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The Diamond of Drury Lane

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London, 1790; Mr Sheridan's Drury Lane theatre. Ten-year-old Cat Royal, adopted by Sheridan after being left on the theatre steps as a newborn, overhears discussion of a 'diamond' hidden somewhere in the theatre. And so she sets off on a wonderful romp through 18th-century London in search of treasure, by way of a subversive cartoonist called Captain Sparkler, a black ex-slave who is a musical prodigy, the children of a duke who want to taste the low-life, and the rival gangs of Covent Garden who provide that taste ? and more.

Despite the sheer unlikeliness of the ? crucial ? involvement of benevolent aristocrats with madcap Cat, this pacy story, full of riveting detail about London and the theatre, and with a cast of characters whose loyalty cannot always be assumed, is a most engaging read, beautifully pulled off down to the ?blurbs? from contemporary critics. A sequel follows ? worth waiting for!

Running Order:

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