***************** THE DOUBLE DEALER

By VARICK VANARDY. or of "Missing-\$81,500."

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CHAPTER IX.

Some Wheels Within Wheels. The man who left the saloon in the ake of Bobcat Rickett, in obedience the signal from Crewe, was Crack--an old habitue of the place, and ne who was devoted to its owner. Nor was that devotion the conse-nence of fear, as in the cases of any others. Cracker had formerly en a dope-fiend, but for a year past, ith the aid and encouragement of hat many-sided man, he had gradual-y grown away from his weakness ntil he felt that he was rapidly bening a man again.

Nevertheless he was a denizen of he underworld, and he knew every -way it contained, and nearly all the characters that comprised it

He knew Bobcat Rickett, too, and his devious ways and methods; and he knew, moreover, something that Crewe did not know about the man-emething that he had intended to reeal and had neglected to do so only

for lack of opportunity. Cracker, long ago-months before, in fact, and while he was still using he dope—had overheard a conversa-tion between Bobcat and two plain-clothes men when he was himself supposed to be dead to the world unthe influence of the drug he had

sed. The plain-clothes men were Lieu-enant Holderness, now no longer on he force, and Marline, of whom men-ion has been made recently. The talk between them and Bobcat lickett was, in effect, that if the Bob-t could even get anything "on"

tt could ever get anything "on" rewe so that he might be delivered to their hands so that they could get the goods" on him, so that they buld catch him in a fe'enious act, blocat was to receive an adequate ward, and would be, forever after-ard, immune from police interfer-

Of course they lied to him when y made the promises, but Eobcat ieved. Holderness had been dise remained; and Baxter, but Mar-e remained; and Baxter, who had en hand in glove with both of them, w trained with Marine.

Cracker was naturally shrewd, arp, and keen. d he been without the knowledge

that "stool pigeon" agreement, he ght have been less wory and watch-than he was when he obeyed the

But the first sector of the object of the sector of the place, believed that frewer was the master criminal of hem all; none doubted that he could ive them cards and spades in the pur-

hits of crookdoom. And he had watched the interview, And he had watched the interview, between Crewe and Bobcut, although ne had heard no word of it; still, he ad not a doubt that something was n foot for which Crewe needed the ervices of the yegg—and he was cer-ain that in such an event the yegg would betray Crewe. While he followed Bobcat, the lat-er stopmed once in front of a saloon.

stopped once in front of a saloon, ut evidently decided against the risk entering it.

He walked on after that until he ame to a small combination eigan nd stationery store, which he en

Cracker, watching from the op-Cracker, watching from the op-posite side of the street, saw him pur-chase a supply of cigarettes—and then a sheet of paper and an envelope after which he spont nearly an hour in laboriously writing a letter. When he came outside he dropped the letter into the first post-box he resed and then went on his way

assed, and then went on his way whistling and strutting—for he was still proud of hi new clothes, not-withstanding the soring they had re-

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ALT AND ceived at the hand of Crewe.

Christy nodded understandingly. "Watch out for Baxter and Mar-line. I practically fired them out of the place this afternoon, but you are to act as if you know nothing about "I'm on, boss," Christy replied with

a wink. "I am going a burgling tomorrow night, Christy; housebreaking." "With Bobcat Rickett?" "Yes."

that '

"Don't. He's a "stool,' I tell you, and Marline is his long suit." "I know that already, and so I am going to make this little expedition of

relief of the second se "Then those three keys are-"

"Then those three keys are—" "Latch-keys to the doors of three separate houses, Christy, and in one of the three I confidently expect to "nd the lavalier, the bandeau, the the and the bracelet that were whiched at the wedding reception last which "

night." Christy could only look his aston ishment, for, according to all preced-ont, the stolen property should be al-ready in the possession of some "ience." Crewe continued:

"I have put Pincher on the trail of Daxter and Marlinc. He will telephone in after seven tonight. Whatever he may have to say pass it on to Feltner. I am particularly anxious to know if either of those bulls should go to see Dobcat Rickett."

Ten minutes later Crewe went out. He turned northward, walking with his customary swiftness, but when half-way across Washington Square he wheeled abruptly and started even

nore swiftly upon the back track. Another man who had also been moving rapidly, half halted, then continued on his way; but Crewe stopped him by stepping directly in front of

"You are a new man at the bureau, pren't you?" he asked. "I don't seem promember you. But, anyhow, it

comember you. But, anyhow, It wo th your while to try to follow You would lose. Desides, it isn't

.y. You might catch the malaria something." te "shadow" grinned appreci-The ively.

"You might take me along with you," he said. "It would save us both a lot of trouble—and I'm willing to be coaxed."

"Oh, I see! You are another one of that bunch, are you? You are playing with fire, young man, and you'll urn your fingers if you don't look

"Oh, I guess I know how to avoid

"Oh, I guess I know now to avoid the flames, Crewe. You see L—" He stopped, for Crewe had wheeled and left him, and the would-be sleuth saw him enter a waiting taxi which drove rapidly away upon the instant when the door was banged shut; and he could not follow because there was an other taxi in alcht

a could not follow because there was no other taxi in sight. The taxi, as it happened, was Drewe's personal property; and the chauffeur who drove it—well, he also nelonged to Crewe. That strange man had many possessions of the sort in and around New York, and he was constantly adding to them.

The taxicab was driven as rapidly s the city ordinances permitted to far up-town station of the subway, and the attention of the chauffeur eemed to be attracted to the oppo-ite side of the street when his fare" stepped down and slammed "fare" the door

At all events the passenger dis-peared in the subway before the man turned his head again, and even then he had already started his car for-

Less than one hour later, or, to be exact, at seven o'clock, Birge Mo-reaux, portrait artist, in full evening dress, paused at the door of his studio

been pairse the door ins stat di-cections to his man Feltner. "Keep your ears open for the tele-chone, Feltner," he said, "and he expectally particular in regard to the erorts you receive. If you should socially particular in regard to the ords you receive. If you should ant mer I will be at the home of . Deforme until ten, and at the h after that until twelve. Then I all return here unless I satisfy you

Quite contrary to his . habit he turned toward the rear of the build-ing when he stepped from the eleva-tor and left it by the Nameless Street

Muchmore didn't tell him nor' 1-that Crewe sometimes visits this building by this entrance, and he is so mad to think that Crewe gave him the slip that he says he is going to stand right there until Crewe comes, or until it is time for him to go to his South Fifth

Avenue place again.' "Oh, I see! Did you have some-thing that you particularly wished to say to me—that you thought of calling upon me just now instead of waiting until our evening engage-

"Yes, I did. And I hope you won't think me officious or fresh when I do say it, Mr. Moreaux." "Certainly not, Bunting. What 's

it? it "" "I don't know what your relations with Crewe are, Mr. Moreaux, and I don't care to know. I want you to believe that. But I do know that practicelly the entire detective bu-reau has been given the tip to 'get' him, if he can be 'got." "And so-here is where Mr. Fresh Buttinski comes in-I felt like pass-ing the tip on to you. I thought per-

Furthinski comes in—1 feit like pass-ing the tip on tō you. I thought per-haps you might think it would be just as well if you h d nothing more to do with that man—for the present at least. I speak as an officer to a citi-zen, and, if you will 'ermit me to say it, as one who wishes to be your friend." friend.

"Shake hands, Bunting, That's bully of you! I appreciate it, too. But for your own enlightenment I will tell you that Crewe is not at all likely to appear at this door again—for some time to come, anyhow. You know I have the key that you took from him.

"You might put your friend wise and spare him the fatigue of stand-ing up all night. Do not think that you presumed in giving me the warning. I am really very much obliged to you. I will look for you and Much-more at the club at ten-thirty tonight. "We will be there."

"Do, for I expect to have some-thing of considerable importance to

tell you." But as Moreaux hurried on his way his thought, if uttered aloud, would have been:

"I wonder if. Bunting was lying. If so he played the part all right."

CHAPTER X. No Matter Who the Thief May Be. "Mr. Delorme," said Moreaux-the two men faced each other across the library table in that small room which was called the "den"—I asked for this short talk with you when I telephoned two hours ago because I had an important question to ask you—one which may prove to be of grave im-

"Very well, Birge. But surely you

Wery Wer, Brige, But surely you don't have to request interviews with the Nobedy is more welcome at my house than you and. The latch-string is siways out to you." "I how that, sin, and thank you

is the all important ques

to ""
"It is a sking it I will preface it y a short statement."
"Y, C1? Well? Go ahead."
"I have felt very much concerned have the disappearance of those is of Lornals: more so than you used. I tragine. At all events, I writed Lorna that I would do my ""That is very kind of you, Birge. at is very kind of you, Birge, prizes such things highly-and,

cidentally, she thinks that you are bout the salt of the earth." "In order to keep my promise to her I have, in one way and another, engaged the services of several oth-

"Detectives, I suppose? I'm sorry

"Detectives, I suppose? I'm sorry. I did not wish to have the affair noised abroad." "Detectives—and some others who are not exactly detectives, and it will not be noised abroad, Mr. Delorme." "I am glad of that. Please go on." "Inquiry, deduction, thought, care ful analysis, and some abstract in vestigation in different quarters have collectively convinced me that it will not be a difficult matter to recover the not be a difficult matter to recover the lost articles. The question is this: Do you want those lost jewels re-turned, without regard to the identity

"Most certainly I do." "No matter who the — the thief ay prove to be?" answer is the same, Birge."

matter who the guilty party may be, I have no sympathy for him, or her, as the case may develop. The one who is guilty should be exposed; if not publicly, then, at least, to the few who ought to know about it."

"Very good, sir." Moreaux left his chair, helped himself to a fresh cigar from the open box on the table, light-ed it, shook hands with Mr. Delorme, who had also risen, crossed to the door, then turned about and said: "Oh, by the way, are you attending

the Netherlands Society dinner tomorrow night?" "Yes. Aren't you? You're a mem

ber. "Oh, I shall dow'tless be there-

"Oh, I shall do these be there-urless something happens in the nontime to prevent." "Bless me! You talk as if you were a man of business, and I never herew anybody who had more leisure on his hands. Do you know, Birge"--whistfully--- I used to wish that when my Lorms chole, a bushand it would my Lorna chose a husband it would be you. Forgive an old man for say ing it, but I have wished it many times."

Horeaux's tall form seemed to grow perceptibly taller, and the expression in his eyes was serious indeed, not-withstanding his silie as he replied

quickly: "Good Heavers, Delorme, I am twice as old as she is. She is nine-teen and I am thirty-eight. That would rever do, you know. Such a thought never occurred to Lorna, fond as she was, and is, of me." "But it occurred to you more than

cnce, Birge. I know." "Nonsense, Mr. Delorme. Non-sense, Gracious! I must go. Good sense. Gr night, sir."

Promptly at half past ten o'clock the two officers, Muchmore and Bunt-ing, arrived at the club where Birge Moreaux was waiting them.

Moreaux was waiting them. He conducted them at once to a se-cluded corner, of cod them refresh ments, which they accepted, and hav ing lighted cigar: all around, the ar-tist looked quizzle...ly at Muchmon

tist looked quizzie, if at suchnose and inquired: "Well, lieutenant, what's doing?". "We supposed that our errand here was to have your reply to that que-tion, Mr. Moregux," was the quick reply.

Still, you have something on you what has happened to interest you to day.

"Very well, sir. Nothing of any importance. And I really an not suce that I ought to tell you about it." "I think you may trust me, lieuten-

ant." "I will. You gave me a tip last night about a Mephistoph "an looking chap that you had seen talking with another man in the Lowery near Houston Street. After I accompanied Mr. Delorme to handquaters I went over to Crewe's just to look around a bit, and he was there. If 'd doped it out who he was in the meantime. He calls himself. Sindahr, the miracle worker."

Ah, yes. I have heard of him." "Ah, yes. I have heard of him." "It isn't necessary to tell you all that happened. When I first went in-ide I took a good look at him, and one of the things I saw was a few traces of some sort of preparation which he had evidently been using to make his hair white, or gray. "It was under his hair, along the back of his neck; just a trace of lt.

Bunting asked. "Yes; I am coming to that. But understand me, it would not do for either of you to be in the immediate neighborhood on the watch. The lookout would spot you. I was es-pocially warned against that." "Well, what then?" "I will be there probably inside of the was under his har, along the back of his neck; just a trace of it, but enough to set me thinking. I de eided to arrest him as a suspicious character and hold him for investiga-tion, and so, put the cuffs on him Later, he managed to get away; but the decent the met is a set him to be the set in the set "Well, what then?" "I will be there, probably inside of the house, watching, whether Delorme is there or not. Around the corner in Madison Avenue, a block and a half away, there is an undertaker's estab-lishment kept by a man named Gro-ver. at doesn't matter. I can get him nat doesn't matter.

"The point is this: there were hings about him that jogged m temory, but I could not put my fir remoty, but route house house have any error them, so to speak. But the hough has been hiking around in my ranium the whole blessed day, and— alf an hour ago I met him on the treet in his other character, and IT blowed if he didn't have the gal stop me and speak to me. I go

"I am still very much in the dark eutenant," Moreaux said mildly. "Do you recall a Count Sucini wh.

it.". "Mr. Moreaux is right. His way is the best way, Bunting. It is your job, and we will do as you say, Mr. Moreaux," Muchaore said decisively. "Good Then it is settled that you "Well, that's the guy." "You don't tell me! Did you ar-rest him again?"



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fact is, gentlemen, it has been my good or ill fortune to perform a service for Crewe in the past, and he is not one who forgets."

"He remembers both ways, good and bad," Bunting remarked quietly. "We will say, then, that recalling his promises of service to me, I asked The promises of serve serve of the, resolvery of the lost jewels. The point is this—and we will forget the source of my in-formation, if you please. That is part of the contract." "Certainly."

"The descriptions of the wedding "The descriptions of the wedding presents in the newspapers has ex-cited the expldity of every crook in the city, Many of them suppose the presents to be still contained in Mr. Delorme's house. It is to be burglar-ized tomorrow night. "Whit, please, until I have finished. Mr. Delorme will not be at home if he keeps an engagement he has made; but he may not keep it. At all events, I shall be there, or if not inside of the house, near at hand."

house, near at hand." "Do you know the time planned for the burglary, Mr. Moreaux?"

"If you two officers will promise to

whit there, inside of that shop, with patience, from half past one until I call you on the telephone, you will catch red handed whoever the bur-glars may be—and it is possible, just possible, that there will be other de-

velopments. Now what do you both

located that I won't be heard using

"Don't you think that you run an

Bunting asked.

ver

ceived at the hand, of Crewe. Thus, Cracker's suspicions were verified, In his own mind, at least, and feeling assured because of the letter-writing episode, that Rickett would not attempt to leave his house again, for a time, at least, he hurried back to Crewe and told net only what he had seen, but also that other story about the conversation he had over-heard so long ago.

about the conversation he had over-fheard so long ago. "That is good work, Cracker," Crewe told him approvingly. "Put this ten-dollar bill in your pocket and get back on the job. You will have to stay on it until one o'clock tomor-row night, tóö. I shall go there then, and I will look for you near his door." "Good evening, Mr. Moreaux," he said in his hearty manner. "Please and I will look for you near his door. You can stand it without much sleep till then, can't you?"

"Betcher life, Crewe. More'n that, if you want me to," was the reply. Christy returned at five o'clock and delivered the keys he had had made

in the meantime. "I shall not be here tonight, Chris-ty," Crewe said to him at the upper end of the bar, near the window. "Sindar will be in about midnight. You tell him to deliver those stick-pins and other things to you, and that it will be hed for bin if he does not pins and other things to you, and that it will be bad for him if he does not. Tell him also that I want him here be fore twelve tomorrow night. I will be

Good evening, Mr. Moreaux," he said in his hearly manner. "Please don't think that I was spying on you, or the building, either, for that mat-ter. Muchmore is around the corner on an errand for the chief, and I was waiting for him. But I would have gone in too see you for a moment if it had not been for the engagement with

and not been not the engagement what you at ten-thirty tonight." "Oh, I hadn't a thought of your spying upon me, Bunting!" the artist returned smiling. "Who is that other chap?" "He is a new man at the bureau, sthouch seiveral years on the force.

"I DON'T know—yet." "Oh, I see. You are surmising -

and he grasped the hand which Mo-reaux extended in greeting. "But I have got three guesses, Mr. "Good evening, Mr. Moreaux," he Delorme, according to the old style Delorme, according to the old style of playing the game. And one of them wins, or, rather, no matter which one of the three may win, the resultant consequence will be-let us say-un-pleasant."

"You instructe, Birge, that some-body whom I know and know well, is the guilty person?" "It is more than an instruction, sir. It is a statement."

"Why don't you tell me the names

of all three of your 'guesses'?" "For the specific reason that such a course would be a decided injustice to the two who are innocent.

"I had not thought of that. Well, o ahead in your own way, Birge. No

will be known." "Well, well. Your information is somewhat of a squelcher upon what i intehded to suggest, although I don't ference after all." "What was it, Mr. Mereil

"What was it, Mr. Moreaux?" the lieutenant requested eagerly; and Bunting bent forward in his chair and asked at the same time: "Please tell us what it is, sir." "You were both rather eager last

night to understand exactly were the relations between that man Crewe and myself. And this evening Mr. Bunting was kind enough to give

me a warning concerning him. The

"Good. Then it is settled that you will both be at the undertaker's at half past one tomorrow night, and will d will the best tonics known, combis-ed of the best tonics known, combis-ed with the best blood nurflers act.

dozen unnecessary men detailed to assist." "Remember, I do not know the

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"The answer is the same, Birge." "Do you recall our conversation at the breakfast table this morning?" "Every bit of it, word for word." "Then I have your authority to go ahead will a free hand, without fear or favor, no matter upon whom the burden of guilt may fall?" "You do not intend to arrest him and tell me?" "I DON'T know—yet." "The answer is the same, Birge." "To you recall our conversation at the breakfast table this morning?" "Not by a jugful. I pretended that I was nightily giad to see him again." "Not by a jugful. I pretended that I was nightily giad to see him again." "Not by a jugful. I pretended that I was nightily giad to see him again." "Not by a jugful. I pretended that I was nightily giad to see him again. "Not by a jugful. I pretended that I was nightily giad to see him again. "And also that in the meantime to the the preson than ourselves— not even your own chief—shall be told anything at all about it? I must in-sti upon that, too." "Certainty." Muchanore regiled. "H DON'T know—yet." "I DON'T know—yet." "I DON'T know—yet." "Yes." The perfect combination of the two in "And also that in the meantime gredients is what produces such "

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