

exquisitely set in platinum, lay and winked at us solemnly.

Poirot drew in his breath with a long hiss.

“*Épatant!*” he murmured. “You permit, madame?” He took the jewel in his own hand and scrutinized it keenly, then restored it to her with a little bow. “A magnificent stone—without a flaw. Ah, *cent tonnerres!* and you carry it about with you, *comme ça!*”

“No, no, I’m very careful really, Monsieur Poirot. As a rule it’s locked up in my jewel-case, and left in the hotel safe deposit. We’re staying at the *Magnificent*, you know. I just brought it along to-day for you to see.”

“And you will leave it with me, *n’est-ce pas?* You will be advised by Papa Poirot?”

“Well, you see, it’s this way, Monsieur

Poirot. On Friday we're going down to Yardly Chase to spend a few days with Lord and Lady Yardly."

Her words awoke a vague echo of remembrance in my mind. Some gossip—what was it now? A few years ago Lord and Lady Yardly had paid a visit to the States, rumour had it that his lordship had rather gone the pace out there with the assistance of some lady friends—but surely there was something more, some gossip which coupled Lady Yardly's name with that of a "movie" star in California—why! it came to me in a flash—of course it was none other than Gregory B. Rolf.

"I'll let you into a little secret, Monsieur Poirot," Miss Marvell was continuing. "We've got a deal on with Lord Yardly. There's some chance of our arranging to film a play down there in his ancestral pile."

“At Yardly Chase?” I cried, interested. “Why, it’s one of the show places of England.”

Miss Marvell nodded.

“I guess it’s the real old feudal stuff all right. But he wants a pretty stiff price, and of course I don’t know yet whether the deal will go through, but Greg and I always like to combine business with pleasure.”

“But—I demand pardon if I am dense, madame—surely it is possible to visit Yardly Chase without taking the diamond with you?”

A shrewd, hard look came into Miss Marvell’s eyes which belied their childlike appearance. She looked suddenly a good deal older.

“I want to wear it down there.”

“Surely” I said suddenly, “there are some very famous jewels in the Yardly collection, a large diamond amongst them?”

“That’s so,” said Miss Marvell briefly.

I heard Poirot murmur beneath his breath: “Ah, *c’est comme ça!*” Then he said aloud, with his usual uncanny luck in hitting the bull’s-eye (he dignifies it by the name of psychology): “Then you are without doubt already acquainted with Lady Yardly, or perhaps your husband is?”

“Gregory knew her when she was out West three years ago,” said Miss Marvell. She hesitated a moment, and then added abruptly: “Do either of you ever see *Society Gossip?*”

We both pleaded guilty rather shamefacedly.

“I ask because in this week’s number there is an article on famous jewels, and it’s really very

curious——” She broke off.

I rose, went to the table at the other side of the room and returned with the paper in question in my hand. She took it from me, found the article, and began to read aloud:

“. . . Amongst other famous stones may be included the Star of the East, a diamond in the possession of the Yardly family. An ancestor of the present Lord Yardly brought it back with him from China, and a romantic story is said to attach to it. According to this, the stone was once the right eye of a temple god. Another diamond, exactly similar in form and size, formed the left eye, and the story goes that this jewel, too, would in course of time be stolen. ‘One eye shall go West, the other East, till they shall meet once more. Then, in triumph shall they return to the god.’ It is a curious coincidence that there is at the present time a stone corresponding closely in description