

The Bride's Diamonds

Clever Detective Work Performed
by the Jeweler's Daughter

Diamonds big and bright—unset diamonds that shone and gleamed and changed to all manner of colors as Mr. Mulford moved the velvet tray about before his customers.

They were sitting at a table in the little room at the back of the store, the jeweler and rich Mr. and Mrs. Carberry. Mr. Carberry had bought his wife's wedding-ring of Mr. Mulford the day he opened the store twenty-five years before, and had been a regular customer ever since, and a successful broker may be a very good customer indeed.

As for the store, it was much finer than it was in those days. It had larger windows and better stock—more carriages stopped before the door. Neither of the men had any thing to complain of as far as fortune went.

“Well,” said Mr. Carberry at last, “I think we've settled the matter. The stones are chosen and the settings selected, and I fancy Bessy will have as pretty a wedding-present as need be. We want to please her; she has pleased us, and daughters don't always do that.”

“No. they do not, Mr. Carberry,” said Mr. Mulford, with a little sigh.

“You don't mean that your little girl—” began Mr. Carberry, and stopped short with: “I beg your pardon.”

“Oh, no excuse,” said Mulford, blandly. “You've known my Esther since she was a baby and you know she has no mother to advise her. Esther is a dear girl, but I had ambitions for her. I wanted her to marry well—there was young Vinton; why, he went wild over her.”

“Any man might,” said Carberry, “I always think of the Turkish saying: ‘She must be a jeweler's daughter, for she has diamond eyes,’ whenever she looks at me.”

“Yes. Essie has her mother's eyes,” said Mulford, “and is a good girl. But there is a young man in the store—the light one with the small mustache who brought us the book of designs, you know—she has taken a notion to him. Well, you know a man don't usually pick out a clerk in his own store for his daughter.”

“After all, I don't see why not,” said Carberry, “if he is otherwise a fine fellow—carry on the business and all that—you've no sons of your own. What sort of a boy is he?”

“Oh, he is very well,” said Mulford, “gentlemanly, excellent credentials, but I don't know him yet. It's just a dark girl and a light boy admiring each other, as far as I can tell. I'm not sure they are suited to each other, or that he will make her happy. It may be that he

thinks it would be good for him to marry my daughter. It would please me so much better to have Esther marry some one above such suspicions.”

“I should like it, I think.” said Mr. Carberry. “He’ll not carry your daughter away, and you have only one.”

“Very true,” said Mulford. “I’m too ambitious, no doubt. Still, I can’t help it, it is my nature. At all events, I’ve told her that they must not think anything settled for a year or more. I won’t give my consent until I know young Cummings better.”

“That’s only your duty.” said Carberry. “Well, I hope it will end well. And when the diamonds are set let the young fellow bring them over, so that I can talk with him a little. I’m a pretty good judge of men, I fancy. I’ll give you my opinion of him.”

“So will I,” said Mrs. Carberry; and then the three parted, the Carberrys entering their carriage and driving to their residence, which was quite outside of town.

It was not quite to Mr. Mulford’s liking to find his Esther in the store, and young Cummings neglecting a customer who wanted to look at eye glasses, for the sake of her broken bracelet, which she had made an excuse for running in; but his girl was so pretty, she gave him such a smile and love-pat, that he could not resist her. And there was this order of the Carberrys to talk over. It was a valuable order, and a pleasant event; and Esther was full of bright speeches.

“After all.” Mulford said to himself. “Carberry was right.”

He did not want to lose her and if Cummings turned out all right, why, he could carry on the business, and in his old age he himself could take his ease, surrounded by his grandchildren.

“It is certainly a splendid set,” said the jeweler one morning; “necklace, bracelet, earrings, buckle and comb. They ought to be exhibited some where. I knew Carberry was rich, but I did not know he could quite afford this. It’s a pretty penny in my pocket, too. The sooner Mr. and Mrs. Carberry see them the better.”

And Mr. Mulford telegraphed to the effect that the diamonds would be before them at five o’clock that afternoon. And at three, after making a suitable toilet, Cummings left the house, carry the cases in a russet leather portmanseau.

He took his way toward the cabstand while Mr. Mulford watched him from the door turn the corner.

“I think I shall like the boy, after all” says the jeweler to himself, as he returned to the store.

Esther running in a few moments later, found her father in excellent humor, and felt that the course of their true love was very likely to run smooth.

“Charlie is awfully nice, isn’t he, father?” she asked, rubbing her cheek against his coat sleeve. “Now, say, isn’t he?”

“Wait until we see whether he runs away with those diamonds, Essie,” said the jeweler, and of course Esther was in duty bound to laugh immensely at this paternal joke. It was long before she laughed again after that merry fashion.

She waited dinner for her father that night until the soup was cold and the roast a cinder, and when he came his face looked pale and pinched. It was eight o’clock, and young Cummings had not reported himself.

The only comfort he had was in remembering that Carberry said that he would talk to him and find out what sort of a man he was. Still, nothing would keep a clerk who had as much sense as Cummings had a moment longer that was necessary upon such an errand, and when nine o’clock came the jeweler was quivering with anxiety, while Esther paced the floor repeating, “Something has happened, to him,” at intervals.

At ten o’clock, Mr. Mulford himself took a cab and rode out to the Carberry place. He found Mr. Carberry on the piazza.

“Ah,” said that gentleman, advancing to meet him. “you have brought them yourself, eh? Always glad to see you, and as Bessy has gone somewhere with her intended, we have a better chance to look them over. Come in; Mrs. C is in the library.”

“You do not mean to say that young Cummings has not been here?” cried the jeweler.

“No, he has not. Of course I expected him. Your telegram reached me, but he is not here yet.”

“He will never come,” said the jeweler. “What a fool I was to trust him.”

“He may have met with an accident,” said Carberry. “At all events we must not judge him until we have proof of his guilt.”

The police were notified that night. The one whose post included the cab stand had some information to give.

“Your clerk came down to the stand, Mr. Mulford,” he said; “I know him very well to bow to. He came here and stood a moment. Just then a cab came around the corner—one that does not belong here and a girl jumped out and spoke to your clerk.

“She may have said a dozen words, and then she stepped into the cab again, and he got

in, too, and they drove away. They sat on opposite seats, and he looked out of the window as they drove off.

“I thought nothing of it until the story began to get about, and I did not notice the cab particularly. The girl had a nice little figure, a very small waist, and wore a gray veil tied over her face. Lots of ladies wear them so, but I think she was dark.”

“You are sure it was Cummings?” said Mr. Mulford.

“I am sure it was your clerk,” replied the policeman: “I’ll swear to that “

“You see, my darling,” said Mr. Mulford to his sobbing daughter, late that night “Charles Cummings is a rascal. He has almost ruined me by this theft but I am thankful that he had not yet robbed me of my child. At least you are safe from him, my Essie.”

But Essie, kneeling before her father and holding both his hands in hers, made answer:

“No, father, no. Charles Cummings is no thief. He has fallen a victim to some one who knew what he carried with him. He has been robbed, perhaps murdered. The truth will out some day.”

“And how about the pretty young woman whom he met, Essie?” asked the old man.

“She was in the conspiracy,” said Essie.

“Have common sense, Esther,” said the father. “He entered a cab with her in broad daylight She was his confederate, no doubt and he has gone abroad to share his spoils with her. He had ample time to take an ocean steamer, and did, no doubt. A bad woman, and a chance such as I gave that boy have led many a one to destruction.”

“Charlie is good and true.” persisted Esther. “You will know it someday. and I will maintain it always, if all the world besides should doubt him,”

And to this she held, while the papers painted her betrothed in the light of a rascal who had betrayed a trust confided to him, and no one but herself believed him innocent Night after night as she paced her bedroom floor, she strove to devise some means of discovering the fate of the man she loved.

The talk about the diamonds had all been held in the little reception-room of the jeweler’s establishment; no one learned of it there. But how was it at the Carberry establishment?

One morning she arose full of a new idea, and went to Mrs. Carberry. The lady received her in motherly fashion.

“We kept the gift a secret from every one but my maid, Hannah Earle,” she said, “and she was as anxious to surprise Bessie as we were. I remember when the telegram came, I

asked her to read it because I could not find my glasses, and she was quite delighted. Oh, no, she told no one.”

“Where was she that afternoon?” asked Esther.

“At home, when the telegram came, of course.” said Mrs. Carberry; “she was doing my hair. She went out to see her mother, who is ill, she says, after that. But she was at home all the evening. Oh, she would not gossip. Besides, sick old women couldn’t be in league with robbers. My dear, you must give that young man up. There is no doubt of his guilt.”

“Will you call your maid a minute, please?” said Esther.

Mrs. Carberry smiled, but rang for the girl.

She entered, received the command which was an excuse for her summons, and went away—a little dark woman with a very small waist.

“She is very respectable,” said Mrs. Carberry, “and engaged to her cousin, who already owns one cab of his own, and earns money by driving people about—means some day to have a livery stable. As it is, he is getting on very well, she says. His stand is on the corner yonder. His name is Garvey. She is to be married soon. Why, child, what ails you?”

“I can not tell you,” said Esther, who was trembling from head to foot “But you too will one day believe my Charlie innocent”

She hurried away, meeting the maid in the hall, and observing her closely. The girl wore a gray dress with a dark stripe in it, and her belt was fastened with a curious silver buckle. Esther went straight to the policeman who had seen the girl speak to her betrothed.

“You would know her if you should see her again?” she asked.

“I’d know that waist” said the policeman. “If she had the gray dress with the black stripe in it and the funny silver belt-buckle, like a door-lock, I’d know that too.”

That night Mr. Mulford sent for the detectives, but it was not he who spoke to them, it was his daughter.

She stood before them with an air of one who is speaking of what she knows, and uttered these words.

“You are entirely wrong. You are looking for Charles Cummings, believing him to be a thief. Look, instead, for those who robbed him and for his dead body. I will tell you who beguiled him away—Mrs. Carberry’s maid, Hannah Earle. She was the only one who knew that the diamonds were expected at that hour. The driver of the cab is the man she is to marry. His name is Garvey. He keeps a single cab; his stand is at the corner of the

little triangular park at --- street. I accuse them of the deed and demand their arrest. Officer --- has described Hannah's dress to me, and a buckle that she wears, in describing the woman who took Charles Cummings away in a cab."

Later the policeman, having gone to Garvey's stand, declared that he could swear to the man's face, and Hannah and the driver were arrested at the same moment, without having been given any opportunity to aid each other.

The woman assumed an air of injured innocence that touched all hearts, but Garvey—an arrant coward—went down on his knees at once.

"I know nothing of the diamonds," said he. "Hannah asked me to drive her that day and I did. We took up a young man with a bag, what was in it I dunno. Sure there was no killin.' I just left the two of them at a place Hannah asked me to leave them. A dacent house, a fine place intirely. I seen no more of them—Hannah bade me not wait. The house?—oh, yes, it's the gray one with the fence about it and big trees—I'm told it's an asylum. I dunno."

He willingly led them to the spot, and after some parley the detectives succeeded in extorting from the proprietor of the place the fact that he "entertained a few nervous gentlemen," and a search-warrant was produced.

The doctor rubbed his hands and bowed.

"Could I have been imposed upon?" he cried. Oh, yes. They should see the young gentleman who had, as he believed, raved about diamonds, and in five minutes more Charles Cummings entered the room, and was clasped in the arms of his betrothed.

The story he told was this:

As he was about to take a cab, a young woman had stepped from one which had just turned the corner, and exhibiting Mr. Mulford's telegram to Mr. Carberry, had said that as she was driving into town on an errand Mr. Carberry had asked her to stop for the messenger with the diamonds, and seeing him leave the store, she had intercepted him. Of course he had no such suspicion of any trick, and never having seen the Carberry mansion, entered the madhouse quietly. There the woman was assisted by two keepers, who forcibly took the bag from him and gave it to her.

He fought with them in vain—she had represented him as her husband, and all his protestations were as naught—as they are always in such a place.

However, all is well that ends well. When Hannah found that her lover had turned traitor, she knew all hope of escape was over; she declared that the whole plan was Garvey's and that she had only been his tool, but produced the diamonds which she had hidden in her maitress. The bride received them on her wedding eve, and shortly after Mr. Mulford atoned for his unjust suspicion of Charles Cummings by accepting him as a son-in-law.

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