hain't it, Eliza?"

"But we never let on a word," put in Mrs. Judd. "We was close as wax. We told none of 'em as how Mr. Judd went to 'Olloway that night, did we, Willyum?"

"Not us. Ye see, I took a fancy to ye. If ah'r little Johnnie 'ad lived, 'e'd 'av' bin just your ige. Fifteen, aren't ye?"

At last Philip got him persuaded to summon his neighbor. Judd did so with an air of mystery that caused the baldheaded restaurateur to believe that a burglar was bottled up in the greengrocer's cellar.

Once inside the shop, however, Mr. Judd's manner changed.

"Wot did I tell yer, Tomkins?" he cried elatedly. "Wot, price me as a judge of karakter! 'Ere's Mr. Morland come back to p'y me that ninepence. Eh, Tomkins! 'Oo's right now, old cock?"

Philip solemnly counted out the money, which he handed to his delighted backer.

"There was a bet, too," he said. "'Ra-ther!' roared Judd. "Two bob, w'ich I've paid. Out w' four bob, Tomkins. Lord lumme, I'll stand treat at the George for this!"

"There's something funny in the kisse," growled Tomkins as he unwillingly produced a couple of forins.

"I was sure you would see the joke at once," said Philip. "Goodby, Mr. Judd. Goodby, ma'am. You will hear from me without fail within a fortnight."

He was gone before they realized his intention. They saw him skip rapidly up the steps leading into Holborn, and London had swallowed him forever so far as they were concerned.

Ten days later a firm of solicitors wrote to the greengrocer to inform him that a client of theirs had acquired the freehold of his house and shop, which property during the life of either himself or his wife would be tenable free of rent, rates or taxes.

So Mr. Judd's investment of ninepence plus the amount expended on eatables at the Royal Star hotel secured to him and his wife an annual revenue of £175.

And Tomkins never heard the last of it.

## CHAPTER XII

BEFORE retiring to rest Philip ascertained Mr. Abingdon's London address and wrote asking for an appointment the following evening.

He also interviewed the manager.

"I want the help of a thoroughly reliable solicitor," he said. "I wish to purchase some property—not valuable property, but of importance to me. Can you give me the address of some one known to you?"

M. Foret named a reputable firm in the locality.

"They may refer to you," added Philip. "Of course I do not ask you to say more than that I am staying here, but the point is I do not wish you to mention my age."

"Will you not see them, then?"

"No, I will endeavor to conduct the whole business by post."

The manager laughed.

"You certainly are the coolest young gentleman I ever met. However, Mr. Anson, it may please you to know that your bank gave you the best of recommendations. I will say so to anybody."

So Philip first drafted and then copied the following letter:

Dear Sirs—M. Foret, of this hotel, has given me your names as a firm likely to transact certain negotiations for me. I want to purchase a small property in the Mile End road, known as Johnson's Mews, also a shop near the entrance to the mews, tenanted by a marine store dealer named O'Brien. The mews is owned by the Cardiff and Havre Coal Company, limited. I do not know who owns the shop. I wish to acquire these properties for a philanthropic purpose, but I am most desirous that my name should not figure in the transaction. I propose, therefore, when you have ascertained the price, which should be at the earliest

possible moment, to pay to your credit the requisite amount. You can have the properties transferred to any nominee you choose and again transferred to me. Kindly add your costs, etc., to the purchase price. My movements are somewhat uncertain, so please send all communications by letter. It will be an obligation and lead to future business if you attend to this matter tomorrow morning. Yours faithfully, PHILIP ANSON.

He did not compose this letter without considerable trouble. The "philanthropic purpose" he had already decided upon, but he thought it was rather awkward to refer to the possibilities of "future business."

As for the double transfer, he distinctly remembered copying letters dealing with several such transactions at the time of the coal company's conversion into a limited liability concern.

He was early to bed, and his rest was not disturbed by dreams. He rose long before the ordinary residents. Deferring his breakfast, he walked to Fleet street and purchased copies of morning and evening papers for the whole of the week.

He could thus enjoy the rare luxury of seeing himself as others saw him. He read the perfunctory descriptions of the scene in court and found himself variously described as "pert," "masterful," "imperious," "highly intelligent," "endowed with a thin veneer of education" and "affected."

Philip could afford to laugh at the unfavorable epithets. Up to the age of thirteen he had been trained in a first rate lycée, and his work was supervised by his mother, a woman of very great culture. He spoke French as well as English and spoke both admirably. He knew some Greek and Latin, was well advanced in arithmetic and had a special penchant for history and geography.

It was in the glowing articles which appeared during his imprisonment that he took the keenest interest. Oddly enough, one ingenious correspondent blundered on to a clue. Gifted with an analytical mind, he had reasoned that the diamond laden meteor fell during the extraordinary storm of the 19th, and the meteorological department in Victoria street helped him by describing the center of the disturbance as situated somewhat to the east of the London hospital.

The writer had actually interviewed a member of the staff of that institution who amused himself by noting barometrical vagaries. His instrument recorded an extraordinary increase of pressure soon after 10 o'clock on the night of the storm.

"Alas," said the scribe, "it did not indicate where the meteor fell, and not a policeman, bus driver or railway official can be found who observed anything beyond a phenomenal electrical display and a violent downpour of rain."

That was too close to be pleasant, and Philip was glad to hear from M. Foret that the solicitors after telephoning to ask for some particulars concerning Mr. Anson were giving prompt attention to his instructions.

"What did you tell them?" asked Philip.

"I said that you impressed me as the kind of young gentleman who would pay well for services given unsparingly."

"Did that satisfy them?"

"Perfectly. Such clients do not abound in these hard times."

Three hours later a letter came for Philip Anson, Esq., by hand. It was from the solicitors and read:

We are in receipt of your esteemed instructions. Although Saturday is a day on which it is difficult to do business, we lost no time in inspecting the premises in the Mile End road, accompanied by a surveyor. We found that the mews extended approximately on an area of 3,200 superficial feet, while the shop tenanted by O'Brien has a frontage on the main road of eighteen feet, with a probable depth of thirty or thirty-five feet. The owner of this shop is a resident in the neighborhood, and will accept £450 for the freehold.

We were fortunate in finding the managing director of the Cardiff and Havre Coal Company, limited, at his office. Although the company requires the mews for the purpose of a depot, they are not unwilling to sell, with a stipulation that the premises shall not be used by any competing company during a period of twenty years from the date of transfer. We stated that the site was required for a philanthropic purpose, but the latter stipulation is insisted on. The price asked is £2,200, which we consider excessive, there being a very inadequate approach. Moreover, we wish to point out that O'Brien's shop does not adjoin the mews, and it would be necessary to purchase two other houses to make the entire property a compact one.

However, adhering to the letter of your instructions, we have pleasure in informing you that the two properties can be acquired, with very little delay, for £2,650. The legal and other charges will not exceed £150. We trust, etc.

Philip immediately wrote:

I am greatly obliged by your promptitude in the matter of Johnson's Mews and the shop. I inclose check herewith for £2,800. The purchase of the other houses can stand over for a few days.

This he dispatched by special messenger, and in a few minutes he held a formal receipt.

A telegram came for him. It was from Mr. Abingdon.

Can you see after it at my house.

Then Philip enjoyed his first real breathing space during hours of daylight. He went by train to the cemetery in which his mother was buried, carrying with him a beautiful wreath.

It was a remarkable fact that this was the first visit he had paid to her grave. During the days of misery and partial madness which followed her death he never lost the delusion that her spirit abided with him in the poor dwelling they called "home."

Hence the narrow resting place beneath the green turf in no way appealed to him. But now that a succession of extraordinary external events had restored the balance of his mind he realized that she was really dead and buried; that what he revered as her spirit was in truth a fragrant memory; that he would be nearest to her mortal remains when standing in the remote

corner of the burial ground allotted to the poorest of the poor—those removed by one degree from pauperdom and a parish grave.

It happened by mere chance that since Mrs. Anson's funeral no one had been interred on one side of the small space purchased for her. There were three vacant plots here, and a surprised official told Philip there would be no difficulty in acquiring these for the purpose of erecting a suitable monument.

The boy filled in the necessary forms and then. It was some consolation to know that he could perpetuate her memory in this way, though he had formulated another project which should keep her name revered through the ages.

On the site of Johnson's Mews should arise the Mary Anson Home For Destitute Boys. He would build a place where those who were willing to work and learn would be given a chance

and not driven, starving and desperate, to pick up an existence in the gutter.

He was too young to devise all the details of such a splendid institution, but he had got the idea and would possess the money. He would leave the practical part of the undertaking to older heads.

The one essential feature was that generations yet unborn should learn to love and honor the name of Mary Anson. Provided that were achieved, he knew the work would be given.

Soon after leaving the cemetery he came face to face with Bradley, the policeman, who was in plain clothes and walking with a lady, obviously Mrs. Bradley, judging by the maternal manner in which she wheeled a perambulator containing a chubby infant.

"Well, I'm blowed!" cried the policeman. "Who would have thought of meeting you? I looked in at the mews last night, but you had gone. Some one is looking after you pretty well, eh?"

He cast a patronizing eye over Philip's garments, which were, of course, considerably smarter in appearance than those in which the constable had seen him on Thursday evening.

"Yes," said Philip. "I am in good hands now."

"They haven't given you a watch?" This anxiously.

"No, I am a watchless."

"That's right. You'll have one soon. The inspector has your address. By the way, he wants to know your Christian name."

"Philip."

"Thanks. I won't forget."

Philip raised his hat and took the quickest route westward. He did not count on being recognized so easily.

Mr. Abingdon received him with some degree of reserve. The magistrate could not understand the receipt of a letter bearing the address of the Pall Mall hotel, a place where he had been entertained at dinner occasionally by one of his wealthy friends, but which was far removed from the limit imposed on the pocket of any man whose resources depended on the exercise of an ordinary profession.

But Philip still figured in his mind as a rugged urchin. Not even the skilled police magistrate could picture him as the actual owner of millions of pounds worth of portable property; hence, the boy's appearance now told in his favor. Cursory impressions soon yielded to positive bevilderment when Philip began to relate his story faithfully from beginning to end, neither exaggerating or suppressing any salient detail save the actual locality where his astounding adventures found their center and genesis.

Mr. Abingdon did not doubt for one moment that the boy was telling the truth. The romance of his narrative was far beyond fiction.

Philip himself grew enthusiastic as he went on. His brown eyes blazed again with the memory of his wrath and shame at the arrest. He told the magistrate exactly how the proceedings in court had affected him and gave a vivid picture of his bargaining with Isaacstein, the packing of the diamonds, the fight between the policeman and a burglar, his interviews with all sorts and conditions of men and the ruses he had adopted to preserve his secret.

At last he came to the transaction which secured for him the ownership of the mews, itself. He read copies of his letters to the solicitors and their replies, and then of course the magistrate knew where the meteor had fallen.

"That is a very clever move on your part," he said, smiling. "It invests you with all the rights and usages of that particular piece of earth and effectual-

ly stops any one from disputing your possession of the meteor. How did you come to think of it?"

"You put the idea into my mind, sir," said Philip modestly.

"In what manner?"

"You hinted at our last meeting that some one might lay claim to my diamonds on the ground that they had fallen on their property. I do not intend that any one living except yourself shall ever know the history of my meteor, but I thought it best to buy the place outright in the first instance and then devote it to a charity which I intend to found in memory of my mother."

Mr. Abingdon smiled again.

"Your confidence is very flattering," he said. "I suppose you took up your quarters at the Pall Mall hotel in order to impress people with your importance and secure instant compliance with your wishes."

"That was my motive, sir."

"Then, my young millionaire, in what way do you wish me to serve you? Of course you have not sought this unreservedly without an ulterior object in view. You see, I am beginning to understand you already a little better than when we first met."

Philip did not reply immediately. He did not want to risk a refusal, and he was not yet quite sure that the magistrate fully comprehended the extent of the fortune which had been showered on him from nature's own mint.

"When Mr. Isaacstein returns from Amsterdam, he will pay me something like £40,000," he said.

"Yes. It would seem so from the receipt you have shown me."

"That will be determined on Wednesday next at the latest."

"Yes."

"If the money is forthcoming, it will be proof positive that my diamonds are of good quality, and as I picked up these dirty stones quite promiscuously it follows that the others are of the same standard."

"Undoubtedly."

"Well, Mr. Abingdon, I can form no estimate of their collective value, but they must be worth many millions. According to Mr. Isaacstein's views, I will be able to command a revenue of between a quarter and a half million sterling per annum."

"It is marvelous! Perfectly appalling in some senses!" cried the perturbed lawyer, throwing up his hands in the extremity of his amazement.

"You are right, sir. I am only a boy, and the thing is beyond my powers. I can see quite clearly that while I ought to be at college obtaining a proper education I will be worrying about the care of great sums of money. I do not know anything about investments. How should I? Isaacstein will probably endeavor very soon to get the better of me in the necessary business transactions. How can I stop him? I have no older relatives, no friends whom I can trust. For some reason I do feel that I can have faith in you. Will you take charge of my affairs, advise me during the next few years, tell me how to act as my mother would have told me—in a word, become my guardian?"

For a little while Mr. Abingdon was silent. When words came he could only gasp:

"You certainly are the most extraordinary boy I have ever encountered."

Then Philip laughed merrily.

"I don't think, sir, that I am so much an extraordinary boy as a boy who has been pitched into an extraordinary position. I hope most sincerely that you will do what I ask. If I may say so without presumption, it will be a good thing for you. I suppose a man who looks after millions of money is entitled to a vastly bigger income than one who sits hours in a police court dealing with offenses against the law."

"Such has certainly been my experience," said the magistrate, who appreciated the nice manner in which Philip hinted at a good fat salary for controlling the estate of the King of Diamonds.

"Then you agree?" cried Philip joyously.

"Not so fast, my youthful friend. Even a police magistrate must bow to his wife. Mrs. Abingdon would never forgive me if I took such an important step without consulting her. Will you remain to dinner?"

Then Philip knew that he had gained his point. Nothing was said before the servants, but when they were cozily ensconced in the library before a pleasant fire he was asked to relate again his entrancing history for Mrs. Abingdon's benefit.

That good lady was overwhelmed. She, like everybody else, had read the newspapers and, of course, had the additional benefit of her husband's views on the subject of the unkempt boy with his small parcel of valuable gems.

But the presence of Philip under their roof, the glamour of the tale as it fell from his lips, cast a spell over her. She was a kindly soul, too, and tears gathered in her eyes at some portions of the recital.

"What a pity it is that your mother died," she murmured when he had ended.

The words endeared her to Philip instantly. A worldly, grasping woman would have thought of nothing save the vista of wealth opened up for her husband and herself. Not so Mrs. Abingdon. If anything, she was somewhat afraid of the responsibilities proposed to be undertaken by her spouse, to whom she was devoted.

The magistrate did not promise definitely that night to accept the position offered to him. He would think over the matter. He could retire on a pension at any time. This he would do without delay, and Philip could certainly count on his friendship and advice, while his house would always be open to him.

Meanwhile he would give one word of advice—in trust no human being

with the power to sign any ominous document without his (Philip's) consent. Then it would be difficult for any one to deal unscrupulously with him.

The boy went away at a late hour. He left behind him an exceedingly perplexed couple, but he felt that when Mr. Abingdon had time to assimilate the facts and realize the great scope of the work before him there was little doubt he would gladly associate himself with it.

At the hotel a telegram awaited him: Have realized for fifty-two thousand. Returning Monday. ISAACSTEIN.

Here was the final proof, if proof were wanting, Philip was a millionaire many times over.

## CHAPTER XIII

A TALL, strongly built man, aged about forty-five, but looking older by reason of his grizzled hair and a face seamed with hardship, a man whose prominent eyes imparted an air of alert intelligence to

an otherwise heavy and brutal countenance disfigured by a broken nose, stood on the north side of the Mile End road and looked fixedly across the street at a fine building which dwarfed the mean houses on either hand.

(Continued Next Week.)

## FACTS CONCERNING

### KELLEMS' INCIDENT

"Mr. Kellem, you must get out of town by Saturday night of there will be trouble, and to save funeral expenses better go." This letter, virtually threatening the life of Rev. M. Kellem, who has been conducting weekly meetings here for several weeks past and who has had phenomenal success with his work, was received by him yesterday morning along with another letter stating that if he did not leave town "we will help you—with eggs."

"No child wrote this," said the preacher, "nor was it necessary for the party to use simplified spelling. They are grown people and are trying to run a bluff on me, but you know the American people are not to be called by a bluff. This is a land where free speech is guaranteed and I shall stay."

Rev. Kellem regards this threat on his life as a serious matter and says he may make an investigation. In all his experience during the past twenty years he has never received threats of the mail such a vile communication or threat. It is a cowardly act, and as he states, is only used when a person is without authority, argument or words and unable to prove the position he may take on a subject.

"These letters have not been sent by the hoodlum element," says Mr. Kellem. "For I have never been in a town where there has been better order I have had no occasion to say harsh things and have not. Nor have they come from the better element. But from some fellow or fellows who have an idea crossed in their heads that has been hit by the sermons."

"If I could pin that on the back of the fellow who wrote and sent it he would go to jail in a hurry," said he. "It is a serious matter, funeral expenses."

The reporter joshed and said that it would be working a shell game on him if they should use eggs, to which he made reply: "Yes, and eggs are pretty expensive, too."

It was suggested that some of his hard-shelled Baptist friends might have sent the letters, but he put the negative emphatically to this answer.

Both envelopes were addressed by the same hand apparently, for the writing indicated a man of similarity. The "Mr." and the "P." in Forest are written with a strong, steady hand that indicates that some grown person has done the work. While there was a desperate effort to disguise the similarity of the two hands the individual did not succeed. One of the letters was written on a money order blank and the other on a common piece of ruled tablet paper. In each instance the individual tried very hard to misspell words, but as he twisted the simplest and got the hardest words right it would lead one to infer that the work was that of a person of maturity who got "sore" over some of the things Rev. Kellem has said.

It is needless to attempt to frighten the man away for he is Irish and is not made of that kind of stuff. Once he was holding meetings in Des Moines and having many conversions when the wife of a certain hard character joined the church. He made his threats that if Rev. Kellem attempted to baptize his wife he would shoot him, but the preacher notified the police on the day for immersion and the department sent a representative who stood right by the fellow while his wife was baptized.

Never has an evangelist drawn such large crowds and got more results. It is said by some that Sunday night's crowd was the biggest that has ever gathered for church services here and many were turned away for want of seats.

If the scribe carries out his threat Mr. Kellem will probably have to dodge some missiles on or before the following Sunday, for he will be at the same old stand every night this week.

## A BARE CHANCE

I have a farm of 127 acres to sell; 70 acres in cultivation, 30 acres pasture, 27 acres timber; horses, cows, hogs, chickens, wagons, farm implements; orchard and good buildings, \$48 per acre. Four miles from depot; good schools and neighborhood. Enquire at the Springfield Hotel, Springfield, Gr.

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