

*When he could see no visible clue to that international murder, Scotland Yard's Harringay was not left in the dark. He simply borrowed . . .*

# A Nose for Crime

*By John Michel*



I HAD been pounding on the door for a good three minutes when Harringay of New Scotland Yard, the scourge of criminals of three continents, opened the door of his New York hotel-apartment.

"It's Fothergill!" he said and beckoned to me. "Sorry, old boy," he went on between puffs of smoke from his pipe, "for not opening the door sooner. I thought you were my wife's attorney. She's still looking for alimony, y'know. Couldn't keep away from her back in jolly old Britain. Can't keep away from her here."

I nodded and waved aside the apology. "Harringay," I began, "as an old friend and fellow blitzee, you must help me. I am in trouble. To put it mildly, I am in danger of my life."

"Make it brief," said Harringay. "I can give you ten minutes—no more. No reflection on you, old chap, but I am busy at the moment cooperating with the F.B.I. on the trail of a gang of Nazi spies."

"Courtneigh is dead," I whispered. "He is not only dead, but I am suspected by the New York police of doing him in."

Considering the fact that Courtneigh, an important official on the British Trade Commission, was a very close friend of both of us, Harringay took it bravely. "Ummm," he mused. "Sorry to lose him. Poor Courtneigh! Had a bad gout, didn't he?"

"He had a gathering last night at his

apartment," I broke in. "Dinner for five, then cards and Scotch and sodas. Courtneigh insisted that we all remain for the night so as to finish up some Trade Commission business this morning. We all went to bed before one A. M., but, with some unfinished business of the Commission in mind, I went in to see Courtneigh before retiring. He was sitting up, working late, as he always does. My interview with him was brief, lasting until 1:30.



"In the morning, precisely at nine o'clock, Courtneigh was found stabbed to death in his study. Naturally, the butler called the police. In the investigation that followed, during which none of us were allowed to leave the apartment, it came out that I had seen him last the night before.

"However, although Frieden, the police inspector in charge of the investigation, insisted that the others remain at the apartment until this evening, I was released upon my own recognizance as an official of the British Government. I came immediately to see you on the possibility of preventing embarrassing

publicity and so forth.”

“Naturally,” said Harringay, “you are suspect Number One. Have the police established a motive?”

“They have,” I replied. “A matter of a sum of money lent me by Courtneigh which I was prepared to repay this morning.”

“The police did not believe you,” he rejoined, then tapped his teeth with the stem of his pipe. “Still, beyond a doubt, you are innocent.”

“Of course,” I agreed hastily.

He got up from his chair meditatively. Suddenly there was a smashing of glass followed instantly by a faint hiss. Something whizzed by me and buried itself in the opposite wall.

“Ha!” exclaimed Harringay. He threw himself to the floor, drew a large Parabellum automatic, known erroneously in the Americas as a Luger, from the gaping right pocket of his smoking jacket and fired through the window.

From across the court burst a shrill scream. I leapt to the window in time to see a body topple from another window on the same level as our own, some twenty yards or so distant, and fall seven stories to the pavement. Harringay snatched up a battered pair of binoculars from his desk, threw open the window and focused the lenses on the body, which had bounced shockingly.

“Ah!” he breathed after a moment. Then he drew back, closed the window, and, replacing the revolver and binoculars in their respective resting places, took a deep breath. He began walking toward his bedroom, talking over his shoulder as he went.

“On second thought, Fothergill,” he drawled, “I can give you six hours—no more. My work with the F.B.I. has, for the nonce, been terminated. The body lying at the bottom of the airshaft is none other

than that of the chief of the spy ring. Recognized him via the glasses. Thorough chap. Been trying to get me for months.” He paused, scratching his head. “Beastly aim, that fellow. Wouldn’t have taken tenth place at the shooting meets at Ploveridge.”

He disappeared into the bedroom, to emerge a few minutes later attired in his usual tweeds. “I must inform the police of the shooting which just occurred and, at the same time, try to arrange a reinvestigation of Courtneigh’s death while the others who were present at the apartment last night are still there.

“Of course,” he added, throwing me a wry glance, “I shall be pleased to accept some slight remuneration for my services—say fifty pounds. The sum would just cover my monthly alimony instalment.”

I nodded agreement eagerly.

AT a pay phone in the lobby of his hotel, Harringay contacted Inspector Frieden. After a short conversation with the Inspector, he reported to me that he had settled the matter of the shooting of the Nazi spy and also arranged for a reinvestigation at Courtneigh’s apartment.

Frieden was leaving immediately for Courtneigh’s place from police headquarters, Harringay told me, and we were expected to join him there within the hour. In the meantime, as I also learned from the detective, three policemen had remained to see to it that none of the others present at the time of death, departed before evening.

We reached Courtneigh’s apartment within a short time via subway, and, upon arriving, found that Frieden was already there. Present in Courtneigh’s study were also Ronald Cather, Gene Sholes, and John Skite, all British expatriates and acquaintances of Courtneigh and myself,

and who had been his guests on the fatal night.

Harringay immediately lit his pipe and had a talk with Frieden, who cooperatively showed him around the murder room. The circle of men gathered in poor Courtneigh's study watched the detective as he flitted here and there with Frieden, examining this bit of drapery hanging near a window, tapping concentratedly on that piece of heavy furniture.

Finally, after the Inspector had opened a steel filing case near Courtneigh's desk and, drawing forth a blue-colored folder, which Harringay inspected minutely, the detective paused in his walk and sat down in the chair behind the desk.

"An inside job," he announced reflectively. "Obviously the windows were permanently locked, this apartment being completely air-conditioned. There is the open question of the door, of course, but the butler swears that he locked it before midnight and would surely have been awakened by anyone opening it. Having known Courtneigh's butler for a number of years, I see no reason to doubt his story. On that basis, I can only conclude that there is good possibility that the murderer is in this room."

Harringay broke off suddenly and asked to see the murder weapon. Frieden handed him a flannel-wrapped object which the detective began promptly to unroll. He had just removed the ivory-handled letter-opener with which Courtneigh had been killed, when the murdered man's dog, a huge brown shepherd, came padding into the room. He went straight up to Harringay, was rewarded with an absent pat on the head, then began wandering around the room, sniffing, as all dogs, at our legs.

I had been keeping my attention fixed on Harringay up to that moment. Examining the weapon, nothing more than

a blank look showed on his face. But, as the dog retreated, a new light suddenly gleamed in his eyes. I felt better immediately, because up to now there had been no indication in the detective's manner that he had found a possible clue with which to clear me.

Harringay, now plainly aroused, seemed to be searching for something on Courtneigh's desk. He fumbled with some papers, turned over a few books and nearly upset a bottle of ink before he apparently found what he was looking for. Peering at the thing closely, as he drew it from a small silver box, I made out what looked like a sliver of steel.

Harringay was smiling now. He held up the object and called for attention. "Observe, gentlemen." Instantly the small bit of metal was the cynosure of all eyes.

"If you don't recognize what this is, I'll tell you. The object is a dog whistle, designed specially for the auditory senses of the canine which can detect vibrations of a frequency so high as to be totally inaudible to the human ear. From years of acquaintance with Courtneigh, I know that he used this whistle to signal the dog when he wanted him to perform some errand, for, as you know, the murdered man was an invalid. One blast, for instance, told the dog that his food was in the bowl in the far corner, ready for him."

He paused, put the whistle to his mouth and blew on it. There was no sound, but the dog instantly stopped sniffing at Frieden and moved toward a corner, where, as we could plainly see, rested a porcelain bowl.

**H**ARRINGAY'S face was grim. "Two whistles brought the dog to Courtneigh to carry some paper—say a newspaper—to some other point in this apartment." He illustrated his point. Every eye in the room was fixed upon the animal

as it left off sniffing at the empty bowl and moved toward the detective and the desk.

“Three blasts,” continued Harringay, “was a call for help. But now, gentlemen, consider another remarkable attribute of the canine, namely his extraordinary sense of smell. With this wonderful faculty he can detect a man frightened and in fear of his life.

“He does this by smelling out the odor of formic acid which is released through the sweat glands in large quantities when the human body is called to the alert against danger by the higher centers of the brain. Dogs do not care for this odor. It annoys them, floods their senses with an irresistible urge to destroy.” Harringay leaned forward in his chair.

*“In this room, gentlemen, is a frightened man, acutely aware that his life is at this moment hanging in the balance. I do not know him, but the dog, reacting to the danger signal, will, by combined instinct and association, recognize the murderer and attack him.”*

A cold chill rippled down my back. I looked at the others whose attention was frozen upon the dog, then I shot a rapid glance at Harringay who deliberately raised the whistle to his lips.

He blew it once—twice—thrice—my eyes leapt immediately to the dog—but it was already too late. To my right there was a crash. Glancing up and aside, I saw Cather reaching desperately for a gun as he cleared his chair which had gone over. Then the snub nose of his automatic was out and poking toward Harringay.

The sharp blast of a shot echoed through the room. When the noise had died away, I saw Harringay still sitting behind the desk—but in his hands was the Parabellum automatic, smoking. Cather, writhing in agony, was rubbing his right wrist, where the slug, striking his gun, had

shattered the bones. Frieden secured him with handcuffs in an instant.

Harringay stood up. He placidly replaced the gun in his pocket, picked up Cather’s automatic and handed it to Frieden.

“His attempt to escape establishes his guilt. The motive was the former contents of the empty blue folder which Frieden showed me some minutes ago. It contained a list of British fifth column spies operating in this country. Men who had belonged to the pre-war Fascist movement in England. Cather’s name was undoubtedly on that list. He obviously attempted to get it, was intercepted by Courtneigh last night and killed him, afterward destroying the contents. We’ll probably have no trouble obtaining a copy from New Scotland Yard.”

I breathed easier. Frieden was already leading his prisoner away. Then I silently took out my check book, wrote a draft for two hundred and fifty dollars and handed it to Harringay.

We started walking out of the study, the others following. Then, an idea which had been lurking in my mind ever since Harringay had blown the danger signal on Courtneigh’s whistle, blossomed suddenly.

“Look here,” I began, turning to Harringay, “that dog didn’t move a muscle when you blew three times on that whistle. I was looking right at him—and I know!”

Harringay chuckled. “Courtneigh did use the one and two whistle signal for the dog as we both well know. But after that, as far as I was concerned—anything went. Naturally the dog didn’t move toward Cather. I never expected him to—but Cather did.”

He paused, glancing at his check. “Providential, this money, old chap. Well, cheerio!”