

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Schiller Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schilling Kralik Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Raabe Gibbon Tschechow  
Gerstäcker Klee Hölty Morgenstem Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus Musil  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kierkegaard Kraus Moltke  
Machiavelli Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo  
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Nietzsche Marx Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz  
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka  
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko  
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



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# **The Diamond Coterie**

Lawrence L. Lynch

# Imprint

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"Really this is a sad affair."



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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Really, this is a sad affair."

"I have a clue."

"I am ready to do that at any and all times."

"John Burrill! Why, he is a brute!"

So he dines at Wardour Place

"Who are you?"

"Ah! This phial is one of a set."

"Are we alone?"

The tramp turned and looked back

"Doctor Heath flatters himself."

"Here is this man again."

"Poor Frank! don't let this overcome you so."

"Why, Evan, you look ghostly."

"You must not have a third attack."

"Conny, it has come."

"I am happy to know you."

"I have never once been tempted to self destruction."

Only a moment did Sybil listen

Evan saw Sybil and Frank canter away

"It is not in his power or yours to alter my decision."

"Then take that, and that."

"It's the other one," he muttered

"Stay a moment, sir."

"I'll be hanged if I can understand it."

"I hope you will excuse me."

"Well, Roake, are you ready for business?"

"If you ever see me again, you'll see me sober."

"You promise never to marry Francis LaMotte?"

The cottage stands quite by itself

"Prince, come away, sir!"

"Why, boy, bless me."

"Any of the stiff's friends in this gang?"

"Did you ever see that knife before?"

They find Corliss at the Sheriff's desk

"Softly, sir; reflect a little."

"Sybil Lamotte shall die in her delirium."

"Constance Wardour, you love Clifford Heath."

"Another, Miss Wardour, is — yourself."

"Mr. Belknap, it is I."

"Cap'n, you're a good fellow."

"My friend, come down off that."

"That hope is ended now."

"Prisoner at the Bar, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"It was found close beside the body of John Burrill."

They come slowly forward

"There is a flash — a loud report."

Bathurst telling the story





## The Diamond Coterie.

### CHAPTER I.

#### TWO SHOCKS FOR W— —.

On a certain Saturday in June, year of our Lord 1880, between the hours of sunrise and sunset, the town of W— —, in a State which shall be nameless, received two shocks.

Small affairs, concerning small people, could never have thrown W— — into such a state of excitement, for she was a large and wealthy town, and understood what was due to herself.

She possessed many factories, and sometimes a man came to his death among the ponderous machinery. Not long since one "hand" had stabbed another, fatally; and, still later, a factory girl had committed suicide.

These things created a ripple, nothing more. It would ill become a town, boasting its aristocracy and "style," to grow frenzied over the woes of such common people. But W— — possessed a goodly number of wealthy families, and some blue blood. These were worthy of consideration, and upon these calamity had fallen. Let us read an extract or two from the W— — *Argus*, a newspaper of much enterprise and exceeding veracity:

#### MONSTROUS DIAMOND ROBBERY—BOLD BURGLARY.

This day we are startled by the news of a robbery in our midst, the like of which it has never been our fate to chronicle.

When the servants at Wardour Place arose this morning, they found confusion reigning in the library, desks forced open, papers strewn about, and furniture disarranged. One of the long windows had been opened by forcing the shutters, and then cutting out a pane of glass, after which the bolts were easily drawn.

Miss Wardour was at once aroused, and further examination disclosed the fact that her dressing room had been invaded, and every box, trunk and drawer searched. The beautiful little affair, which has the appearance of a miniature combined desk and bookcase, but which contains a small safe, that Miss Wardour believed burglar

proof, had been forced, and the jewels so widely known as the "Wardour diamonds," stolen. Quite a large sum of money, and some papers of value, were also taken.

Most of our readers are familiar with the history of the Wardour diamonds, and know that they represented a fortune.

The burglary was effected without noise, not a sound disturbing Miss Wardour, or any of her servants, some of whom are light sleepers, and they have not a single clue by which to trace the robbers.

Miss Wardour bears the loss with great calmness. Of course every effort will be made to recover the jewels, and capture the thieves. It is rumored that Mr. Jasper Lamotte, in behalf of Miss Wardour, will visit the city at once and set the detectives at work.

This was shock number one for the public of W — — .

Miss Constance Wardour, of Wardour Place, was a lady of distinction. She possessed the oldest name, the bluest blood, the fairest face, and the longest purse, to be found in W — — ; and, the *Argus* had said truly, the Wardour diamonds represented a fortune, and not a small one.

Emmeline Wardour, the great grandmother of Miss Constance, was a belle and heiress. Her fondness for rare jewels amounted to a mania, and she spent enormous sums in collecting rare gems. At her death she bequeathed to her daughter a collection such as is owned by few ladies in private life. She also bequeathed to her daughter her mania. This daughter, after whom Constance was named, added to her mother's store of precious stones, from time to time, and when, one fine day, a bank, in which she had deposited some thousands of her dollars, failed, and she found herself a loser, she brought her craze to a climax, by converting all her money into diamonds, set and unset.

At her death, her granddaughter, Constance, inherited these treasures, in addition to a handsome fortune from her mother; and, although the original collection made by Emmeline Wardour contained a variety of rare stones, opals, amethysts, pearls, cameos, etc., besides the many fine diamonds, they all came to be classed under the head of the "Wardour diamonds."

It is small wonder that W— — stood aghast at the thought of such a robbery, and it is impossible to say when the talk, the wonderment, the conjectures, suggestions, theories, and general indignation would have ended, had not the second shock overborne the first. Once more let the *Argus* speak:

#### A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

Yesterday afternoon, while the town was filled with the excitement caused by the Wardour robbery, Miss Sybil Lamotte, the beautiful daughter of our wealthy and highly respected citizen, Jasper Lamotte, Esq., eloped with John Burrill, who was, for a time, foreman in one of her father's mills. Burrill is known to be a divorced man, having a former wife and a child, living in W— —; and his elopement with one of the aristocracy has filled the town with consternation.

Mr. Lamotte, the father of the young lady, had not been from home two hours, in company with his wife, when his daughter fled. He was *en route* for the city, to procure the services of detectives, in the hope of recovering the Wardour diamonds; both his sons were absent from home as well. Mr. Lamotte has not yet returned, and is still ignorant of his daughter's flight.

Thus abruptly and reluctantly ends the second *Argus* bombshell, and this same last bombshell had been a very different thing to handle. It might have been made far more sensational, and the editor had sighed as he penned the cautiously worded lines: "It was a monstrous *mesalliance*, and a great deal could be said in disparagement of Mr. John Burrill;" but Mr. Lamotte was absent; the brothers Lamotte were absent; and until he was certain what steps they would take in this matter, it were wise to err on the safe side. Sybil was an only daughter. Parents are sometimes prone to forgive much; it might be best to "let Mr. Burrill off easy."

Thus to himself reasoned the editor, and, having bridled his pen, much against his will, he set free his tongue, and in the bosom of his family discoursed very freely of Mr. John Burrill.

"My dear, it's unendurable," he announced to the little woman opposite, with the nod of a Solomon. "It's perfectly *incomprehensible*, how such a girl could do it. Why, he's a braggart and a bully. He

drinks in our public saloons, and handles a woman's name as he does his beer glass. The factory men say that he has boasted openly that he meant to marry Miss Lamotte, *or* Miss Wardour, he couldn't decide which. By the by, it's rather odd that those two young ladies should meet with such dissimilar misfortunes on the same day."

Mrs. Editor, a small woman, who, from constantly hearing and absorbing into the vacuum of her own mind, the words of wisdom falling from the mouth of her husband, had acquired an expression of being always ready and willing to be convinced, looked up from her teapot and propounded the following:

"W-what do you s'pose she eloped with him for?"

"Maria, I believe I have told you frequently that there is no such word as 's'pose.' I don't *suppose* anything about it. It's enough to make one believe in witchcraft. Miss Sybil Lamotte held her head above *us*; above plenty more, who were the peers of Mr. John Burrill. Last year, as everybody knows, she refused Robert Crofton, who is handsome, rich, and upright in character. This Spring, they say, she jilted Raymond Vandyck, and people who ought to know, say that they were engaged. Why, Ray Vandyck comes of the best old Dutch stock, and his fortune is something worth while. I wonder what young Vandyck will say to this, and how that high-stepping old lady, his mother, will fancy having her son thrown over for John Burrill. I wish I knew how Jasper Lamotte would take it."

So, in many a household, tongues wagged fast and furious; misfortune had smitten the mighty ones of W—, and brought them within range of the gossiping tongues of their social inferiors; and, while the village oracles improve their opportunities, and old women hatch theories, the like of which was never heard on earth, let us make the acquaintance of some of the "mighty ones."

## CHAPTER II.

### W— INVESTIGATES.

Wardour Place, the home of Miss Constance Wardour, and the scene of the "*great* Diamond robbery," lies a little east from the town,

away from the clamor of its mills, and the contamination of its *canaille*.

It is a beautiful old place, built upon a slight elevation, surrounded by stately old trees, with a wide sweep of well-kept lawn, bordered with rose thickets, and dotted here and there with great clumps of tall syringas, white lilacs, acacias, and a variety of ornamental trees and flowering shrubs.

The mansion stands some distance from the road, and is reached by a broad, sweeping drive and two footpaths that approach from opposite directions.

In the rear are orchard and gardens, and beyond these a grassy slope that curves down to meet the river, that is ever hurrying townward to seize the great mill wheels and set them sweeping round and round.

The mansion itself is a large, roomy edifice, built by a master architect. It at once impresses one with a sense of its true purpose: a home, stately, but not stiff, abounding in comfort and aristocratic ease; a place of serene repose and inborn refinement. Such, Wardour Place was intended to be; such, it has been and is.

Miss Constance Wardour, mistress of the domain and last of the race, is alone in her own favorite morning room. It is two hours since the discovery of the robbery, and during those two hours confusion has reigned supreme. Everybody, except Miss Wardour, has seemingly run wild. But Miss Wardour has kept her head, and has prevented the servants from giving the alarm upon the highway, and thus filling her house with a promiscuous mob. She has compelled them to comport themselves like rational beings; has ordered the library and dressing room to be closed, and left untouched until the proper officer shall have made proper investigations; and then she has ordered her maid to serve her with a cup of strong coffee in the morning room; and, considering the glittering wealth she has just been bereaved of, Miss Wardour looks very calm and unruffled, and sips her coffee with a relish.

Presently the door opens and a lady enters: a very fat lady, with florid complexion, restless, inquisitive, but good-humored gray eyes, and plenty of dark crinkly hair, combed low about her ears.

This is Mrs. Honor Aliston, a distant relative of Miss Wardour's, who has found a most delightful home with that young lady, ever since the death of Grandmamma Wardour, for Constance Wardour has been an orphan since her childhood.

Mrs. Aliston comes forward, rather rolls forward, and sinking, with a grunt of satisfaction, into the largest chair at hand, fixes two gray eyes upon the heiress, which that young lady, perceiving, says: "Well?"

"Don't say 'well' to me. I've just come down from the mansard," gasped the widow Aliston.

"From the *mansard*?"

"Yes," fanning herself briskly with the pages of an uncut magazine.

Constance laughs musically. "Why, Aunt Honor, you didn't expect to see the robbers running across the country, did you?"

"Not I," disdainfully. "I wanted to see how long it took the news to get to—Mapleton."

"Oh!" indifferently.

"And—they're coming."

"So soon!"

"So soon! and the sheriff, or constable, or coroner,—*who* is it that make these investigations? He's coming, at any rate, whoever he is, with a mob at his heels. Who did you send for, Con?"

"For Mr. O'Meara, of course, and—I would like to see Ray Vandyck."

"What for?"

Constance laughed. "Oh, I am fond of Ray, you know, and I think he would offer some unique suggestions; besides—dear me, auntie!" breaking off suddenly, "I wish this farce was at an end."

Mrs. Aliston's gray eyes twinkled. "Why, child, you may be thankful it's no worse. Suppose—"

"Hush, Aunt Honor. 'Walls have ears,' you know. I have half a mind to take Mr. Lamotte into my—"

"Constance Wardour, *what* are you thinking about? 'Take Mr. Lamotte!' that means Frank Lamotte and Madame Lamotte, and *that* means all the rest."

"I said '*half* a mind,' auntie. I don't think the notion will ever get its growth. I think we will see the end of this affair through our own spectacles; but—hear that noise! Are they bringing a legion of people? Auntie, I don't believe you have had a cup of coffee yet."

"Don't you? Well, I *have*, my child. Let's go out and meet those people. They will bring all the dirt that lay loose on the highway on the soles of their boots. Con," turning suddenly, "you don't look solemn enough."

Without heeding this last remark, Constance Wardour throws open the door, and passes out and down the hall to meet the party just entering.

There is Mr. Soames, the mayor of W—, very bustling and important; Corliss, the constable, exceedingly shrewd in his own opinion, and looking on this occasion as wise as an owl; Thomas Craig, Esq., sub-editor of the *Argus*; and some lesser lights, who, on one pretext and another, hope to gain admittance and sate their curiosity.

"Really, Miss Wardour," begins the bustling mayor, "really, this is a sad affair! miserable affair! Must have given you a terrible fright, and then the loss!—but we will find them. Of course your jewels, such valuables, can't be kept hid from sharp detectives—a—Corliss, what had we better do first?" for Mayor Soames, like many another mayor, is about as capable of fulfilling his duties as an average ten-year-old.

Corliss, however, comes gallantly to the rescue. He is equal to any emergency; there is nothing, if you take his word as proof, that Corliss is *not* equal to.

"First," says Corliss, "I think we had better—ahem—investigate."

"To be sure—investigate, of course—Miss Wardour, you have—"

"Closed up the disturbed rooms," interrupts Constance, promptly. "Yes, sir; I fear you will find little there to assist you. Nelly, throw open the library."

The servant, thus commanded, took from her mistress' hand a key, unlocked the library door and threw it open; and then the farce began.

If there is anything in all our dispensations of law and order that is calculated to strike astonishment to the heart and mind of a foreigner, it is our off-hand way of conducting a police investigation. In other countries, to be a magistrate, a notary, means to be in some degree qualified for the position; to be a constable, means to possess a moderate allowance of mother wit, and a small measure of "muscular christianity;" and to discover a crime, means to follow it up with a thorough and systematic investigation. Such is not our mode. With us, to hold office, means to get a salary; and to conduct an investigation, means to maunder through some sort of farce, which gives the criminal time to make good his escape, and to permit the newspapers to seize upon and publish every item, to detail every clue, as fast as discovered; all this being in favor of the law-breakers, and detrimental to the conscientious officers of justice.

In France, they complain of too much red tape in the police department. Let them supply us out of their superabundance; we have too little.

While Corliss "investigates," the mayor delivers an impromptu oration; and Mr. Craig, of the *Argus*, takes notes, according to his own light.

Out of his inner consciousness, the *Argus* man evokes an idea, which Corliss is not slow to adopt and use as his own.

"I suppose they will have a detective down as soon as possible," says Mr. Craig, as Corliss lays one ruthless hand on an overturned chair. "If I were you, Corliss, I would leave everything exactly as I find it, for the benefit of whoever works up the case."

Corliss slowly lowers the chair to its former position, and turns upon Craig a look of offended dignity.

"Why, what did you suppose I intended to do?"

"Umph!" retorted Craig, with a disrespectful sniff, "I rather thought you intended to sit down in that chair."