

# THE EAGLE DIAMOND SEQUEL

By Alice Baker

"Yes, the Eagle diamond was stolen along with other gems from the American Museum of Natural History on the night of October 29, 1964," wrote an official of the museum this winter. "All the other gems were recovered with the exception of the Eagle diamond, a number of other diamonds, and an emerald mounted in a ring. I presume that the thieves had it cut up in order to realize something of its worth and to be sure it lost its identity."

The Eagle diamond gained notability by being numbered with the Star Sapphire of India, the DeLong Ruby, and the Midnight Sapphire of the Tiffany-Morgan Collection. In this group of superlative gems, the uncut Eagle pebble was most vulnerable—its lack of renown slated it for a sacrifice.

Any one of the former mentioned jewel greats, taken to a lapidary, would have incriminated the thieves on sight; but the Eagle gem could be cut with impunity.

The Eagle stone was a "haul" to the three jewel thieves. Its 15 3/8 karat size would cut into jewels for many rings. It was a yellow instead of a blue diamond, and it would be subject for shrewd bartering. But the lapidary would have the edge in any transaction.

The jig was up for Kuhn, Clark, and Murf, "the Surf". They slightly over-played their delusions of inexhaustible wealth. Their lavish display of dollars was their own undoing; and they were caught. From now on, they are well-marked jewel thieves, and surveillance will keep them poor.

The people of Eagle who knew of the diamond's discovery and who followed the many vicissitudes which shadowed its existence will learn of its lapidary surgery with regret and wish that its true owner might have received even a small fraction of its worth.

And Tom Devereau somewhere in the Great Beyond will some day say to the trio with a kindly smile, a sparkle in his bright blue eyes, and in his high pitched tenor voice,

"Ye spalpeens, didn't ye know that a dozen of me Irish shades was taggin' ye and bringin' ye to justice?"

*(Ed. Note: The Eagle Diamond was discovered in yellow clay, forty feet below the surface during the digging of a well for Tom Devereau in the Village of Eagle the hot summer of 1876. It was the largest of the uncut diamonds in the United States . . . a dodecahedron crystal with curved facets. Its discovery caused "quite a stir" hereabouts, with lawsuits and salted diamond mines.*

*The gem had sold for a dollar to a jeweler in Milwaukee and then for a mere \$840 to Tiffany's in New York. There it remained until J. P. Morgan bought the Tiffany collection, including the famous gems mentioned in the above story. Morgan exhibited his collection in the American Museum of Natural History. The Eagle diamond had then reached a value of \$25,000. The above three thieves were caught, tried and sentenced to three years in prison. The F.B.I. recovered most of the other gems, but not the Eagle Diamond.)*