

The Mysterious Monogram

An Absorbing New Novel

By Howard P. Lovejoy

Copyrighted by the Author

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

The morning after a dinner given at his club by Lord Harcourt, an English nobleman, to announce to his engagement to Miss Grace Norton, one of his guests, Townshend, by name, is found dead, evidently stabbed while sitting at a table in one of the card rooms. Later the old door man is found back of the club strangled to death. The only strangers at the dinner were Kandwahl, the Indian prince, and Cornish, an American.

Harcourt, having been intoxicated, remembered nothing of what he did after dinner, and his valet, having found a stiletto in his pocket and blood on his clothes, is afraid he might be guilty of the murder.

On the stiletto is carved a strange



monogram, which Harcourt finds later on a cigarette stub on the table by the dead man. He goes to the Marston's drawing room and still another in a flower box near Miss Marston at the Cornish's residence.

(Now go on with the story.)

CHAPTER VII.

AN INTERRUPTED VISIT.

Fergus was in the hallway when Harcourt entered his house.

"Anything for me?" he asked giving the man his hat and cloak.

"Nothing my lord."

"Very well, then, Fergus. Go to bed. I shall not need you. My luggage is packed I suppose."

"Yes, my lord."

"We leave at eleven from Victoria station. Good night."

He walked slowly up the stairs and laid out his trunk. He knew there would be no sleep for him and he wanted to think alone—to arrive, if possible, at some conclusion that would define for him his future course of action.

On the threshold of the room he paused, pushing open the half closed door. There was a faint glow by the big mahogany writing table, and Harcourt fancied that he heard a noise in the far corner of the room. The light he had seen faded away. Luckily and as he listened all was quiet. With a start he touched the electric switch, and as the globes flumed he gave an exclamation of surprise.

Behind the filing cabinet was the figure of a man in evening dress. The man's face was half turned toward Harcourt and he was looking at him with a look of angry surprise. It was Kirishin Kandwahl. A drawer of the cabinet had been forced open, and in his hand the knife Harcourt had locked up in it.

Quietly Harcourt closed the door behind him and then stepped slowly forward.

"Good evening, your highness," he said with mock courtesy.

"Good evening, my lord," he returned with a little bow.

"You pay unexpected visits," Harcourt observed. "May I ask how you reached this room?"

With a wave of his hand, Kandwahl indicated the open window.

"Indeed," said Harcourt. "This is the second time I have had occasion to note that method of entrance—or exit."

Kandwahl smiled again, and it was evident that Harcourt's reference was known to him. "You are very observant," he replied in his soft, purring voice.

"Had I known that you were yours," Harcourt continued with a glance at the knife Kandwahl held in his hand.

"Doubtless have mentioned the fact to the police," Kandwahl interrupted. "Believe me, my lord, but for the chance discovery of its sheath this morning, I should have been delighted to leave it in your possession—especially since you seem to place so high a value upon it."

He indicated the open drawer of the filing cabinet. "Really, quite an ingenious hiding place. It took me some time to discover it after I succeeded in opening the drawer."

"You are well versed in such work," Harcourt said sarcastically.

"I have the knife."

"Which you will be good as to place upon the table," said Harcourt.

"Pardon me," Kandwahl objected. "I shall do nothing of the sort."

"Am I to be put to the unpleasant necessity of ringing for servants or perhaps telephoning to Scotland Yard?"

"To a great extent, yes. The police will never be able to fasten the crime upon you. Without the knife they cannot produce evidence against me. Vice versa, therefore, is a source of danger to both of us, for its discovery will implicate you as well as me. In that event I might be obliged, for self protection, to tell where I found it."

"Would you also mention just how it came into my possession?" Harcourt asked with a smile.

"Not being a seer—even though I am an Indian—I should be unable to throw any light upon that subject," said Kandwahl. "I can only add that I do not intend to be accused of this crime myself or not, for in whatever of the kind."

"You know far more about this than you are willing to tell. You seem over-confident of my safety, as well as of your own. Does your determination to remain silent go so far that you would let an innocent man suffer the penalty for a crime he did not commit?"

The Indian did not answer at once. Then he spoke in a low tone, as though he feared that someone other than Harcourt might catch his words.

"When I shall tell what I know, he said solemnly. 'Until then my lips are sealed.'"

He stood by the door now, waiting. "Will you see me out as I suggest?"

For a moment Harcourt hesitated. What part had this man played in the events of the past twenty-four hours?

—what did he know of the mysterious monogram that had haunted Harcourt ever since his first discovery of the knife the Indian had come to steal?

He knew that Kandwahl could tell him what he wished to know—if he would. But he realized that any questioning would be in vain and his own position in the matter forbade his trying to force the information he sought.

"It will probably be better that my servants should not know of your having been here," Harcourt said. "I will go down with you myself."

Kandwahl bowed and walked out. Silently Harcourt followed him down the stairs and himself let him out at the main entrance of the house.

Without even a word of farewell, the great door closed behind the Indian, and Harcourt, more puzzled than ever, returned to his study.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SUSPECT ARRESTED.

Alone on the steps outside, Kandwahl was heard to murmur, "ver I set the chain within. The trees in the park shaded the house from the glare of the arc light at the corner, and he stood in the sheltering darkness for a moment, looking cautiously up and down the now deserted street.

Then he slipped quickly down the steps and hurried off at a rapid pace.

Once he looked back and saw no one, then he passed along the shadows of a doorway opposite and followed slowly, halting now and then behind convenient shelters, lest Kandwahl should turn again and observe him.

Kandwahl, hastening his footsteps now, quickly turned the corner, and the man who followed hurried after him.

The fog was growing thicker, and the watch of discovery growing less and less, the pursuer came closer in the fear that Kandwahl might elude him in the gray mist.

There were but few persons abroad, and those who passed glanced suspiciously at the figure in evening clothes, with his inexpressive wrapped tightly about him, hurrying silently through the haze. Now the faint of a hansom bell came faintly to Kandwahl's ears, and once the horn of a taxicab warned him just in time to avoid the thing that suddenly bounded up out of the fog at a street crossing.

Still the man behind him—now only a few paces away—came steadily on, never risking for a moment any chance of losing sight of the Indian. But he made no effort to overtake him, he was apparently being to discover Kandwahl's destination.

At last Kandwahl came to the river and walked briskly along the embankment. The toll of a bell rang out loudly through the stillness, and he paused to look over the river wall. It was black and chill below, and he shivered as he thought of being enveloped in the water's depths.

For a moment he stood leaning against the banister. The dew dropped from the folds of his cloak and looked at it for a moment. His arm shot up and the long, slender blade flashed wickedly in the faint light.

With a snarl he gripped his arm. With a strong hand he turned back, and the blade dropped from his fingers, clattering upon the stone pavement at his feet.

With a snarl he turned his head, and looked into the determined eyes of a thick set man in a plaid mackintosh, a man of unusual strength whose grip still held his wrist from door.

"Not so fast, your highness," said the man with a grin. "I think MacBee will like to have that knife."

"Who are you?" Kandwahl demanded, his eyes fixed on the weapon on the pavement to the face of the stranger.

"Barney is the name," the man replied. "And Scotland Yard the address. I think you'd better be coming there with me now, sir."

"You mean that I am under arrest?"

"I'm afraid so, sir. If you'll just step along a short distance I think I can find a night hawk with a cab, sir."

Still holding fast to Kandwahl's wrist, Barney stepped down and picked up the dagger.

"You needn't break my wrist bones," said Kandwahl with a grimace. "I shan't attempt to run away."

"Thank you, sir," said the detective. "I hope we won't have to detain you long, sir."

"I hope not, I am sure," Kandwahl agreed. "And may I ask why I am being taken there at all?"

"You may, sir, but I won't promise to answer. I happened to see you leaving Lord Harcourt's house, sir, and curiously to know what you were going to do overcame me. When I saw you about to throw this beautiful little toy into the Thames, I just couldn't resist the temptation to ask you to come along with me and explain it all to me."

"I knew he'd be interested in knowing why you didn't want it any more," Barney smiled knowingly, and bailed a passing cabman who whirled up sharply when he heard the directions and caught sight of the detective's familiar countenance.

During the ride Kandwahl discreetly remained silent, and the detective was not disposed to be communicative. Half way to their destination Kandwahl produced his cigarette case, apologized for having but one cigarette, and lit it after several attempts in the stiff breeze that was now blowing.

He only took a few puffs of it, however, and then threw it out of the cab with a sigh of relief. He had remembered just in time to take the monogram of his cigarettes, and that on the bill of the dagger in Barney's pocket were the same.

MacBee was in his office when they arrived. Fully dressed he sat by a small table with a reading lamp, smoking his pipe with evident enjoyment, as he sat staring silently at the ceiling.

He looked toward the door as the two men entered and smiled when he saw Kandwahl. Then he turned an inquiring glance at Barney.

"He has the dagger, sir," said Barney, saluting his superior. "I found him named to throw it into the river."

MacBee took the knife from the detective and examined it carefully. From his pocket he took the sheath, and fitted the blade into it. With a smile of satisfaction he compared the workmanship on the bill and blade with that of the leather case, and then, with a low whistle, looked straight at Kandwahl. "This is your knife," he said accusingly.

"It is," was the frank and rather sheepish reply.

"I thought so from the first," MacBee said. "The initials seemed familiar."

"They are mine," Kandwahl said. "No—were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

"No—we were alone. I gave the knife to Capt. Townshend before Lord Harcourt's dinner last evening."

"Indeed," said MacBee. "Did anyone see you give it to him?"

he may say?" Harcourt asked. "No, not the slightest," Carrington replied. "One thing of interest to us all, however, is the fact that MacBee expressed implicit confidence in Jack's innocence, and said he hoped shortly to justify his belief."

"How perfect?" Grace exclaimed delightedly.

"I'm sure I wish him luck," drawled Harcourt.

"MacBee told you something else—about the knife?" Farndale prompted.

"Oh, yes," Carrington went on. "I almost forgot that. You remember what I told you, Jack? I knew it belonged to Kandwahl, and when he was taken into custody last night it was found upon his person."

"You are sure?" Grace asked excitedly.

"Positively," said Carrington. "Kandwahl admitted his ownership, and could not deny that it was the murder dagger. But its beyond me how the deuce—"

"Is it Dicky?" Harcourt broke in warily.

"Yes. Did you know of it?" Carrington demanded.

"I suspected as much," Harcourt answered. "You'll find Scotch on the table."

Farndale and Carrington helped themselves, and Harcourt took a stiff drink with them; then led the way to their rooms as Adele and Grace went up to dress for dinner.

Alone with Marston, Cornish lit a cigar and began to walk slowly up and down the room. "Look here, Sir Thomas," he said at last. "This MacBee's business is taking an aspect I don't like. I think Harcourt knows more about it than he is willing to tell."

"Bliss me, sir," Marston exclaimed in amusement. "Surely you don't mean you believe he could have—"

"Committed the crime? No. In fact, I am perfectly satisfied that he did not. On the other hand, I do think he is connected with it in some way that we know nothing of, and that he feels it his duty to shield some one."

"That would make him an accomplice?"

"Not necessarily. Like all Englishmen of his class, he has fool notions of his own innocence. 'I beg pardon, sir—no offense meant, I assure you—but he has absurd ideas of honor.'"

"Surely he would not permit himself to be accused of a crime of which he is innocent—just because of a desire to shield the guilty person?"

"That depends upon the person he is trying to protect," said Cornish.

"Impossible!" Sir Thomas objected. "There is no one for whom Jack would go so far—no one who could possibly be mixed up in this. I am sure you are mistaken. If Lord Harcourt knew anything of this affair, I am sure he would tell it to the police immediately."

"Well, I'm not so sure of it!" Cornish persisted. "Now, when you want to make clear to you this: I like Harcourt tremendously. He's a bit of a fool, but there's a lot of real man in him—deep down under his polished surface. I'm afraid he's going to get tangled up unpleasantly and quite unnecessarily however. And I don't intend to stand by and see him make any false steps. We may have to use force to prevent his getting himself into trouble, and then, if I can count upon your help in case we are obliged to resort to such methods."

(To Be Continued.)

HOUSE INVENTORIES.

Convenient Booklets Issued by the Insurance Companies.

Of the simpler schemes of the insurance agents who are always feverishly trying to hold old business and attract new one of the most successful is the issuing of a blank book for use as a residence inventory.

This is usually a neatly prepared booklet of 12 pages, in the System.

On the inside of the front cover is a notice of what to do in case of fire, instructions for making an inventory and appraisal and on the opposite page are lines for the dates of the original inventory and three revisions.

On the inside of the back cover are printed general instructions for placing insurance, how to give a notice for additional insurance and what to do in case of removal of property.

The twelve pages of the book are each devoted to a room and are ruled to show the number of articles inventoried, and a memorandum of each article itself, date of purchase, cost and description.

These inventories cost from six to seven cents apiece if they are got up in attractive style, and therefore they should not be carelessly made.

Convicted by a Thermometer.

In connection with the death of Dr. Whitlaw of Kilmilly, Scotland, an interesting story is told of his early career.

Bled called up one night he was walking along with the messenger when he was set upon and knocked down in a lonely part of the road.

His pockets were rifled and he was left lying on the road severely injured. One of the articles stolen was a clinical thermometer with which he had that evening taken the temperature of a patient. He remembered the temperature registered, also that he had not shaken down the mercury before putting the thermometer in his pocket and he communicated these facts to the police.

Some time afterward a thermometer registering the identical temperature was discovered in a passage in Glasgow and by this means the police were enabled to track the doctor's assailants and to arrest them.

"No one seems to know much more about it, but the moment the rumor reached me I telephoned to MacBee, and he confirmed the story. He declined to discuss the matter, but the folks in town are saying that the police expect another and more important arrest in the near future. The fact is, it is openly prophesied—and without contradiction—that before morning the murderer will be in the hands of the police."

"If he is not already there," said Cornish.

"He does give any hint as to who