

Diamonds of Malopo

by
VICTOR ROUSSEAU

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(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER I.—Winton Garrett, twenty-five and just out of college, calls by appointment on Archie Garrett, his New York cousin and executor, to receive his inheritance of \$100,000. Archie, honest, an easy mark and a fool for practically a millionaire, as he has inherited all but \$10,000 in a rubber plantation in either the East or West Indies and in a controlling interest in the Big Malopo diamond mine, somewhere or other in South Africa, sold him an special favor by a Dutch promoter named De Witt.

CHAPTER II.—Winton, en route to his mine, finds the town of Malopo, including the 95-carat "De Witt diamond." Two coach passengers are a disreputable old prospector, Daddy Seaton, and his daughter Sheila. On the journey a passenger, who turns out to be De Witt himself, insults Sheila. Winton fights De Witt and knocks him out. Sheila tells him to turn back. She says that her father, a broken English army officer, who has killed a man and is therefore in De Witt's power, that De Witt is all-powerful, being backed by Judge Davis, president of the diamond syndicate and also the resident magistrate and judge of the native protectorate.

CHAPTER III.—Winton finds Malopo in a turmoil, both over the strike and the theft of the De Witt diamond. Winton foolishly discloses his identity to Sam Simpson, a Jamaican negro, sub-editor of the local newspaper. He more wisely confides in New Burns, watchman at the Big Malopo, who tells him that the syndicate has planned to take control of the mine.

CHAPTER IV.—Winton finds that Sheila is cashier at the restaurant. He offers her friendship. She rebuffs him. Van Vorst, a notorious diamond thief, one of De Witt's men, slips the stolen De Witt diamond into Winton's pocket and two policemen club Winton and arrest him. He escapes them and when at his last gasp Sheila takes him into her house, bathes his wounds and saves him from his pursuers.

CHAPTER V.—The next morning Sheila offers Winton help in escaping from Malopo. He convinces her with difficulty that he did not steal the De Witt diamond and that he is president of the Big Malopo company. Bruised and blood-stained he runs across town, breaks by force into the company meeting, and asks for a popular demonstration proves his identity, blocks the reorganization and takes control. He asks Sheila to marry him, she laughs hysterically and refuses him.

CHAPTER VI.—Winton hires Seaton as compound manager and develops Big Malopo. Judge Davis, a philosophical old hypocrite of unknown past, offers him the syndicate's co-operation. "Otherwise," he says, "we'll smash you, you & your young fool."

CHAPTER VII.—Winton, infuriated by a scurrilous newspaper article about Sheila and himself, knocks Sam down and publicly threatens Judge Davis. He finds Sheila about to elope with De Witt, to save her father. He horsewhips De Witt. Sheila again refuses to marry him and says she is going away, never to see him or her father again.

CHAPTER VIII.—Winton hires Sam as night watchman. Van Vorst's gang steal the De Witt diamond. Winton pursues Van Vorst, who escapes with the big stone.

CHAPTER IX.—Winton is rescued by Sheila, on her way to a native village. There she kisses an old woman, only partly white, and says, "This is my mother." He again asks her to marry him. She refuses him, because of the race bar. Heart-sick, he sets out for Malopo with a native guide.

CHAPTER X.—Winton succumbs. His guide robs and deserts him. Sam rescues him. Burns' brain is affected; he cannot tell what happened. The workers in the mine return no stones. Winton is forced to borrow money from the syndicate, agreeing to pay in a month or lose the mine.

CHAPTER XI.—The syndicate makes further plans to oust Winton. His men search the native workers and secure many large diamonds. Seaton appears, confesses the plot and says he's come to take his medicine.

CHAPTER XII.—Seaton is tried for diamond buying from the natives before Judge Crawford, who has succeeded Judge Davis. The crowd believes Davis to be behind De Witt. Seaton confesses everything. He tells how he shot a man and how De Witt, knowing about it, forced him to do all kinds of crooked work. Winton, thinking Davis has abandoned him to his fate, voluntarily testifies that Davis is the man whom Seaton mistakenly thought he had killed and that Sheila is Davis' daughter. Davis drops in a faint. De Witt flees from Malopo. Seaton is acquitted.

When he went out early in the morning Judge Davis was just turning into the compound. He was mounted on a big bay, and appeared much the same as usual. Winton, who had been a little alarmed at his appearance the night before, was reassured. He saddled his horse and mounted, and the two rode silently out into the desert.

The sun was rising in a crown of fiery clouds. There were pools of rain everywhere, and the freshness of the air was a delightful contrast to the long drought. Cloud-banks were already heaping up in the sky, but there was not likely to be another downpour until nightfall; the first rains are not continuous, as in later weeks. The day promised intense heat, but the long, rolling ridges of the desert had already a sub-tinge of green.

Hour after hour, the two men rode side by side. Occasionally Winton ventured some remark, but the judge hardly answered him; he was brooding, with his head sunk on his breast. Winton was lost in dreams of Sheila. After a long time, in the broiling heat of the noon sun, he saw the faint outlines of the distant hills before him. First they were a blue line against the sky, then a patch of green against the brown of the desert. He pointed them out to his companion, but the

Judge only looked up, nodded, and resumed his brooding. Presently he raised his head, and Winton was alarmed to see the light of the deadly purpose in his eyes.

"He'll make for there, Garrett," he said.

"Seaton?"
Judge Davis nodded. "They told me last night," he answered. "That's why I wanted to give him a night's start. He'll have made that place by now. I've been there—long ago. We'll meet. It will be the fulfillment of a quest that occupied a great part of my time years ago, Garrett; I put it aside, but I never abandoned it altogether, and now I've taken it up again."

It occurred to Winton that if Judge Davis went mad, he would go mad in precisely that cool, methodical way. He wondered if he was armed, and what he would do if he and Seaton met. And he cursed himself for not having reflected that such a meeting was highly probable.

He had a fleeting idea of attempting physical restraint, but he abandoned the idea instantly. Whatever needed to be done must be done when the time arrived.

The distant hills grew nearer. Green valleys and precipitous heights appeared. The sun was at the zenith. The horses walked with hanging heads, panting. Not a living thing appeared on the vast plain except the steeds and their riders.

But presently Winton caught sight of something on the far horizon that looked like a vast flock of sheep. Yet surely no man had ever owned so large a herd. It formed a wide arc, miles in length, along the edge of the desert.

It was a mirage, of course. But, even so, somewhere the reality existed; and Winton, more puzzled than ever, followed it with his eyes as he rode on, wondering when it would disappear. It did not disappear. The entire herd seemed moving in the direction of the hills, now about four miles away, traveling almost parallel with the horses, yet with sufficient inclination to make it probable that, if it were indeed a real herd, it would pass into the valley toward which the riders were making.

At last Winton called the judge's attention to the flock. But Judge Davis, seeming hardly to be aware of his presence, shook himself impatiently and rode on, immersed in his morbid introspection.

The flock appeared to keep pace with the horses, and it was now clearly converging toward the pass. Winton, watching it, abandoned the idea that it was a mirage. Yet it could not possibly be any man's flock. There were hundreds of thousands of the animals, moving, apparently, without herdsmen.

The valley opened before them. Winton recognized his location; the native village was not far away. The riders were already ascending into the foothills. As they rounded one of the bases of the mountain chain Winton looked back, and saw the herd much nearer. Then it was lost to sight, and he thought no longer of the prodigy in thinking of Sheila.

They rode along the winding pass, ascending, descending, until at last the cluster of beehive huts appeared in the distance.

Suddenly Winton saw that Judge Davis was clutching a revolver in his hand.

The sight shocked him but less than the look which Davis' face had now assumed. If Seaton was in the village there would be murder. Winton tried to take the weapon gently from Davis' hand; but with an adroit movement, as if he had been on guard all the time, the judge wrenched himself away, and suddenly spurred the horse he rode, which darted on ahead down the valley.

As Winton followed half a dozen antelope came bounding past him, and, glancing back for a moment, he saw that a straggling band was following them. They had short, lyrate horns, white faces, and rufous bodies. And then he understood what the herd signified.

The herd was not sheep, but antelope—springbuck. It was, in fact, one of the periodical migrations of these animals, of which Winton had heard. After a drought, when the rain falls, they travel from the interior in countless numbers in search of water, turning aside for nothing, passing even through populous cities.

And what had looked like an orderly progression, seen at a great distance, was a succession of the gigantic leaps that have given the animal its name. The springbuck were streaming into the valley, jumping to a height of ten or a dozen feet, and jostling against the riders' horses, as if devoid of fear. Winton galloped through the ad-

vance guard in pursuit of Davis, who was far in advance of him and nearing the village. He emerged out of the pass suddenly, almost into the middle space among the beehive huts.

The village appeared deserted, except for an old man and an aged woman who had crouched over the embers of a dying fire. The woman was the old queen of the tribe; the man was Seaton. He rose and faced Davis.

Winton saw the judge's hand tighten upon his revolver. But suddenly the weapon was lowered. The judge was looking into the old woman's face; his own seemed to become rigid as a plaster cast, and he noticed Seaton no longer.

"So it is you, Amy?" he said. "I have found you at last!"

"Yes, it is I," answered the woman in a strange guttural voice, speaking as if the words were difficult to pronounce.

"I have come to take you home, my dear; you and the child."
"Home?" mumbled the old woman.
"Home," the judge repeated impatiently, passing his hand across his forehead.

"How long ago it seems since you went away! You must have been ill, I think. Or perhaps it is I. Bring our baby; I want to see her. What did we call her? I have forgotten."

"I forget what we called her," answered the old woman; "but she is called Sheila now."
"A pretty name," answered the judge.

As he spoke, Sheila came out of one of the huts. She fixed her eyes on Winton in inquiry; he could see that Seaton had told her the truth. Then she looked at Davis. She stepped toward him.

"I am here," she said in a low voice.
Judge Davis did not appear to notice her.

"I wish she would come," he said. "She must be a big girl by now. Where is she, Amy?"

"I don't know," muttered the woman, passing her hand across her forehead.

And Winton knew that the past twenty years had been completely obliterated from Judge Davis' memory. He had no notion that it was his own daughter who stood before him. If the old woman had kept her wits, they were gone now, perhaps through the shock of the meeting. And a strange metamorphosis had come over her. The withered old woman assumed the attitude of one of thirty years. There was a vivacity in her gestures.

"I'll go home with you now, my dear," she said, advancing and laying her hand upon the horse's neck. "I have been waiting such a long time for you. Did you have a hard journey here, my dear?"

"Not very hard," answered the judge. "I'll carry the child, and you shall ride my horse. Where is she? Wait a moment, though, Amy; there was something else I had to do."

Seaton, recognizing the situation, had stolen quietly away toward a ridge of rocks behind the village. Watching him, Winton saw him unloose a rifle and saddle a horse that was grazing there. He was not greatly interested in this maneuver. The man without a people seemed to have become an outcast once more.

There was only one passage from the huts, which stood on a small elevation half way up the hill, into the valley. Seaton climbed into the saddle and started down this track. The movement arrested the judge's attention.

Instantly he remembered. His old face flushed. He spurred his horse and set off in pursuit, leveling his revolver.

Seaton's horse stumbled, but the rider pulled him to his feet and dashed down the winding trail. Winton was near enough to see the look of terror on the old man's face. The judge might have been fifty feet behind him. The old woman watched the two men impassively; probably her stunned mind was incapable of taking in the situation.

Suddenly the thunder of hoofs became audible, and the vast herd of springbuck dashed into the valley, completely filling it.

Seaton had reached the end of the trail and was dashing up the valley, with Davis in pursuit. They raced almost side by side. The judge made no attempt to use his revolver, which he had replaced in his pocket; but, bending forward over his horse's neck, stretched out his hands, which worked convulsively, as if to rend his enemy to pieces. After them poured the torrent of hoofs and horns, two hundred thousand springbuck surging like an irresistible tide under the impulse of the migrating instinct. It swept between Winton and Davis, cutting them asunder; and Winton, checked on a little knoll, remained a helpless spectator of what followed, as incapable of interfering or rendering aid as if he were marooned upon an island amid a surge of living waters.

All around him tossed the red bodies, and his horse, snorting with fear, reared and plunged, so that it required all his skill that he might keep his seat and not be flung down, to be gored and trampled on.

He saw the judge grasp at Seaton and half pull him from his saddle. Seaton screamed and tore himself free. Then the flood of the springbuck swept in between them and drove them along, not ten paces apart, but isolated and helpless in the living stream.

Their horses moved automatically, carried on by the momentum of the vast herd, which filled the valley behind and had spread over the face of the desert as far as could be seen.

The swirl through the neck of the pass had all the force of those uncountable numbers behind it. It was like water forced through a hose pipe. Iron gates could not have withstood it.

Winton saw the judge and Seaton swept upward, where the pass ascended toward the summit of the precipice. The herd gained the plateau. But there was no other exit. It was nearing the edge of the acclivity.

Then, without any perceptible check, the foremost files of animals leaped to destruction upon the rocks below. For an instant Winton saw Davis and Seaton at the verge of the precipice. They disappeared.

And, file by file, the springbuck followed the tawny bodies plunging into the void until the pressure was checked as the main body of the herd, by some communicated instinct, swerved into the main channel of the pass.

As the compact ranks of the springbuck scattered, Winton drove his horse up the precipice. At the edge he dismounted, and, thrusting his arms through the reins, he looked over.

A vast brown stain upon the rocks below was all that marked the grave of Davis and his enemy. And overhead, winging their way through the blue sky in solitary file, the vultures dropped to their festal.

Sick with horror, Winton went back to the village. He saw Sheila standing beside the crouching woman at the fire. He tethered his horse to a tree and went up to her. She paid no attention to him, but looked at her mother fixedly.

The old woman was bent forward, her body supported by the elbows upon the knees. She was quite motionless. Winton took her hand; it was already cold.

CHAPTER XIV

The Uprising.

It was night. Winton had performed the last offices for the dead woman. The triple tragedy had been too stunning for any interchange of words upon their future, but at last, there being nothing more to do, Winton was free to speak to Sheila about their future.

He had already gathered that Seaton had told her everything concerning the past.

"I want you to come back with me to Malopo, Sheila," he said. "Marry me—I will sell out and take you to my own country. Your life shall begin anew—yours and mine."

She put her hands on his shoulders. "Do you still love me, Winton?" she asked.

"I have not changed, Sheila."

"It is not because you think you are bound?"

"Sheila, I love you just as much—always."

"Then I will be your wife, Winton," she answered gravely, raising her mouth to his.

He did not urge his love—it was no time for that, and the past was too vividly with them for love-making. Some day, not very far ahead, Winton hoped that his dreams might come true. For the present he was very well content to know that Sheila was his, and that nothing more could come between them.

It would be impossible to find the way back to Malopo that night, and already the rain-clouds hung black in the sky. Winton was to occupy one of the huts, and on the morrow they would start for Malopo at dawn.

He was surprised that the village was empty, and was about to question Sheila when she spoke of it.

"They left two days ago," she said.

"All the warriors, with the women and children. Winton, I am afraid it means something serious. They do

I tried to get warning to Malopo.



not trust me any longer. They told me nothing. I tried to get warning to Malopo, but my Hottentot left me."

"Sheila, I must tell you something. The boy robbed me on my return from this village last time when I had fallen from exhaustion. Then he made away."

"He robbed you, Winton?"

"He took my watch and purse, and I think he was planning to kill me, only he was afraid."

"He came back and told me that you had reached Malopo safely. I was alarmed for your safety, Winton. If I had guessed— But now I must tell you something in turn. Mr. De Witt was here last night."

"De Witt?" cried Winton. "Sheila, you saw him?"

"No. I heard the horse coming up the pass, and I could tell from the

clank of the stirrups that it was a white horse. I hid, Winton. I thought at first it was you. But I watched from among the rocks and recognized De Witt. I was afraid of him. I thought he had come to find me. And, Winton, that Hottentot, who had run away two days before, was with him. I recognized him, too. Mr. De Witt has great influence among the Totties.

I don't know what he is planning—"
"He is planning to escape, Sheila. It was not you that he was seeking. He is a fugitive, and thinking only of getting away."

And he told her quickly of the details of the trial. But whether he convinced her or not, his own fears were aroused for her. He believed that De Witt planned to take Sheila with him; he would, of course, be ignorant of the fact that she knew the story of her parentage. Somewhere De Witt was lying in hiding. Winton spent a very restless night in the hut next to Sheila's, and when at last the dawn came, and he called her and she came out, her eyes heavy with sleep, but smiling at him, his heart went out in utter thankfulness.

They saddled their horses and rode away. During the journey they discussed their plans. They would reach Malopo in the afternoon and be married at once. He would take Sheila home to the little cottage, and he would settle up his affairs as fast as possible and leave the country with her.

But the program received an unexpected setback. A civil marriage was rendered impossible by Judge Davis' death, and the clergyman, the only one in Malopo, had gone out for a day's bok-shooting, and would not return till the morrow.

Winton was utterly downcast. Even the thought of taking the girl into Malopo, which had used her so badly, was unbearable. He decided to house her making tea for him in Burns' cottage—Burns having gone back to live in the boarding house, some little distance away, where he had resided formerly.

After he had settled her there, under Sam's protection, he went back into town and, calling at the police station, informed the police chief of the tragedy.

To his surprise he found himself the object of a severe cross-examination. The presence of the vast herd of springbok was, of course, known, but the story appeared incredible.

Winton had been seen riding out with Judge Davis; the enmity of the two men was, of course, a commonplace of knowledge. The chief of police said that he would ride out the next morning to investigate, and his manner left little doubt that he suspected Winton of having caused the judge's death.

With his reception, Winton's second purpose, of giving warning concerning the native unrest, went out of his head. Malopo had, indeed, been prepared for an outbreak for some time past, and rumors of all sorts were current; it was not probable that any action would have been taken on the story, which would, furthermore, have led to Sheila's examination. On the whole, when he remembered his lapse, Winton did not regret it.

When he got back to the claim, full of fears for Sheila's safety, and found her making tea for him in Burns' cottage, he forgot all his troubles.

That was the happiest afternoon he had ever spent. He left Sheila at nightfall, confident that all would be well with them. An unreality hung over the past, and it seemed only a day since he had been with her in the little house in the suburbs on the night after his arrival in Malopo.

He slept—but suddenly he found himself upon his feet, groping for his clothes. Fear hung heavily over him, and he did not know what intuition had awakened him. But he thought of Sheila in imminent danger.

He struck a match, lit his lamp, and went to the window. There had been a heavy shower, but the rain had ceased now, and it seemed not far from the dawn. The stars were brilliant in a cloudless sky.

Far away Winton heard an indefinable murmuring sound as of a number of voices. It dwindled and grew again, and suddenly swelled into a tumult, which seemed to spread along the ridge of the fields. There was no mistaking its portent. Somewhere a riot had broken out.

And suddenly the night was cloven by a column of fire that shot upward, illuminating a smoky cloud that drifted slowly across the stars.

Winton thrust on his clothes hurriedly and ran out of the room toward Burns' cottage. He knocked hard on the door.

"Sheila!" he called. "Sheila!"

He heard her answer. She came to the other side of the door, and he begged her to dress hastily and come out to him. He waited through agonizing moments. The tumult was growing. It was spreading from compound to compound.

Then there arose within his own compound a terrific babel, so suddenly and unexpectedly that it seemed as if by preconcerted agreement. And all at once the enclosure was filled with a mob of yelling savages. Before them a man, dressed in European clothes, went flying for his life.

"Sheila!" called Winton desperately. She opened the door and stood before him dressed, with her unbound hair hanging down her back. There was no need to explain anything. She ran to him and clung to him.

Winton hurried her toward the cottage. It did not seem much of a refuge, but at least he had his revolver there, and on both sides of him

the savages were approaching, with the evident intention of attacking the building.

They were seen. The yells were redoubled. A spear whizzing through the air buried itself in the ground at Winton's feet just as he reached his door.

He pushed Sheila inside, ran to his table, and grabbed his revolver, loading it hurriedly and thrusting two or three handfuls of cartridges into his pocket. Then he ran back to receive the fugitive, of whose presence he had been subconsciously aware, although his mind had been filled with Sheila. He recognized Sam and greeted him.

Sam sank down on the floor, panting and sweating. His foremost pursuer was not twenty feet distant. Winton aimed methodically and fired.

The man flung up his arms and fell with a scream. The mob behind, which had been streaming on in a disorderly mass, stopped short. Winton fired again and another native dropped. The savages, disconcerted, hotted, reformed, and began to spread out about the cottage. A few had spears, but there were, of course, no firearms among them, and the majority were armed with nothing more formidable than knobkerries, the native shillalah.

Sam in turn dragged Winton inside and bolted the door. They faced each other.

"What is it, Sam?"

"It's a rebellion," gasped the negro. "They've broken out all along the fields. I heard the uproar and went into the compound. I thought our boys would co-operate, after our social—"

"Never mind that, Sam. Yours was a brave act."

"No, sir," gasped Sam. "I was sure moral suasion—appeal to human brotherhood—no primitive instincts in our men—was mistaken."

"Yes, your theory didn't work. Now we've got to save Miss Seaton—Miss Davis here—"

"They've killed Josephs, sir."

"What?" cried Winton in horror. Sam began to shake. "They stuck a spear right through his body, sir. He had gone in alone. They nearly got me. We're all as good as dead."

"Nonsense!" answered Winton, try to convince himself that the outbreak was one of those sporadic riots that occurred periodically in the compounds, and had no connection with the threatened rising of the tribes. He looked at Sheila, who smiled bravely and laid her hands on his arms and looked up at him.

"I'm not afraid, Winton," she said. "We'll have help soon—we must," said Winton with conviction.

But the yells increased again, and there came another rush for the door. Winton opened it suddenly and discharged his revolver. Screams followed and a panicky retreat. He bolted it again and recharged the weapon.

A spear came upward through the open window, glanced off the angle formed by the wall and roof, and dropped flat at Sam's feet. Winton fired out into the black faces massed beneath. Another scurry followed and two more natives writhed on the ground.

The mine boys had discarded the trappings of semicivilization. The obsequious diggers had become native warriors, dressed for the most part in loincloths alone. Their rolling eyes and painted faces gave them a diabolical aspect.

From the window Winton could see fires rising everywhere along the fields.

"If we can hold out half an hour help must come," he said to Sam.

(Continued next week.)

COPPER DRAGON OF BEFFROI

Twelve-Foot Weather Vane in Ghent Celebrates Its Five Hundred and Forty-Sixth Anniversary.

The Copper Dragon of Beffroi, in Ghent, has just celebrated its five hundred and forty-sixth birthday on the top of its lofty perch on the Beffroi, over 300 feet above the ground. It is six feet in height and eleven and one-half feet in length, measured from the tip of its enormous tongue to the end of its tail.

The copper grasshopper atop Faneuil hall, Boston, was designed by Shem Drowne, a coppersmith of colonial days. Over 180 years old, it has had an interesting history, being present at the Boston tea party and having survived two earthquakes.

Perhaps the public tired of gauging the wind by the weather report in next day's newspaper; or perhaps the ornamental possibilities of this new idea in vane design have given a new fillip to the use of this time-honored institution. Whatever the reason, the weather vane is coming back.

Only Half Efficient. "These scientific management people," says a well-known business man, "with their extraordinary ideas of doubling or trebling a man's labor, remind me of the humble hod carrier's impossible promise."

"Now a factious boss said to a new hod carrier:

"Look here, didn't I hire you to carry bricks up that ladder by the day?"

"Yes, sir," said the hod carrier.

"Well, I have had my eye on you, and you've only done it half a day today. You spent the other half coming down the ladder."

"Whereupon, the hod carrier, with a grin, responded:

"Very well, sir, I'll try to do better tomorrow."

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