

THE DOUBLE CROSS

By A. E. THOMAS

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CHAPTER XIV—Continued

"Jefferson," said Doris, "get the gardener—tell him to get what men he can—get them out of their beds—pay them anything they want, I don't care. We've got to search the grounds again from end to end. Get some boats—we've got to follow the shore of the lake. Get lanterns—searchlights—anything you can. We mustn't wait! Mr. Stanley may be laying out there dying at this very moment. Hurry!"

Thus electrified, the butler went out and shut the door.

Doris turned to Nina, took her by the hand and led her to the divan.

"Sit down," she said, "I want to talk to you. Rollin has gone away—we shall not see him again, any of us."

"Gone?" cried Nina.

"Yes, he leaves the country today forever."

"But look here," cried the other, "he can't go like this, without settling with me."

"He is going," repeated Doris, "and you can't help it. You mean to say that he's taken care of you all this time?"

Nina laughed. "Yes, he had to. He was afraid I'd blab to you if he didn't."

"I suppose you knew it was my money that he gave you?"

"I suspected it."

"You must have done rather well," commented Doris, with a tinge of sarcasm. "Have you saved anything?"

Nina showed her white teeth. "Oh, I've been doing," she admitted.

"Yes," commented Doris, "you don't look exactly poverty-stricken."

"But I say, what's up?" asked the other. "Here's the whole house in an uproar in the middle of the night, but no Mr. Stanley. And that butler was so scared he couldn't hardly talk to me."

"Never mind that," said Doris. "There's a question or two I have to ask you. You must realize that the middle of the night is a peculiar time for you to be calling on Mr. Stanley? What does it mean?"

"I don't know much more about that than you do," Nina replied. "I'll tell you everything I do know, and it's this. Somehow or other Mr. Stanley found out where I was living, and came to see me. He said that he had something very important to discuss with me, and that I must come here at precisely this time of night to do it. He didn't tell me any more than that."

"Didn't you think it peculiar?"

"I did—very. But he said that he would make it worth my while. In fact, he paid me very well in advance and promised that he would double the sum if I did as he said. Well, I knew that he was a very rich man and that I could rely on him to keep his word, so I'm here. And that's all I know."

"Very well," said Doris, "whatever he promised you, I will make it my business to see that you are paid. Come and see me when you like; but just now, if I were you, I wouldn't wait for Mr. Stanley any longer."

"All right; you seem to be the boss."

Doris glanced at the sleeping child. "Poor little lamb, he's tired out," she said. "Well, now that his father has gone, I suppose I shall have to go right on taking care of him—only now I shall know it."

"You needn't worry about him," was the somewhat surprising response, "his father'll look after him. Oh, yes, and his mother, too. They're both perfectly crazy about him."

"What are you saying?"

Nina smiled broadly. "I haven't got any kid," she announced. "He's my sister's."

"What?"

"I borrowed him."

"Look here—"

"Oh, yes," went on Nina cheerfully, "Mr. Rollin Waterman wasn't so clever by half. The best way to hold a man is through a kid. Well, just when I needed one, I didn't have any, but my sister did, so I borrowed him. Oh, you should have seen me! I looked quite sweet when Rollin came to see me, lying in bed, pale and interesting, all dolled up in a silk negligee and a boudoir cap, and this little chap in my arms. Rollin was quite touched for a moment—and later on he was touched a good many times."

"Good heavens!" said Doris feebly.

"Yep," continued Nina, "Heaven will protect the poor working girl, but she can help herself a lot. Well, I'm off." She rose.

"Tell Mr. Stanley I was here, when you see him."

"Yes," said Doris, and her voice fell, "when I see him."

Nina opened the door. "He knows my telephone number, if he wants me." She went out.

CHAPTER XV

When Wilson left the library with the stricken Waterman, he found Jefferson and O'Hara sitting bolt upright upon the stairs. They rose hastily, and stood aside to let Waterman pass. The secretary detained the latter with his hand upon his arm, while he said to the butler:

"Jefferson. Mr. Waterman finds himself obliged to go to town at once. Go

upstairs with him, help him dress, and pack his bag."

"Very good, sir," replied the butler. Waterman lumbered heavily up the stairs without speaking. Jefferson followed him.

As soon as they were out of sight, Wilson sat down upon the stairs and mopped his face with his handkerchief. The chauffeur stared at him in silence.

"Well," he said presently, "it's a h— of a night, ain't it?"

"Eh?" said Wilson absently.

"I say, it's a h— of a night!"

"Oh, yes, yes. But—it's over now."

"What do you mean, over?" demanded the chauffeur.

But Wilson did not enlighten him. Dazed as he was by the swift occurrences of the night, he made an effort to spur his faculties. Suddenly he thought of Nina. "Where's the girl who came to see Mr. Stanley?" he asked.

"Oh, she's in the reception room," replied O'Hara.

The secretary considered a moment. "Listen," he said. "There's a line of steamers plying between New York and South American ports with sailings every Monday morning. I happen to know because sometimes at the office we used to have to catch these boats with mail. I don't know which boat it is that sails tomorrow morning, but any morning newspaper will tell you. It's the Blue D Line. Mr. Waterman will sail on this liner. You are to see that he does."

"Hey, wait a minute," objected O'Hara. "You ain't asking me to kidnap the guy, I suppose?"

"Nonsense, what an idea!"

"Well, it sounds kind of queer to me."

"Nothing of the sort. Mr. Waterman is going of his own free will. If he decides at any time between now and the time the ship sails that he prefers not to go, that is his business. It is his present intention to take that boat. I want you to have the car at the door in five minutes. You will take Mr. Waterman to town. There will be a few hours to spend before the boat sails. What you will do with them is Mr. Waterman's business. Only this—if Mr. Waterman should change his mind, should he decide not to sail, turn him over to the nearest policeman and let me know by telephone at the earliest possible instant. Is that clear?"

"Sure, that's clear enough." The chauffeur rubbed his chin doubtfully. "But how about this business in there?"

He jerked his thumb over his shoulder toward the library door.

"You needn't worry about that," said Wilson. "Everything will be done that's possible. I shall call the police as soon as you're gone."

Suddenly he started to his feet.

"Oh," he said, "there's one thing more. Wait here."

In a moment or two he was back. "Here," he said to O'Hara, handing him a bulky envelope. "When you see Mr. Waterman safely aboard the ship, give him this envelope—but not before. And stay there till you see the ship actually under way."

"And what then?" demanded the chauffeur.

"Why then call me up and I'll tell you what to do. Now go and fetch the car!"

Again the little man collapsed upon the lowest stair. But not for long. For him the place was truly haunted. He rose and paced uneasily up and down the spacious hall, pausing every now and then to listen for a possible sound upstairs. Putting his hand in his pocket for the solace of tobacco, his fingers encountered something hard and cold. For the second time that night he handled the Colby necklace. "Good Heavens," he thought, "to think I could have forgotten all about them. What a night! What a night!"

As he stood at the foot of the staircase staring at the jewels, a voice spoke from the hall above.

"Ah-h," it said, "so you've got 'em now?"

The secretary replaced the diamonds in his pocket without answering and Waterman came heavily down the staircase. The butler followed, carrying his bag.

Outside a gentle purring announced the arrival of the car. The butler opened the door. The three men went out into the night. O'Hara opened the door of the limousine. Waterman got in and fell limply among the cushions. Wilson put his hand in at the door and said: "Mr. Waterman, I have told O'Hara of your plan to sail this morning on the Blue D Line. When you go aboard the boat he will hand you an envelope containing the funds necessary for your journey. Upon your arrival at your destination, if you will cable your address, the arrangements already agreed upon will be made at this end. The Blue D liners are equipped with wireless, I believe, and I would like it understood that soon after sailing you are to send us a radio confirming your departure. And if I may say so—"

"Oh, for God's sake," cried Waterman, "shut up!"

Wilson stood back and closed the door. He nodded to O'Hara. The car disappeared swiftly in the darkness.

Wilson sat down heavily upon the

stone steps, and watched the redness of the tail light until it disappeared around the bend in the road. The little man was exhausted. He must rest a moment before he could go on. The coolness of the night air was grateful to his aching head. He knew that what had been done so far had been well done. Even if he were never to see his beloved friend and protector again, at least he would have that satisfaction.

While he smoked a welcome cigarette, he reviewed the tumultuous events of the night. Presently, as his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he became aware of a figure standing at the far corner of the house. His heart leaped up—he started to his feet and approached it.

"Well," he said, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm just waitin' for the lady that I brought to the house," said the man. "The car's around the corner. Fine night."

"Oh—yes—said Wilson. As he turned, the door opened once more



"Doris, Doris, My Darling. Don't Cry, It's All Right."

and Nina emerged. In her arms she carried the sleeping child.

"Here's your passenger," he said, turning to the man, who disappeared in search of the car.

"Well, Pop," said Nina cheerfully, "here we are again, eh?"

"So it appears," he answered abruptly.

"Funny how old pals like you and me are always turning up, ain't it?"

"Very droll indeed," he answered.

"Funny kind of a deal I get here, though," went on the girl. "Mr. Stanley tells me to come here to see him in the middle of the night—makes it worth my while, too, I'll say—I show up, bringing me defenseless child, according to orders—and then no Stanley. Not but what we had a nice little party, what with dear old Rollin and his Missus and the Oriental conjurer, and the dear old pop—but no Stanley. What's the idea?"

"I'm sorry," said the secretary coldly, "but I really cannot enlighten you."

"Ah, well, you always were a gabby old soul, weren't you?" she jeered. "You were the one bright spot in the office in the old days—always so gay, you were. If it hadn't been for you I don't believe I could have stood it as long as I did."

The car rolled around the corner and pulled up in front of them. Wilson opened the door.

"Here," she said, "I can't get in and carry this." She thrust the sleeping child into Wilson's reluctant arms, and scrambled in. The dreaming boy awakened slightly, thrust his arms around the little secretary's neck, and murmured sleepily, "Is that you daddy?"

Nina heard him and laughed. "Ha," she cried, "that's the third daddy that I'll say tonight. He's well supplied, I'll say."

Wilson scarcely heard her jeering voice. Strangely and queerly and suddenly he was touched by the grasp of the tiny arms and the drowsy murmur of the childish voice. It was only a second.

"Good-by, Pop," cried Nina, and again Wilson stood alone in front of the gray old house.

Doris was scarcely conscious of the closing of the library door behind the departing Nina. Minutes passed, she never knew how many. All her faculties seemed paralyzed. But the moon altered, when it did alter, swiftly. Suddenly her brain was on fire. Action—that was it! Something must be done! She turned again to summon the butler. She would send for Wilson, and between them they would get to work. Even at this moment Stanley might be lying almost at the door, dead or dying! Her hand was on the door when she felt a presence in the room. Frozen into immobility she stood, unable to stir. A voice spoke.

"Well, Doris," it said quite cheerfully, "I thought you had gone to bed?"

Slowly she turned. Across the

room, just within the open French window, Stanley was standing. Speechless, she stared. He came to her, smiling.

"What's the matter?" he said.

Then she found her voice. "Jim—Jim—Jim! Is it really you?"

"Of course, why not?" he spoke lightly.

With a cry she threw herself into his arms, sobbing hysterically. He did not try to stop her. He understood perfectly the strain through which she had been passing. But presently, when her sobs grew less hysterical he murmured, "Doris, Doris, my darling. Don't—don't cry—it's all right. Oh, it's been too much for you, hasn't it? But it's all right now. See, here I am; I'm all right. Look at me."

Still she clutched him tightly, so that he held her close and said no more. At last she drew away and murmured, "But we—we thought you were dead."

"Dead?"

"Why yes—yes—all of us—the Swami and everybody—"

With a click of the latch the door opened behind her. The Swami stood there. She turned and saw him. Quickly she ran to him, seized his hand and cried:

"Oh, sir, he isn't dead at all—Jim's not dead—here he is!"

The Swami bent his calm, benignant gaze upon her and said, "And why not?"

"What? You knew it all the time?" she cried.

"Knew what? was the calm inquiry.

"Why, that Jim wasn't dead at all?" The Swami knitted his brows. "I do not understand, madame?"

"You don't understand? Why, when you left here five minutes ago you said—"

The Swami raised his hand. "I fear there is some mistake, I have not seen madame since noon."

"What?" she cried, falling back in amazement.

"I have been in my room absorbed in meditation for many hours. By-and-by, a little while ago, I hear strange sounds about the house. I open my door. The house is bright. It is long past midnight, so I come to see what it might be."

The violet eyes stared more widely than ever before. "You haven't seen me since noon?" she cried.

"No, madame—not since the noon meal."

"And you haven't been in the room for the last hour? How about the pistol, the blood stain on the rug, the strange dark woman and her child? How about them?"

"Wait, my friend," replied the Swami in a puzzled voice, and he turned to Stanley: "Is madame quite herself?"

"I think so," answered Stanley with a smile.

"But I do not understand one word of what she says!"

"Madame has had a trying experience, but she will be quite all right after a night's sleep, I am sure."

"Ah, and all else is well?" inquired the Hindu.

"Oh very; never was better!"

"Then perhaps I will retire."

"Do so," agreed Stanley, promptly. "I regret that your meditations have been disturbed."

The Swami moved to the door.

"Good-night, my friend; Madame, good-night." Silently he was gone.

Jim turned again to Doris. She looked at him with something of a glare. "Jim, Jim, am I going mad?" she cried.

Through the door behind the desk came Wilson at this moment. Had he in his arm he carried a bundle of clothes.

Stanley grinned at him frankly.

"Well, Frank, it was a great success, eh?"

"Immense," said Wilson, grinning back.

"Ten thousand thanks!"

"That's all right, sir," returned Wilson easily, but his face was still dead white. "What do you want me to do with these things?"

"Eh?"

"Your Hindu costume, sir?"

"I don't care—I'm through with them."

"In that case I think I'll go to bed, sir—I'm a little tired."

"Sleep well, my friend. Oh, by the way, O'Hara's gone?"

"Yes, sir. The car's just pulled out."

"Do you think he will go through with it?"

"I'm sure he will. What else can he do? You see, sir, there's this," and once more, and for the last time that night, Wilson produced the Colby necklace.

Stanley took the blazing beauty from his hands. He looked at Doris, still smiling. She came slowly toward him, smiling herself and for the first time. He clasped the diamonds about her throat. A moment the two men looked at her.

"Hm," said Stanley at length, clearing his throat. "Good-night, Frank."

"Good-night, sir," responded the little clerk, and he went out.

"Jim—Jim," breathed Doris faintly. "It was you—you were the Swami!"

"You clever, clever darling!"

[THE END.]

LIGHT DEVELOPS BAD MILK FLAVOR

Defect May Be Due to Any of Several Causes.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Sunlight—nature's cure-all for many ailments—is bad medicine for milk. Milk kept in the "outdoor leechbox" or on the window sill sometimes develops an odor like drying linseed oil. Such a defect may be due to any of several causes, but one of the most common causes, according to Dr. William C. Frazier of the bureau of dairy industry, United States Department of Agriculture, is ordinarily light. The light apparently acts as a catalyst in the oxidation of the milk fat, he says.

That light is essential for the development of the carboard taste has been demonstrated recently by Doctor Frazier in a series of tests in which duplicate sets of samples of milk were prepared, one of which was exposed to daylight and the other placed in the dark. In all cases the samples kept in the dark developed no off flavors or odors, even after seven to nine days at near freezing temperatures, whereas the samples kept in the light at the same temperatures developed the characteristic carboard odor and taste after 20 to 48 hours of which 8 to 23 hours were daylight.

Further tests showed that the carboard taste is not due to the carboard cap, and that it develops in the cream or in whole milk and not in skim milk. Furthermore, milk from cows that had received no oil feeds was found to be just as susceptible when exposed to light as that from cows that consumed large quantities of oil feeds.

Consumers are cautioned to keep milk in the dark, even when temperatures in the light are near freezing, to avoid the development of carboard taste and linseed-oil odor.

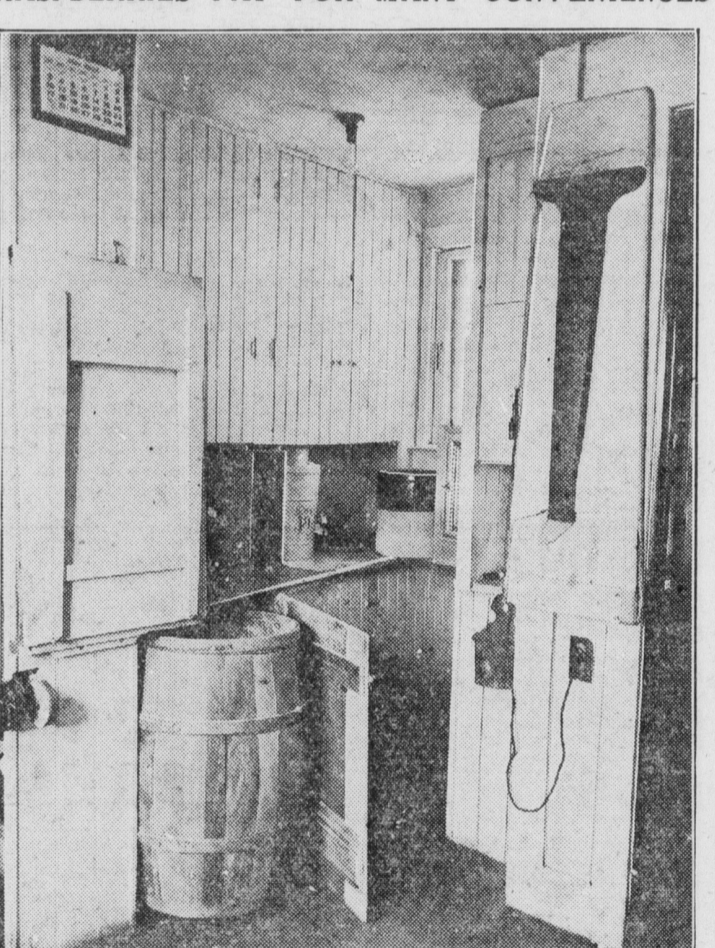
Scalloped Smoked Fish and Egg Is Good Dish

Any of the smoked fish with large flakes may be used, but flounder makes a particularly good dish of scalloped fish. The bureau of home economics tells how to prepare it.

- 1½ cups flaked 4 to 6 hard-cooked eggs, sliced
- 2 cups milk ½ cup bread crumbs
- 4 tbs. flour 4 drops tabasco
- 6 tbs. butter

Stir the bread crumbs into two tablespoonfuls of the butter, melted. Prepare a cream sauce of the remaining butter, and the flour and milk. Grease a baking dish and put in a layer of fish, then egg. Pour over this the cream sauce, and continue until all of these ingredients are used. Sprinkle the buttered bread crumbs over the top, and bake in a quick oven until the sauce bubbles up and the crumbs are brown.

RASPBERRIES PAY FOR MANY CONVENIENCES



Folding Conveniences in the Kitchen.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Where there's a will there's a way. Mrs. Devoe of Worcester county, Massachusetts, was determined to make her kitchen more convenient after she had talked with the home demonstration agent about the improvements needed. She realized that considerable extra planning and work would have to be done, especially as the suggested improvements would require an expenditure of about \$150. So Mrs. Devoe concentrated on her own special source of income—her raspberry patch. From the sale of her fruit she earned enough to carry out her cherished plan. Most of the work she did herself.

To economize space there is a folding ironing board on a closet door,

ROMPERS SUITABLE FOR WINTER WEAR

None More Easily Made Than Print Shown.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Among the various practical designs in rompers suitable for children of three or four years old, there is none more easily made than the romper of colored print shown in the illustration. It is cut with wide, short, raglan sleeves which may be extended to the wrist if preferred. The neck is flat, outlined by a shaped band of plain contrasting material, carried to the bottom of the front opening. Plain material is also used to finish the sleeves and pockets and to make



Rompers for Four-Year-Old.

the loose leg bands into which the rompers are slightly gathered at the sides.

White piping outlines the colored bands and adds to the decoration. Three large flat buttons, easily managed by little fingers, are used for the front fastening, while in the back two buttons, each side keep the drop seat in place.

This romper may be made from any ordinary romper pattern with raglan sleeves. The bureau of home economics, which designed this adaptation, does not have patterns to distribute. It will be noticed that the legs are cut slightly higher on the sides to prevent them from slipping down over the knees.

Any Woman Can Look Stylish
By MAE MARTIN



Most stylish-looking women are just "good managers." They know simple ways to make last season's things conform to this season's styles.

Thousands of them have learned how easily they can transform a dress, or blouse, or coat by the quick magic of home tinting or dyeing. Anyone can do this successfully with true, fadeless Diamond Dyes. The "know-how" is in the dyes. They don't streak or spot like inferior dyes. New, fashionable dyes appear like magic right over the out-of-style or faded colors. Only Diamond Dyes produce perfect results, fast on them and save disappointment.

My new 64-page illustrated book, "Color Craft," gives hundreds of money-saving hints for renewing clothes and draperies. It's Free. Write for it now, to Mae Martin, Dept. E-143, Diamond Dyes, Burlington, Vermont.

DELICIOUS JELLY-QUICK DESSERT

Less than 2¢ a Dish

JELLY-QUICK makes two pints of delicious dessert, enough for ten servings—more than twice the ordinary quantity. An ideal dessert and delicious in taste. Seven flavors. Just mix with hot water—a minute's work—and it will jell in a hurry. Grocers can supply you.

FOOD PRODUCTS CO. BUTLER, PA.

JELLY-QUICK
A nourishing, strengthening daily dessert.

Coming Football Star.

The football squad at York (Maine) high has a candidate who, for size, would look pretty good to some of the college squads. He is Carleton Moulton, an aspirant for center. Moulton is fifteen years old and tips the scales at 272 pounds. He is more than six feet tall and is freshman.

With Big Alimony.

She—I suppose you know Alice married money.

He—Oh, yes. They're separated now, aren't they?

She—No—just she and her husband are separated.—Life.

There are millionaires who have simply let their business associates make them rich. How lucky.

Civil dissension is a viperous worm that gnaws the bowels of the commonwealth.—Shakespeare.

"AS NECESSARY AS BREAD"

Mrs. Skahan's Opinion of Pinkham's Compound

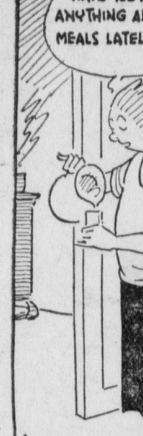
Saugus Centre, Mass.—"I have taken 10 bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and would not be without a bottle in the house than I would be without bread. It has made a new woman of me. I used to be so cross with my husband when I was suffering that I don't know how he stood me. Now I am cheerful and strong and feel younger than I did ten years ago when my troubles began."—Mrs. JOHN SKAHAN, 20 Emory St., Saugus Centre, Mass.

Garfield Tea Was Your Grandmother's Remedy

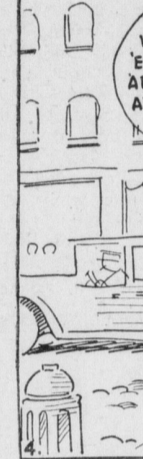
For every stomach and intestinal ill. This good old-fashioned herb home remedy for constipation, stomach ills and other derangements of the system so prevalent these days is in even greater favor as a family medicine than in your grandmother's day.

HOXSIE'S CROUP REMEDY
THE LIFE-SAVER OF CHILDREN
No opium, no narcotics. 50 cents at drugists, or KLEIN CO., NEWBURGH, N. Y.

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YEAH



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OH SPIKE OF THE JOKES FROM ENGLISH PAPERS, I CAN'T BELIEVE THE KID OVER THERE STARTS EVERY SENTENCE WITH "PLEASE, SIR."

