

THE DOUBLE CROSS

By A. E. THOMAS

Copyright, By Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc.
W. N. Service

CHAPTER XII—Continued

"Not idly!" cried Stanley. "Why, what's wrong?"

"Oh, nothing serious, but—oh well, when the wife has most of the money—"

"Ah," cried Stanley, as if his point of view had suddenly broadened.

"Yes—devilish awkward at times!"

"Well, well," continued Stanley generally, "we must find a way to set you on your feet again. By the way, what became of all the old office staff? I didn't recognize a single face the other day. What happened to Higgins?"

"Are you sure, sir?"

"Oh, he landed on his feet. He's with Lane and Adams."

"Good—fine chap, Higgins. And that—what's her name? Oh, yes, that Morgan girl?"

This was the last name that Waterman had wished to hear. He was a trifle startled, but he did his best to conceal it.

"Why, what about her?" he asked, shifting uneasily in his chair.

"Oh, nothing—she just flashed into my mind. Rather a vivid personality, don't you think?"

"Yes—yes—"

"I saw her the other day."

"Where? How?" He could not exclude an accent of alarm, but Stanley ignored it.

"Oh, on the Avenue."

"Did you speak with her?"

"No—why?"

"Oh, I just wondered."

"Driving uptown—just caught a flash of her face in the crowd," Stanley continued. "And by the way—do you remember our last afternoon in the office together? I mean that fateful afternoon when we tossed a coin to see who should first propose to Doris."

"Oh, yes, yes," said Waterman. He raised his arms over his head, stiffed a yawn, and said, "By gad, I'm getting sleepy, sitting here in front of this fire. I think I'll turn in."

"Oh, my dear chap," cried Stanley, "no, not yet! I have something most interesting to show you—something rather extraordinary."

"Well—" said Waterman feebly.

"Yes, it's a thing that wouldn't happen once in a thousand times, and—oh, that makes me think. I had a little talk with Doris before you came downstairs just before dinner. She told me something that explained many things."

His voice was still kindly, still genial, yet Waterman's apprehension increased.

"What did she tell you?" he asked.

"Why—er—Stanley went on, feeling the other's gaze as he spoke, "she said that on that very night I've just been speaking of—you know, the night you won her and I lost her—some woman came to her and told her a scandalous story about me."

Waterman thought it necessary to affect amazement. "Really?" he said.

But Stanley gave him a slightly mocking smile. "Oh, come now, my dear chap—no use pretending you don't know it, because she told me that you do."

Waterman fidgeted. "Well, of course," he said, with outspread hands. "Oh, I know you promised her you wouldn't tell, and—you were always the soul of honor. However, as she has told, you needn't pretend any longer."

Waterman could not suppress a wave of discomfort. "Well," he said finally, "it's her business."

"Yes," agreed Stanley, "and mine—just a little. I suppose you don't happen to know the exact details of this woman's story?"

This put Waterman in a hole. Being in complete ignorance of what Doris had told Stanley, he hadn't the faintest idea how to answer. But after a moment's hesitation he decided it was safer to deny knowledge of the matter.

"Why no—no," he said.

"Nor who this woman was?"

"No—no—certainly not."

Stanley smiled again, still amiably. "Naturally," he remarked, "I'm a bit curious to know what villainy I'm accused of."

"She—er—she didn't tell me," stammered the other. "Said she'd promised."

"Yes—well, I'm glad to see that Doris has finally come around to your opinion, Rolly."

"My opinion?"

"Yes—oh, she told me how you had defended me. Thanks, old man—thanks. I knew I could always depend upon your loyalty," and he put his hand affectionately on Waterman's shoulder. "Well now—help yourself to the port—to get back to that afternoon in the office—oh, just a moment—"

He rose, walked to the desk and pressed a button. After a moment the little door behind the desk swung open and Wilson appeared. "Frank," said Stanley, "I want you to fetch that machine here. If you please—you know the one I mean."

Wilson looked at him an instant and swallowed hard before he said, "Very well, sir," and went out.

Waterman made a heroic effort to shake off his growing uneasiness. "What is it, a radio?" he said.

"No," smiled Stanley, "it's not a radio. It's—well, I suppose we might call it a sort of accounting machine. It was once used in our old office."

Accounting machine—accounting—Waterman somehow disliked that word. "Didn't know we had any accounting machines," he observed.

"Well," returned the other, "we had this one, and I rather think you'll recognize it."

At this moment Wilson reappeared. In his hands he carried the audiphone.

"Set it here, Frank," commanded Stanley, indicating the desk, "and you needn't sit up any longer. I sha'n't need you again tonight."

Wilson fixed his eyes upon him—"Are you sure, sir?"

"Oh, quite, quite," said Stanley, easily.

Wilson had another brief struggle with himself. He opened his mouth to speak again, then shut it with a snap and slowly went out, closing the door behind him.

"What the devil's the matter with the fellow?" demanded Waterman. "Looks as if he'd seen a ghost!"

"Perhaps he has—I told you the house is full of them."

Waterman shook himself slightly, as if to get rid of an uncomfortable garment.



"What the H—l Do You Mean by That?" Cried Waterman With the Abrupt Violence of a Crash.

ment. He rose and walked to the desk. "Accounting machine? Why, it's nothing but an audiphone."

"It looks like one," agreed Stanley, "but before we're through with it I think you'll admit that it has something to do with accounting. You see," he went on, "this thing stood on my desk in the office the last day I was there and I had it sent down here that night. I had been dictating and—er—by the way, you never used one, did you, Rolly?"

"No," said Waterman.

"No, you prefer—stenographers. Well, I'd been dictating, as I say, and I thought I'd clear up a lot of work over Sunday. So I sent this thing down to the house. But I never came here again for over a year, for reasons that you know very well. The day I entered this room for the first time, here stood that machine. Out of idle curiosity I started the thing, and—well—you shall hear what I heard. It's extraordinary—an audible recreation of the past, after a year's absence."

He sat down, lighted a fresh cigar meditatively, and appeared to fall in to a muse. After a time, unable longer to endure the silence, Waterman said sharply:

"Well, well—go on, go on."

"Aren't you a little impatient to-night?" asked the other.

"Sorry."

"I wouldn't be in any hurry, if I were you."

"What the h—l do you mean by that?" cried Waterman with the abrupt violence of a crash.

"Why, Rolly!" Stanley reproached him gently.

The other controlled himself with an effort.

"I beg your pardon, I'm a little unstrung tonight—I haven't been very well—"

"Perhaps you smoke too much—Well, to get on with our little enter-

tainment, and that last afternoon in our office." He rose, and went back to the machine.

"Why are you always harping on that?" cried Waterman, his irritation mounting.

"Eh?" said Stanley, in bland surprise.

"You made a proposal," snapped Waterman. "I accepted it. You lost. I won. For God's sake, forget it!"

Stanley turned and cast upon the other a glance of sudden savage penetration—a glance which froze Waterman into silence and immobility.

"Listen!" he cried. He bent over the machine, and touched a lever.

With strained attention, waiting for he knew not what, Waterman heard these words:

"Of course, there is always the possibility of error in these calculations, and it would be wise to allow a considerable margin of safety therefor; but on the whole we are in a position to say that we think well of the proposition. If you wish, I shall be glad to discuss the matter at length and in detail. Very sincerely, yours,"

Again Stanley bent over the machine, and the voice ceased. He smiled at Waterman and inquired easily: "Recognize the voice?"

Waterman had recognized it—"It's yours, of course," he said.

"Swear to it in a court of law, wouldn't you?"

Waterman rose. He had a feeling that he had best be on his feet. "Sure. What of it?"

"Wait—there's a little more. Extraordinary, isn't it? After all these months, the faithfulness of this machine. Sit down, sit down. This will interest you, I promise you."

There was no doubt about Waterman's being interested. He sat on the edge of his chair, his hands gripping its arms, and glared upon the machine.

Again Stanley bent over the desk and touched the lever. Instantly the machine went on:

"Don't worry about that, I'll attend to the details."

"Splendid—splendid. I have only one slight suggestion to make as to the construction of your scenario."

"And what's that?"

"I don't like the name of your villain."

"You ought to, it's your own."

"What the h—l is this?" cried Waterman, leaping to his feet.

Stanley stopped the machine. "What's the matter?" he inquired gently.

Waterman took a grip upon himself—"Nothing, nothing—only—"

"You don't recognize the voices, do you?"

"No, no, certainly not."

Stanley was casualness itself. "You see," he explained, "I'm naturally curious and I thought you might be able to satisfy my curiosity—let me give you a little more of it."

Again the machine continued:

"Yes, that's the point."

"What are you getting at?"

"I suggest that you strike out the name of Rolly Waterman and substitute the name of James Stanley."

With a suppressed exclamation, Waterman again leaped from his chair.

"Wait!" cried Stanley sharply, with a commanding gesture, and the machine went on:

"What?"

"Precisely."

"You want me to tell Miss Colby that it is Stanley and not you?"

"Stop that thing—stop it!" shouted Waterman.

Stanley obeyed. "Do you recognize the voices yet?" he inquired softly.

"No!—No!" cried Waterman.

"Ah—shall we have a bit more, then?"

"No—I've had enough of this d—n nonsense."

"Are you afraid to go on?"

"Afraid? No—why should I be afraid?"

"Well, sit down then."

"No, I won't. And I'll thank you to explain—"

Now when a man suddenly finds himself looking into the barrel of a revolver held by the hand of his friend, it naturally gives a slightly different turn to his thoughts. To Wa-

terman it was as if the end of the world had come.

"Sit down," said Stanley coldly.

"What!"

"I say, sit down!" And the voice was the voice of fate. "This is the night of your accounting!"

Slowly, feebly, like a man stricken abruptly with mortal disease, Waterman retreated till he felt the chair behind him. Into its depths he slumped, and sat there, with his chin upon his breast, his hands hanging limply till they nearly touched the floor.

Relentlessly Stanley stood and watched him—Relentlessly, too, the machine went on:

"Exactly."

"Well, of all the— Perhaps you will tell me why on earth I should do that?"

"I'll tell you with pleasure. Because you're a business woman. Look here now. If you tell Doris Colby the truth, you get nothing but revenge on me."

"I expect to get something for not telling her the truth!"

"Well, you won't get it."

"No?"

"No. Because I haven't got it. No, listen. I'm practically down and out."

"You're a member of this firm."

"Nominally, but my interest is so small it barely gives me a decent living. Stanley owns the works— He's the lad with the money—always has been. What's worse, I owe everybody in the world. I'm short a lot of stocks in a bull market. I'll be wiped out tomorrow, if the rise goes on. In short, I'm all in. Only one thing can save me—marriage to a rich woman. Well, Doris Colby is just that—a very rich woman. Now you stick by me—and I'll stick—"

Silence fell. It was broken only by the heavy breathing of the stricken Waterman. Stanley sat down upon the corner of the desk and looked at him.

"Do you recognize the voices yet?" he asked.

"No—No—" stammered the other. "It's a frameup, I tell you, and you know it—a d—d frameup!"

"How about the woman who went to Doris and slandered me? What did she tell her? Haven't we just heard it?"

"I tell you it's a lie," shouted Waterman. "You've framed me!" He made as if to take a step toward Stanley.

"Better sit down again," suggested the latter quietly, with a slightly suggestive gesture with the revolver.

Rebelliously, Waterman obeyed.

"And," continued Stanley, "there's just one other little matter."

He took from the breast pocket of his dinner jacket a little yellow chamber bag. "Do you know what this bag contains?" he asked.

Waterman was silent.

"No? Very well then, you shall see." And the next moment, in the brilliant light that fell from the crystal chandelier, there flashed the myriad lights of the Colby necklace.

"Well," asked the inquisitor, "have you had enough?"

"I—I don't know what you mean," stammered Waterman.

Stanley knew that the crucial moment had arrived.

"I mean, Rolly," he said in that same cool, level voice, "mean just this. You've betrayed your friend; you've stolen your wife; you've ruined her happiness, and finally, you're a thief, and these are the stolen goods!"

Again Waterman staggered to his feet, and this time Stanley did not stop him.

"I tell you, it's a lie!" he cried. "You've framed me— You're jealous of me— You've cooked up this whole plot to steal away my wife!"

He shuffled nearer to Stanley with each word. Stanley let him come, but answered, "You know that that's a lie!"

For a second Waterman hesitated—What would he do? Everything hung on that. Then, to the other's intense relief, Waterman hurled himself on Stanley. The latter struggled, not too successfully, and in a second Waterman had wrested the revolver from his hand.

"Now," he cried, backing off, "now we'll see! Take the cylinder off that machine and give it to me."

"Oh, no," said Stanley.

"At once, or I'll take it!"

"Never!" was the stern answer.

"Then stand aside! Stand aside or by G—d, I'll kill you."

Now for the final insult.

"Oh, no, you won't. You haven't the pluck, even though you say that I'm going to publish this story so far and wide that you can never look a white man in the face again—the story of a gentleman who betrayed his friend. You're a skunk and a sneak and a traitor, but you haven't the guts to kill!"

Waterman raised the revolver and cried, "Stand aside, I say!" But Stanley made no move. "Then by G—d, take it!"

He pulled the trigger. The hammer snapped harmlessly. With a cry of rage, Waterman broke the pistol, saw that its chambers were empty, cast it aside and with a roar buried himself on Stanley.

Crash went the table upon which the two men fell—the glasses the bottle, the ash tray. Savagely they fought, rolling upon the floor. Ere the issue was decided, the lights went out. The struggle continued in the darkness.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MAY REPRODUCE RADIO COOK BOOK

Recipes May Be Reprinted in Braille for Blind.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Radio casts a ray of light into the lives of the blind. Among the most enthusiastic radio listeners are the persons for whom the light has faded and who must depend upon touch and sound to "see" the world in which they live.

Now radio is teaming up with Braille, the special form of printing for the blind, just as radio and the usual sort of printing have gone together in educational programs for persons of normal vision.

"Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes," a cook book issued by the radio service and the bureau of home economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, will be reprinted in Braille if the wishes of blind women listeners are followed.

"A group of blind women from different parts of Michigan who recently met at the biennial convention of the Michigan Association for the Blind, have asked to have 'Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes' reproduced in Braille," Charles F. F. Campbell, director of the Detroit League for the Handicapped, has written the Department of Agriculture.

The league, which has a small fund for reproducing in Braille reading matter for the blind, is considering the publication of the radio cook book in special Braille edition for the blind readers. Some 155,000 copies of "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes" have been distributed to listeners of stations broadcasting the department feature for home makers—the "Housekeepers' Chat," a daily program supplied to some 100 co-operating stations.

Spinach Timbales With Vegetables for Supper

Timbales made with vegetables are suitable for a summer lunch or supper. Like all custard mixtures, timbales should be baked at low temperature. These directions for spinach timbales are from the bureau of home economics.

4 eggs 1 tablespoon melted butter
1 cup milk 1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup finely chopped spinach
copped cooked Dash of pepper

Hard-cook two of the eggs and chop fine. Beat the other two eggs, add the milk, cooked spinach, chopped hard-cooked eggs, melted butter, salt, and pepper to taste. Pour the mixture into greased custard cups and cook in a pan surrounded by water in a medium oven for 25 to 30 minutes. When set in the center, remove, and serve hot.

Hot Food in Summer

Few people are so foolish as to wear heavy clothing when the mercury mounts, and many eat food during hot weather which is just as out of place and inconsistent as would be furs and woollens for this season, says the Farm Journal. Vary the meals with the changing weather. About the same amount of food is needed in summer as in winter, but it is better to serve less meat and more milk, cheese and eggs during this period. Plenty of vegetables are not only tempting when appetites lag, but healthful as well.

Egg Sandwich

Mix hard-boiled egg, finely chopped, with mayonnaise dressing and spread on slices of buttered bread, preferably graham. Chopped olives may be added to the egg mixture if it is desired.

TESTING CIRCLE SHOWS VALUE OF CLEANER

Comparing Value of Two Vacuum Cleaners.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

One activity which has become popular in connection with home demonstration club meetings is that of the "testing circle," by which the merits of various kinds of household equipment can be tried out under home conditions. Labor-saving devices of all kinds interest the farm homemaker, and if she can have an opportunity to see whether a given article answers her needs, she is in a position to know whether or not to invest in it. Sometimes manufacturers or retailers loan the articles to a home demonstration club to be tested, and sometimes one of each type is purchased and tried in turn by those interested. A Virginia woman is comparing two vacuum cleaners before making her selection.

Wool Challis is Good for Child

Change to Warm Clothing Must Be Planned.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Winter months, especially north of the Mason and Dixon line, mean weather so much colder that a definite change to warm clothing must be planned for all the members of the family, if they are to keep well and feel comfortable. Warm washable dresses may be made of some of the heavier close woven cotton fabrics such as pique or broadcloth. Light-weight wool material may be preferred. Washable wool challis, albatros, and wool georgette are all practical. While these materials will require washing from time to time

Makes Life Sweeter

Too much to eat—too rich a diet—or too much smoking. Lots of things cause sour stomach, but one thing can correct it quickly. Phillips Milk of Magnesia will alkalize the acid. Take a spoonful of this pleasant preparation, and the system is soon sweetened.

Phillips is always ready to relieve distress from over-eating; to check all acidity; or neutralize nicotine. Remember this for your own comfort; for the sake of those around you. Endorsed by physicians, but they always say Phillips. Don't buy someone else's and expect the same results!

Many Will Consider Tramp's Logic Sound

Dr. John H. Latane, professor of history at Johns Hopkins, said in a Y. M. C. A. address in Baltimore:

"Parents complain that nowadays they're not respected by their children. Well, the answer to that is that parents never were and never will be respected by their children unless they deserve respect."

"It's like the case of the tramp who held up the benevolent-looking gentleman with white whiskers and asked for alms."

"But the old gentleman fixed his kindly eyes on the tramp's red nose and said:

"My friend, I have no money, but I can give you some excellent advice."

"Aw, rats," snarled the tramp, as he snatched a pair of dirty fingers in the old gentleman's face. 'If ye ain't got no money it stands to reason that yer advice ain't worth listenin' to."

The Shirts Look It

Hardware Clerk—'d like to borrow a yardstick.

Dry Goods Ditto—We've nothing but a foot rule. We sell dress goods now by the inch.—Montreal Star.

COULD NOT GET OUT OF BED

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Strengthened Her

Elkhart, Ind.—"I had a tired feeling and was unable to get out of bed without the help of my husband. We heard of the Vegetable Compound and decided to try it. I am still taking it and it sure is doing me good. I can do my work without resting before I am through. I know that if women will give the Vegetable Compound a trial they can overcome those tired and worn-out feelings. I cannot express the happiness I have received and how completely it has made over my home."—Mrs. D. H. SIBERT, 1228 Laurel St., Elkhart, Indiana.

INDIGESTION RELIEVED

QUICKLY

Carter's Little Liver Pills

Purely Vegetable Laxative

These little pills taken after meals or at bedtime will do wonders, especially when you are over-eaten or are troubled with constipation. Remember they are a doctor's prescription and can be taken by the entire family. All Druggists 25c and 75c Red Packages.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS

ASTHMA

DR. J. D. KELLOGG'S ASTHMA REMEDY

For the prompt relief of Asthma and Hay Fever. Ask your druggist for it. 25c and one dollar. Write for FREE SAMPLE.

Northrup & Lyman Co., Inc., Buffalo, N.Y.

Dr. J. D. KELLOGG'S ASTHMA REMEDY

FINNEY

OH HELLO BERGENHA WHERE COUD A-BOW IN A HURRY

THE FE

DUCK S

(Copyright, W. N. Service)

The Com Strip

SUCCESS STORIES

HAVE GOULASH HAND SO SHAKY THE VICTUALS SLIP FROM HIS KNIFE. DID GET DISCOURAGED AND QUIT EATING. NO! HE INVENTED GRAY-COLORED WHICH SOLD BY THE MILLION AND MADE HIM SO WEALTHY NOW EATS WITH A FORK.

Clan

No a

BY PERCY

© by the M