

# **THE CHAMPION DIAMONDS**

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The Campion Diamonds by Unknown

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**THE CHAMPION  
DIAMONDS**



THE  
CAMPION DIAMONDS

BY

SOPHIE MAY

AUTHOR OF "OUR HELEN" "THE ANDREW TWINS"  
"THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER" ETC.

L.C.

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## THE CAMPION DIAMONDS

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### I

#### THE MYSTERY

"FORTY-FIVE to-day! These birthdays will be the death of me yet," thought Henry Campion with a humorous sigh as he plodded through the muddy streets toward his own elegant mansion on a height in Los Angeles.

In the days of his frost-nipped boyhood "back East," the Campion family had been too poor and too busy to pay much regard to anniversaries of any sort; and Henry found now as his own birthdays followed one another faster and faster, with the whirring speed of a weaver's shuttle, that he was growing averse to hearing them mentioned. The effect of birthdays — like that of certain drugs — is "cumulative," and must naturally appall his beautiful wife, his junior by nearly twenty years.

"People tell me I don't look my age, and certainly I don't feel it. I'm not forty-five! 'Nothing is so false as facts, except figures.'"

Unfortunately at this very moment in turning a corner he met a man he had not seen since his mining days, who exclaimed with startling frankness:



"Hello, Campion, is that you? Well, we do grow aged! I'm seventy and you must be well on to sixty; but see here, you can beat me on gray hair!"

At the same time triumphantly sweeping off his hat of "buzz-saw" straw and exposing a tolerable expanse of bare crown surrounded by a thick fringe of tawny, faded hair.

It was the younger man's private opinion that one might as well be gray as bald; yet for all that the random shaft of the old miner had struck home, and Mr. Campion walked on reflecting sombrely, "'Well on to sixty!' I wouldn't have liked Doy to hear that!" Doy was his wife, called in full formality Dorothy. "Poor child, there's a long desert of years between us, but thus far I seem to have made her happy. How she danced on Christmas Eve when she saw the diamonds!"

His face wore a reminiscent smile, and he patted affectionately his left breast-pocket which contained a jewel-case. He had had all the diamonds engraved on the setting with the monogram "D. L. C.," and was taking them home for her approval.

"She is sure to be pleased. Bundy spared no pains; wouldn't trust his own engraver, but had the design made by the artist Kelsey."

It was raining again as he entered his own

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grounds and passed on up the walk lined with orange and lemon trees dripping and fragrant.

Mist hid "Old Baldy" mountain and softened the outlines of the Spanish adobe houses in the nearer distance. The various roses on the lawn drank healths to their neighbors with graceful nods, and vied with the pinks of all shades in pouring libations of ready sweetness on the air.

"The marguerites haven't much to say for themselves in the way of odor, but they hold their own pretty well against the shower," thought Mr. Champion. "I never got accustomed to their having those trunks as thick as your arm; for our Yankee daisies always grow scattering. But it's an advantage to have a good main stalk to cling to. I like marguerites, they are such sociable flowers; they remind me of 'the desolate set in families,'" added the happy Benedict with a thoughtful smile. "Am I growing sentimental in my old age, and did Chaucer hit it right when he said, 'Who may not be a fole, gyf that he lofe'? Well, sentiment aside, there's not another garden in the city so luxuriant as ours or so tastefully planned, perhaps because I have 'put so much feeling into it,' as the artists say of a picture.

"But I must get in out of the rain and see what Doy has to say to the monogram."

As he walked up the stone steps and touched the electric bell he heard the sound of merry

voices, and recalled the fact that a guest was to dine with them this evening, John Reynolds.

"So the diamonds will have to wait. I certainly shan't parade them before John."

Mr. Campion felt much pity for all Doy's old suitors, particularly this young "newspaper man," so poor that he ought never to have thought seriously of taking a wife. The great-hearted millionaire would no more have displayed the diamonds before John than he would have struck him in the face.

"Good evening, dear; so glad to see you," said young Mrs. Campion, meeting her husband at the parlor door.

Her voice was a sweet mezzo-soprano, of itself dower enough for any woman, but Nature had also lavished upon her the gift of unusual beauty. She linked her arm in that of her husband and drew him along into the parlor.

"Here's Jack Reynolds, but he's in a perverse mood and won't tell us a word of news. Saving it all for his newspapers, don't you think, Adelaide?"

Miss Adelaide Hilton was sure of it, she said. She was a young-lady cousin who had been the family guest for the past three months.

"So now, Henry dear, exalt yourself into the chair of wisdom," pursued Mrs. Campion, gently pushing him into his large easy-chair, "and tell us what is going on in the world."