

The Double Cross

By
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CHAPTER XIII

In the dead of night Doris was awakened from troubled dreams by a muffled knocking at her door. Startled, she sat up, wondering if the sound were not a part of her dream. But the knocking was repeated.

"What is it? What is it?" she cried, and a voice said: "Mrs. Waterman!" "Yes—yes—"

"Something terrible has happened! I think you had better come down at once!" "What is it? What is it?" she cried again. But there was no answer. She snapped on the light, slipped swiftly out of bed and hastily began to dress.

At the same moment O'Hara, summoned from the garage over the house phone, walked into the library. Wilson stood across the room, looking from the open French window. "What the devil's the matter?" cried the chauffeur.

Wilson turned a white face upon him. "Thank God, you've come," he said; "thank God!" "What's the matter?" "Something's happened—something dreadful."

"What is it?" "Mr. Stanley has disappeared." "What?" "Yes." The three maids rushed in, almost on the housekeeper's heels, in various stages of negligee—frightened, shivering, inquiring, and one who seemed to be that the house was on fire.

"No—no—no—shut up, for heaven's sake," ordered Wilson. "There isn't any fire." The whole group advanced upon him with frantic inquiries, but he waved them away, crying, "Stand back, all of you—stand where you are! Don't touch a thing in this room. There's been a struggle. Can't you see? I'm afraid Mr. Stanley's been murdered."

Silence fell upon the little group. Awe-stricken they looked about the room. Their eyes fell upon the disordered place—the overturned table, the broken glass, the twisted rug, the papers covering the floor, swept from the desk. Upon this silence Doris entered, pale as moonlight, in a negligee of emerald green, which she had hurriedly cast over her nightgown, her bare feet gleaming from a pair of little mules.

Doris drew her negligee closer about her with a little shiver. "Who saw him last?" she asked. "The last I saw of him," replied Wilson, "he was talking here with Mr. Waterman."

Doris fixed her eyes upon her husband. "Rollin, what happened between you two?" "Why nothing," he answered easily. "We just talked for an hour or so, and then I went to bed."

"Leaving him here?" "Yes. He said he was going to write a letter or two. You remember, he told O'Hara to sit up a while, so as to take them to the village post office tonight."

O'Hara stood in the French window again. His face was grave. "Did you—did you find anything?" asked Wilson, speaking with difficulty. "O—but some one has walked down that path to the lake tonight."

Wilson continued the inquiry. "Did you go as far as the lake?" "I did." "And the boat?—The boat?" "It's gone. And I found this caught on one of the bushes." He produced a large white handkerchief.

There was silence in the room for a moment. Doris broke it. "Here," she said, "give it to me." The chauffeur obeyed. She took the handkerchief, examined it carefully, dropped her eyes, and said faintly: "No, there's no mark upon it." She rolled the handkerchief into a ball.

Wilson turned to Waterman. "Well, sir, he said, 'are you convinced now that it isn't any mare's nest?'" "No, I'm not," was the prompt response. "It's ridiculous—all this fuss. I'll bet you anything you like that if you sit here quietly for an hour or so, Jim Stanley will walk in and—Lord! How he will laugh!"

Doris rose. "Well," she announced, "I'm not going to sit here quietly for an hour. Wilson, call the police." Wilson started for the telephone. Waterman stopped him. "Doris, don't be a fool," he cried. "Call the police," she repeated impatiently.

Again Wilson started for the telephone. But as he did so, a quiet voice was heard to say, "What is this?" "Started, the little group turned as one. The Swami, clad in his customary robes, stood in the doorway.

"By gad, it's the Swami," cried Waterman. "Come in, sir. We had forgotten all about you. I suppose we woke you up with all this tempest in a teapot?" "No—no—" he said quietly. "I was awakened from a dreamless sleep by a sense of trouble. Then something led me here."

He walked slowly to the center of the room and looked about the startled group. "Ah!—it's Mr. Stanley, is it not?" He is not here." "Yes, sir," Wilson informed him. "Mr. Stanley has disappeared."

"Ah?" "We have every reason to fear foul play." "Foul play?" "Yes, sir, murder." The faintest possible smile flickered over the Swami's face. "But you look so shocked," he said mildly. "It is amusing, if, as you say, Mr. Stanley has been murdered, he has but passed to another cycle, where perhaps he will be happier than here. He was my friend and his heart was clean."

"Sarah?" "Just before dinner, sir, as he was leaving his bedroom." "Bridget?" "Sure, I didn't see him today at all, at all. I been in the kitchen all day. What in the name of all the saints would I be knowin' about—"

"Hush, hush, hush!" murmured Wilson. "Mrs. Burkett?" "I haven't seen him since the middle of the afternoon," replied the housekeeper, "when I looked out the window and saw him playing with Henry Cabot."

"Henry Cabot?" inquired the Swami, puzzled. "That's the cat, sir." "How do you happen to be fully dressed at this hour of the night?" inquired Wilson.

"I fell asleep in my chair and slept till you come knockin' on the door." Wilson turned to the butler. "Jefferson?" "I saw Mr. Stanley last, sir," replied the butler, "when I fetched a bottle of port to the library, not long after dinner."

"You locked up, as usual?" "Yes, sir, about ten o'clock. And then I went to bed." Wilson turned to the Swami. "Do you wish to question them further?" The Swami did not answer him but turned to the chauffeur.

"And you?" "Well, sir—" answered O'Hara. "Mr. Stanley sends for me about ten o'clock and says he wants me to sit up. He's going to have some letters for me to mail. So I gets busy around the garage, and about midnight Mr. Wilson rings me up on the house phone and says will I come in."

"How did you get in?" demanded Wilson. "I got a key to the kitchen door." The Swami raised his hand. "Let them go," he said, "they know nothing." "Jefferson, O'Hara, wait in the hall," said Wilson; "the rest of you go to bed."

The servants departed, whispering excitedly among themselves, with many backward glances. Wilson closed the door behind them, and turned and said to the Swami, "Let me tell you everything I know, sir."

The Swami checked him. "I have eyes," he said, "I have seen. There was a struggle, a table overturned, ornaments broken, that desk swept clean, and there, I perceive, is an article of wearing apparel."

As he pointed to it on the floor, Wilson stooped and picked it up. It was a black dress tie. "And," continued the Swami, "upon the rug is blood. Hm," he paused a moment before he went on, "the secret is here—let us find it."

Slowly he turned his somber gaze upon Waterman. No one spoke, till Doris said sharply: "Rollin, why don't you answer him?" Waterman started violently. "Tell him everything you know—everything!" she commanded.

"I don't know anything, I tell you." Waterman answered her. "After you left us, we talked for an hour or so, and then I went to bed. That's all I know about it. If any—" "Hush, hush," breathed Doris. He followed her gaze till it rested on the Swami. The Hindu lay back limply in his chair. His eyes were closed. After a time he began to speak, in a level emotionless voice.

and found—what you know. Then I roused the house." He ended. The Swami turned to Waterman and inquired slowly, "All this, you say, is a lie?" "Every d-d word of it!" cried Waterman.

The Swami rose. "Approach," he said. Waterman slowly recoiled, his eyes fixed upon the Swami, as if hypnotized. At this moment Doris held out the handkerchief, saying in a barely audible voice, "I was mistaken. There is a mark upon this handkerchief—"

"R. W." Waterman slowly collapsed in a chair, and hid his face in his hands. "And now," murmured the Swami, "the truth, my son."

And presently, after one false start, in a low voice Waterman began to speak. "After my wife went to bed and left me here alone with Jim—I—I didn't want to stay. I had a presentiment that something would happen, and I—"

"Presentiment?" prompted the Swami. "Yes—and now I look back upon it, it seems to me that every word he spoke to me from the time I entered this house, shows that he had determined to pick a quarrel with me as soon as he got a chance."

Waterman made another effort. "Well, I tried to get away—said I was sleepy, and tired to go to bed, but he wouldn't let me. So I stayed on." "You wished to please him?" "Why—yes. Well, the talk ran along, till presently he began to say things I couldn't understand, and pretty soon he accused me of something."

"Of what?" "Of—disloyalty to him." Doris smothered an exclamation. For an instant the Swami allowed his eyes to rest upon her; then he turned them back to Waterman.

"What was the accusation?" he inquired. "Does that matter?" "Perhaps not," said Doris sharply, "I think it does." "Well?" the Swami prompted. "I'll tell you if my wife will leave the room."

"No," she decided promptly, "I'll stay." And the Swami said, "You may omit the accusation. I think I know it already." Waterman cast an agonized glance upon the Hindu and presently struggled on.

"Well, sir, one thing ran to another. I was very angry—I admit it. And finally the lie was passed. Then—then he drew a gun on me." "Remember," the warning was gentle. "There are finger prints upon it."

"Yes," cried Waterman, spurred to speed, "and they are probably mine. He threatened me with it. I took it away from him—threw it away. Then he fell upon me. As he did so the lights went out—I don't know why. We struggled in the darkness, and fell to the floor fighting. As we fell, something struck my head, and that's all I know for quite a while. I don't know how long I was out, but when I came to, the lights were on again. Jim was gone. I was so sick and dizzy I could hardly stand up. The room swam before my eyes. I had only one idea—to get upstairs to my room. Little by little I finally made it, fell on my bed, and lay there till I heard Wilson rousing the house. And that's all I know, so help me God! If Jim has disappeared, he went himself. If he's been killed, I didn't do it. I didn't do it, as God's my judge!"

The Swami allowed him a brief interval for self-control, but presently he asked—"The revolver, was it fired?" "No." "The Hindu moved slowly to the desk, picked up the gun by the barrel, and offered it to Doris. The weapon was still broken as it had been when Waterman cast it away. The Swami deftly extracted a cartridge and examined it.

Economic Danger in the Rapid Spread of Use of Labor-Saving Machinery

By JAMES J. DAVIS, Secretary of Labor.

WE ARE coming to realize that it is a serious matter to have any men out of employment. To prosper we must work and produce. If our present prosperity is to be maintained every able-bodied producer in the country must be kept employed for the maximum period of the year and at the maximum wage. When we have any considerable number of people out of work and earning no wages, business suffers by the absence of just that number of buyers.

One element of economic danger to our workers, and so to our prosperity, arises from the rapid spread of labor-saving machinery, what we call the mechanization of industry. In all our great industries machines are being introduced at a rate which justifies calling it a new industrial revolution.

It is only the period of adjustment that needs to be watched, the time during which a man displaced by a new machine must wait and perhaps suffer until he can find a new occupation. Manufacturers will soon see the mistake in too rapidly putting in machines and throwing out workers.

The long day and the long week should be as obsolete in America as serfdom and chattel slavery. Wipe out the long week and you enable consumption to catch up with production and so keep men in their jobs.

The man kept at work all the time has no time left in which to see and buy things. Give him more leisure and he will consume more and want more. He will develop new desires, and so create new demands, new markets for new products.

Existence of Life in Immaterial Things Conceded by Scientific Thinker

By SIR OLIVER LODGE, British Scientist.

Science, with all its great work, has not eliminated the accumulated witness of the ages. The immensity of possible discovery contrasts with our feebleness in putting it into words. For that reason never throw away hastily any old faith or traditions because of some dogma of science, do not run foul of conventions merely because you do not see the good of them.

The problems do not get easier as the world grows older. The extraordinary multiplicity of plants and animals is astounding. What an imagination the Creator must have had! Our growth of knowledge of the planetary system shows that everything is governed by one system of law. Order permeates all space, which leads us to postulate the existence of some great being who controls all. Even space is full of the animation of life and matter.

Real existence is a much wider thing than terrestrial existence. We are mistaken in believing that life can exist only for material bodies. It can exist, perhaps better, with immaterial things. Our senses tell us only about matter and that is why matter only has loomed so large in our minds. Life can exist in the interspaces as well as on the planets.

Passion for the Welfare of Others a Rich Experience of Human Life

By REV. DR. HAROLD LEONARD BOWMAN, Portland, Ore.

It is the most glorious news that man can learn that he is a child of God, an inevitable possessor of a share in the divine life, a child of God. The term "Our Father" means more than that. It signifies that at the heart of all things is love and good will.

True religion cannot be merely an individual affair. It must include both our attitudes and our actions toward other people. If we accept as valid Jesus' picture of God as father, if we rise to His concept of the interrelation of the human and the divine, if we believe that God is love and that He seeks the highest good of all men—then there are startling conclusions to which we are forced. We, His children, must come increasingly to share that love and be governed by its spirit. As children of a father, sharers of His nature, we must share His interest in His other children.

If we let divine love operate in and through our lives we shall find more and more a passion for human welfare, an eagerness for the highest, fullest experience of all human lives.

"Lame Ducks" Not to Be Considered Unregenerate Outcasts of Society

By DEAN ROBBINS (Episcopal), Washington.

There is not only use for the "lame duck," there is also hope. Science is continually making headway in its long warfare upon disease. Malady that once resisted stubbornly now yields to treatment. The victim of tuberculosis, who was once shut up in a stuffy room to die, is now bunched off to Saranac lake or Arizona to get well. The victims of drug habits and of alcoholism, who were once considered hopeless, are now being reclaimed to society by the application of principles of psychology.

Pity is another answer to elimination. As men grow saner, stronger, more self-restrained, more civilized, they grow more pitiful. The truly civilized man assumes voluntarily the care of the incapable. Some divine instinct has taught him that his fate is bound up with theirs. This law of pity has embraced all weakness, all dependence, even all delinquency.

Faith of Judaism Always a Way of Life; Never Has Been a Creed

By RABBI LOUIS L. MANN, Chicago.

Judaism has no fundamentalism because it always has been inevitably and inherently evolutionistic. Religion, according to Judaism, never was a creed, but always a way of life.

Ours is an age of confusion. In the sphere of religion the clash of fundamentalism with modernism, in its vain attempt to turn the hands of the clock backward, holding on to legends and superstitions that have outlived their day, is sadly significant.

In the realm of morals we have witnessed the breakdown of authority. In the field of education a mechanistic philosophy and a behavioristic psychology jostle one another, while education remains mere propaganda. In civic affairs crime is allied with politics. In the sociological realm the institution of marriage is threatened. In literature, art and music classicism and romanticism have given way to jazz.



Waterman Slowly Recoiled, His Eyes Fixed Upon the Swami, as if Hypnotized.



Doris, in a Negligee, Hurriedly Cast Over Her Nightgown.

him. He laid his hand lightly upon her shoulder. "I don't know anything about cycles," said Wilson with startling distinctness, "but I'm going to call the police." Again he started for the telephone. "Wait," said the Swami with quiet swiftiness. "Later, perhaps, you shall summon those imbeciles. But not now." And after a little pause he went on, "You have questioned the domestics?" "No, sir, not yet." The Swami sat down. "Do so," he said. Wilson turned to the maids. "Ann," he said, "when did you see Mr. Stanley last?" "About six o'clock, sir," replied the maid, "as he was passing through the hall."



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Indian Superstitions

Many Indian tribes held that animals and plants were animated by spirits, as powerful and active. Among their elemental gods were the sun, fire and water. The buffalo, eagle and rattlesnake were worshipped. Among plants, cedar, cottonwood, corn and tobacco were venerated.

Heard and Not Seen

"I hear your neighbors have a new solarium in their house." "Goodness, maybe that's the awful thing we hear 'em playing on."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

It is easy for a rich old man to say that youth is enough for a young man.

There are quarrels and quarrels, but family quarrels are the worst.

Are You Ready



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The Comic Strip

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