



# Diamonds of Malopo

by  
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## CHAPTER I

### The Inheritance.

To be twenty-five, to be wearing a new seventy-five-dollar suit, and to walk down Broadway in the sun on a May morning with the knowledge that an inheritance of a hundred thousand dollars is to be turned over by one's trustee within half an hour, must be quite an experience. If an accumulation of such trifles constitutes a sum of happiness, Winton Garrett ought to have been happy.

He was happy. He had left college the day before. The world was before him. He had nothing to worry him. He had no plans, no aims, and no ambitions. He had resolved not to entertain any until he received his legacy.

Now that it was as good as his, Winton was beginning to wonder what it would be like to have control of it. He had not had much money to handle; his bills had been paid for him, and he had had a modest allowance which he had never exceeded.

"I'll have to do something useful with it," he was reflecting, "if Archie hasn't spent it all."

Archie Garrett, Winton's cousin, was just twenty years older than himself. When Winton's mother died, ten years before, and a year after her husband, who had left her everything unconditionally, she had willed all to Winton, her only child, and appointed Archie her sole trustee.

The thing had puzzled everybody, and it had worried Winton's relatives quite a little. For Archie Garrett was the last person in the world whom the average testator would select as a trustee. Winton's mother believed in her nephew, however.

He had once advised her about an investment which was turning out badly. She had listened to him, in the face of expert opinion, and Archie had plucked her out of the financial morass into which she had strayed, and set her on firm ground. People said it was luck, but Winton's mother never forgot.

Archie, a bachelor of forty-four, was one of those men who never quite grow up. His own money had been tied up by a prudent father, but he lived on the adequate income and played at business. He was supposed to be interested in land development somewhere. But nobody who entered Archie's office ever saw any signs of business. Archie hadn't even a stenographer. He read French novels with his feet on the window-ledge, three hundred feet above Broadway; and his desk itself was as immaculate as its owner.

Incappable in his optimism, nothing ever disturbed him. He did have the knack of falling on his feet after sundry financial croppers. He was believed to have made quite a little money out of his income; but nobody trusted Archie any the more for that, though it was admitted that he was honorable. Archie was incapable of wrongdoing. But Archie as a trustee was—unthinkable.

Winton had never troubled very much about his cousin's handling of his fortune. Archie had paid his bills promptly, and had been generous. He had written cordially to Winton a week before making an appointment for that morning at his office, to be followed by luncheon. At the interview the books were to be shown and the estate—which, Winton gathered from some vague statement made a few months before, had increased considerably—was to be handed over.

Winton crossed one of the squares of the city and made his way toward a tall, triangular structure of great height, the acute angle pointing up-town. He went in, entered the elevator, got out at an upper floor, and saw the name of his cousin on the ground glass of a door.

Winton found his cousin seated at a very large desk, quite bare of papers, with his feet on the window-sill, a paper-covered novel in his hand entitled "Les Amours de Viviane," and a huge cigar in his mouth. The band upon the wrapper was beginning to smolder, and it occurred to Winton that the band on the wrapper of his cousin's cigar had been beginning to smolder when he saw him in the same place and the same attitude six months before. Archie might have remained there immovably during the intervening period for any difference that Winton could see.

"Hello, Win! You're looking fine!" said Archie, coming to a reluctant equilibrium. "Sit down." He pushed the box of cigars toward his cousin, and Winton took one and began to smoke. "I've been looking at the trees," Archie continued. "Those chestnuts are beginning to bloom at last. You can feel the spring in the air on a day like this. By George, it makes one feel like a three-year-old!" He leaned his elbows on the desk

and bent forward in a confidential attitude.

"So you're down from college for good, eh?" asked Archie. "And looking forward to blowing in your mother's fortune? My boy, take a tip from an older man, who doesn't pose as your guardian, or anything of that sort, but speaks as a man of the world to a young friend. Be careful of it. With all the sharks there are in the world one needs to hold on to what one has, to trust no man, and to remember the old proverb about all that glitters—eh, Winton?"

He nudged him jocularly in the ribs. "Take my tip, Win, and if ever you change your investment, put it into bonds," he said. "Now I'm not what you'd call a practical man exactly. Plenty of people have stung old Archie Garrett in the past. But I do possess



"But I do possess common sense and knowledge of the world."

common sense and knowledge of the world, and those are the staying qualities, Winton. Get me? Well—bonds, say I. Gold mines? No, sir! Oh! Not if you take the advice of an expert! They don't bite this chicken twice, and if I know you—by George, Win, let's go out and have lunch together!"

"I've got an engagement at two," said Winton, who had to see an old friend off to the West.

Archie consulted his gold watch. "It's only a quarter to one," he said. "There's a pretty fair restaurant near by. I always go there."

He got up, and Winton seized the occasion to say: "Hadn't we better get through our business first, Archie? There won't be much time afterward."

"That's sense," said Archie enthusiastically. "But what's to prevent our killing two birds with one stone? I'll give you a statement between the soup and the meat, and you'll read it between the salad and the cafe parfait, and I'll mail you the deeds—no, by George, they're in the vault of the Second National. Come along!" said Archie, clapping on his hat.

"But just a moment, Archie," protested Winton. "You wrote me about the books. Show me whatever is necessary, so that I won't have to come back."

"Books?" echoed Archie with a puzzled expression, as if the word did not convey very much meaning to him. "Did I write that? Yes, I remember now. But that was just a figure of speech, Win. It looked more business-like on paper. What do you care, so long as I show you I've doubled your capital? The fact is, Win, there ain't any books worth speaking of. What's books between cousins? Come along, Win!"

"Well, it won't trouble me if it doesn't trouble you," said Winton as they left the office together.

"It hasn't troubled me a particle," answered Archie. "I look on it as a family matter. Dear Aunt Mary asked me to take care of your interests. I promised I would, and I guess I've done it. There was just a little under a hundred thousand when I took over your capital. I aimed to raise it ten thousand a year. And I've done better. There ought to be two hundred thousand coming to you, if you want to realize, Win."

"By Jove, you're a trump, Archie," said Winton delighted. He had quite enough business sense to realize how much better two hundred thousand was than one.

"Between ourselves," said Archie as they left the elevator, "there's more coming to you than that. I've made your fortune, Win. You'll be a millionaire inside of two years. We'll talk it over at lunch."

investment; in fact, all Winton's endeavors to lead up to it failed, being followed invariably by a fresh crop of reminiscences of Winton's childhood and Archie's young manhood. Meanwhile the minute-hand of the clock was moving on inexorably, taking the hour hand with it. Also, Archie, mellowing under the spell of the dark beer, was growing sentimental.

"Archie," said Winton suddenly, "if you've spent all my money, let me know the worst."

Archie looked inexpressibly shocked. He set down his glass which he was just in the act of conveying to his mouth, and Winton saw that his hand shook. "My dear boy," he protested, "that's a nice sort of bomb to hurl at your cousin!"

"Then, why the dickens are you telling me about your past instead of coming to the point?" exploded Winton. "Don't you realize that I am interested in my fortune, Archie? Let's get this business over. Where's that two hundred thousand that you were speaking about?"

Archie winked and laid his hand soothingly on Winton's arm. "Working, my boy," he answered. "Do you suppose I've put out real solid money to accumulate at four per cent when I've had a chance to double it? I tell you, Win, if I were not conservative by nature, I'd have put it all into those investments, instead of leaving ten thousand to your credit account."

"So I've really got ten thousand to my account in the bank?" asked Winton.

"Well, what about it? Isn't that enough?" retorted Archie. "I haven't got a hundred to my account. Haven't had more in ten years. I get checks and I pay out checks. By George, Win, I saw more real money when I was a young twelve-dollar clerk than I've seen at any time since."

"What have you invested my capital in?" said Winton quietly. He was growing suspicious of Archie; he felt sure his cousin had made some investment that would never prove remunerative. He was wondering whether he would ever get more than the ten thousand.

"You're very persistent, Winton," said Archie, with a touch of bitterness. "If you don't trust me I'll sell out and let you have your hundred thousand back."

"You said two hundred thousand just now."

"I said there ought to be two hundred thousand coming to you. So there ought to be—three, four, five hundred thousand. Five would be conservative. I should put the actual value of your investments at eight or nine hundred thousand. Personally I'd refuse a million. And I never make a mistake. I'm lucky as well as shrewd—remember that, Win. But, of course, you won't realize even two hundred thousand until your properties have proved themselves."

"Yes, Archie," answered Winton. "But the trouble is that I have an engagement at two, and that leaves me only half an hour to learn about these investments. What are they?"

"The most permanent, enduring, and valuable commodities in the world," said Archie. "Rubber, Win. Fifty thousand in it. What do you think about that?"

"Of course, there's rubber and rubber. There's rubber that never was worth anything and never will be. You have to plant the right sort of soil, under the right sort of sun. Good rubber is a staple—I mean a staple that never grows less. All the world wants rubber, Winton. The price is going up and up and up as the natural supply of wild rubber becomes exhausted. It was reading an article the other day which showed conclusively that civilization is built on rubber. It was written by the chap who tipped me off about this company. How would we get along for autos, and road houses, and rubber heels, and—"

"You've bought rubber shares?"

"No, a plantation, Win. Lock, stock, and barrel!"

"Where?"

"It's in one of the Indies," answered Archie. "Java and—Mocha—no, that isn't it. It's either in the West Indies or in the East Indies, Winton. It doesn't matter a pin, because both have the same climate. I've got a splendid map of the property somewhere. When the trees get bigger, they're going to plant pineapples between them. Of course they're only saplings now, and it would kill them to tap them, but in a few years, when they begin bearing—"

Winton nodded drearily. "That accounts for fifty thousand," he said.

"The other forty?"

"Diamonds," said Archie enthusiastically. "You see, Winton, being naturally conservative, I split instead of putting all your eggs into one basket. I've bought a diamond claim. You own four-fifths of it, at least, and that's almost as good. Now diamonds are a stable—confound it, staple, you know. Winton. People buy them as an investment. Price goes up every year."

"Where is this mine—or claim?" asked Winton.

"Somewhere in South Africa, Winton. Johannesburg—no, that's the gold fields. I know it isn't Kimberley, because De Witt explained to me that the Kimberley men were wild to get hold of your claim, but he wouldn't sell to them at any price. Had no use for that crowd, he told me. He floated his company on the spot and came over here to sell enough shares to provide a working capital. Didn't want to turn over the majority to me at first, Win, but he's got too many interests, and I persuaded him. It's what is called a cost-book mining company, unlimited, and De Witt's gone back as purser. That's what they call the manager in that sort of concern. There are a hundred shares at a hun-

dred pounds each, and you own eighty of them. And now I remember the name of the place, Win. It's called Malopo, and it's in the desert somewhere."

"Thank you, Archie," said Winton coldly. "I begin at last to gather the extent of your activities as my trustee. Where are the deeds and certificates of these two enterprises?"

"In the Second National," said Archie. "And now, Winton, what are you thinking of doing? If I were you, my boy, I'd put in the next year living quietly on the unvested portion of your inheritance. At the end of that time you'll have at least one half-yearly dividend from the mine. De Witt spoke of forty per cent, but he admitted that, with the market as it is now, it may be preferable to withhold a few of the larger stones, which would bring down the dividend to about twenty-five per cent every six months. And in a year's time they'll be tapping a few of the larger trees—rubber, I'm speaking of."

"I suppose I'd better go out and look one of these valuable properties over," said Winton. "I might save something."

His sarcasm was apparently lost on Archie. "I think you might," he agreed.

"I've been thinking that a little holiday—"

"No, Archie," said Winton firmly. "Your financial genius is best adapted to New York. I might want somebody with faith in the enterprises to sell the shares for me."

"That's a good idea, too," said Archie. "Well, I'll stay at home, then. Now, which is it to be, rubber or diamonds? Rubber's the rage, of course, and, after all, diamonds stay diamonds, while rubber doesn't stay rubber. It requires a very intricate process, I understand. If I were you, Win, I'd go to the Indies."

"That decides me," answered Winton. "The Indies, eh? We'll look up the map—"

"No, Malopo," said Winton.

Archie took up his cup of coffee, drained it, set it down, and rose with offended dignity.

"I understand your insinuation, Winton," he said bitterly. "You are trying to express the fact that you discredit my business judgment. Because I have preferred to invest your capital in two conservative business enterprises instead of handing it to you to squander, you asperse my honesty and my intelligence."

"Not your honesty, Archie," protested Winton.

"My honesty and my intelligence," repeated Archie firmly. "I'm very much annoyed, Winton. It's a thing that hurts. I'm going to give you a tip. As you go through the world you'll find it doesn't pay to blurt out your mind. Try to have a little reticence and keep your thoughts to yourself. Now, you can find your way to the Second National bank yourself, and fix things up with the manager, and get your certificates and papers. And you needn't come to see me again until you say you're sorry. Till then I wash my hands of you. Have the goodness to pay the waiter!"

## CHAPTER II

Sheila Seaton.

Taungs—one hundred miles from nowhere—sizzled at eight o'clock in the morning, though it had shivered an hour before in the rarefied air of the desert. The little station on the long railroad line that runs from Cape Town northward into the heart of heathendom looked forlorn indeed, set down in the middle of the scorching sands, coated, like a mangy dog, with patches of stubby grass that would not show green until the annual rains.

Winton got down from the train, collected his baggage, and watched the engine go snorting down to the water tank. He looked about him with the curiosity of one new to the life of Bechuanaland, and had seized compounded, during the northward journey, of ragged negroes, farmers with skinned oxen, heat, flies, sand, and swarming piccaninies.

He saw an array of single-story brick houses, with corrugated iron roofs that gave the sun glare for glare. There were also huts of wattle and daub, and tents pitched on lots in the heart of the town. The market square was filled with cumbrous, white-topped wagons, before which many pairs of oxen chewed and winked away the flies, still harnessed on either side of the wagon tongue. Every house seemed a store, and every store appeared to be dedicated to the sale of old clothes and junk; in front of them gangs of natives in loin-cloths, with tattered, filthy blankets about their shoulders, were chattering in a dozen different dialects with the proprietors.

Taungs looked the dirtiest, meanest place that Winton had ever seen. He wished that it were possible to take it up with the implement of the same name and bury it. He was sure that it would not be terribly missed. He was glad that he was to take the morning stage across the desert for Malopo. He hoped earnestly that Malopo looked better than Taungs.

A drunken native, wearing a loin-cloth and a naval officer's second-hand coat, which he had just purchased, and carrying a knobkerrie, which is the local equivalent of the shillalah, lurched by. A white man on the platform, taking a dislike to him, kicked him into the road and sauntered on. Winton's heart warmed toward his Caucasian brother. He accosted him.

"Will you kindly tell me where the coach office is?" he asked.

"Just arrived up-country and bound for Malopo," answered the white man, not in question, but as the result of his analysis of Winton.

He took him by the arm and pointed up the principal street.

"You'll find Zelden's hotel right at the end," he said. "You can't miss it. It's by the garbage heap. He wants a pound a day, but you can beat him down to five pounds a week. Better get your board by the week."

"Why?" inquired Winton.

"Because you won't start for Malopo under a week, unless you hoof it or go by aeroplane."

"Travel pretty brisk?" asked Winton.

"Look here, young feller, if your hair was a little shorter I'd ask you when you came off the breakwater. Where have you been living if you don't know that men are rushing to Malopo from all parts of the country?"

"I only landed last week," said Winton, trying to be diplomatic. "Has

anybody else landed last week?"

"Only landed last week," said Winton.



There had been a big strike of diamonds there?"

"Big strike, Mr. Van Winkle? Oh, no! Just a middling one. Only a hundred thousand pounds worth of stones taken out since Saturday, excluding the ninety-five-carat De Witt pebble! That's nothing to men like us, eh? We don't trouble about little things like that."

Winton gulped, but managed to retain an aspect of tolerable indifference. "Did the De Witt stone happen to come out of the Big Malopo claim?" he inquired.

"Look here, young man, you know more than you're pretending," answered the other in disgust. "Think you're smart, don't you? I don't know what your game is, but take a word of advice and don't play innocent in Malopo, because it don't go down!"

He left Winton in disgust and sauntered back, only pausing to kick the native, who had the misfortune to intercept him, back into the road again.

Winton saw the situation, as he thought, precisely. If his claim had actually proved valuable, De Witt, who had unloaded the shares upon the unsuspecting Archie, must be kicking himself savagely at that moment. He resolved to be very cautious and to say nothing to anybody about his business.

He learned the location of the coach office from the station agent, and strolled across the market square toward it, stepping among the recumbent oxen. Now he began to perceive signs of prodigious activity in Taungs. The market square was filling up. Auctioneers were putting up thin, miserable donkeys and broken carts, which brought incredible prices. Indian peddlers, old clothes men, hawkers of "ice-cold" drinks poured out from canvas bottles suspended in the sun, to lose heat by evaporation, swarmed among the crowd of bidders. Occasionally a man on horseback, in flannel shirt and wide-brimmed hat of felt, his worldly goods packed in his saddle-bags, and thumping at his steed's flanks, came loping by, riding toward the west. Many of the ox wagons were already upon their way, making their first march before the heat of noon.

Winton pushed his way through the throngs and found the coach office, near the northeastern corner of the square, surrounded by a crowd of applicants, among them his traveling companions of the two days and nights spent in the train.

The coach, a huge affair, containing seats for sixteen, with an immense leather boot at the back for baggage, stood at the side of the office; in the rear a half-dozen mules, which had been led from their stables, were taking their last roll in the dust and scattering clouds upon the bystanders.

Winton heard a passenger offer twenty pounds for a ticket to a little one-eyed man, who rejected his proposal scornfully. The fare was ten pounds; the little man had bought some seats on speculation, and was receiving offers with astonishing disdain and arrogance.

"Twenty pounds!" he repeated sarcastically, spitting into the dust. "Gentlemen here offers twenty pounds for a seat as far as Malopo. Come, gentlemen, shame him! Only one stage a day, and all the seats booked weeks ahead. Who says fifty?"

"Fifty!" cried a stalwart old prospector at Winton's side.

"Sixty!" shouted another.

"Sixty!" Who'll raise sixty? Seventy? Thank you, sir. Eighty? Seventy-five? He was holding out the ticket to Winton, who shook his head indignantly.

Just then his eyes lit upon a pair who attracted and arrested his attention immediately. One was an old man, apparently in his late sixties, with his occupation as prospector stamped all over him. In the hungry eyes, sun-wrinkled and staring, his calloused hands; and about his face was a girl, dark-haired, about three-and-twenty, and of

singular and rather exotic beauty, who stood beside him, her arm drawn through his own.

It was not so much the contrast between the two that struck Winton as the reversal of their natural roles, in that the girl seemed to be the leading spirit. There was something indicative of protectiveness in her finely modeled face, her gesture. The man, on the other hand, looked like one broken by misfortune; his hands shook, as with a palsy, and he glanced up into the face of his taller daughter from time to time with appealing helplessness.

"It's fortunate that I got a ticket for you, father, when I left Malopo," said the girl.

She had evidently come into Taungs to meet her father. Winton wondered who she was, and what she was doing alone in Malopo, unless her father lived there habitually.

"Eighty!" shouted the ticket-holder. "Eighty-five?" Winton realized that the man was addressing him again. He had declined to pay seventy-five with indignation. But now, before he quite realized what he was doing, he nodded. All the while he was watching the girl and the old man.

"I'm bid eighty-five. Who says ninety? Eighty-seven then, then. For the last time, gemmen! Going at eighty-five, which is a sin and a scandal—going—going—gone! It's yours, sir!"

So Winton found himself the possessor of a ticket to Malopo, for which he had paid the equivalent of four hundred dollars and a trifle more out of his swiftly diminishing capital of ten thousand. And he found himself wondering why the sight of the old man and the girl had caused him to change his mind and fall into the speculator's trap.

He discovered that the coach would not start for nearly an hour, and, suspecting that Malopo prices would be considerably in advance of those in Taungs, hurried into the first store he saw which did not seem to have a native clientele. There he threw himself upon the mercy of the proprietor who equipped him with a sensible outfit consisting of a small tin trunk—the white ants would eat through his leather suitcase in one night, Winton was told—and a correct up-country costume. Winton sent for his baggage, which the proprietor obligingly agreed to store for him, and presently strolled in sensible khaki, with a wide-brimmed felt hat rising into a peak, and high boots. He took his seat among the miscellaneous crowd of passengers, and, while the mob outside offered fantastic offers for seats through the window, the mules, now ten in number, started.

On the box seat the Hottentot driver, cracking his twenty-foot whip of hippopotamus hide, and flicking the slackest mules with a dexterity that was never at fault. On rolled the coach through the infested streets, into the clean desert, making in the direction of a ridge of pale-blue mountains westward.

(Continued next week)

## THE FLYING MACHINE DISPLACES THE CAMEL.

The Palestine Weekly is one of the most interesting papers that comes to this office. It is the first newspaper to be published in the city of Jerusalem and to students of the Land and the Book gives most valuable information that cannot be gotten elsewhere. The other day we noted the following:

"King Feisal, of Irak, has at last arrived at Amman on his long-awaited visit, and was received with much pomp by his ruling brother in Transjordan, the Emir Abdullah. A slight mishap befell his majesty during the flight from Bagdad to Amman, when his machine was forced to land at Azrak, owing to a shortage of petrol. Another machine was dispatched with supplies and the flight to Marka airdrome was successfully completed. After his majesty had chatted with the British officers at the Amman air station, he motored to the Emir Abdullah's encampment, which lies beyond the town. There his majesty was received by his brother, attended by a troop of Transjordan military and the affectionate greetings left no doubt as to the warmth of the welcome."

What a remarkable thing is the modern report that a king of the Arabs has thrown aside his stately camel which bore his tribesmen over the desert sands for centuries and now flies through the air in an airplane! Surely the West and the East at last are blended and the modern has displaced the ancient. The ancient caravan paths so full of charm and lore as well as vital history have long been filled with the solemn camels with poised heads gazing away in the distance as if resting their soft eyes on the beginning lines of the world's history as they plod over the sand stretches with padded feet and a dignity that outrivals any king. Thus the ancients for years made their way. Thus Abraham journeyed on the first stages of the Promised Path. Thus Isaac sought Rebecca. Thus the Wise Men sought the Lord. Thus went the commerce of that world bringing out their treasures and taking back their own.

Now the change has come. Ford machines burn gas and hot motors along the caravan paths where the camels held sway. The Arab king rides no longer on a camel of stone or an Arab charger with royal blood. He flies through the air in a modern airplane. What will happen next?—Richmond Christian Advocate.

## Marriage Licenses.

Bud T. O'Neil, State College, and Bertha A. Parker, Lemont.

Guy O. Musser and Lydia M. Breon, Millheim.

James McKivison, Gatesburg, and Olive D. Ellenberger, Marengo.

Arthur Snook and Laura A. Hoover, Pleasant Gap.

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