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‘Ian Simpson is a real find. *Murder on Page One* is a beautifully crafted, gripping piece of crime fiction that holds the attention from page one until the very end.’

Alexander McCall Smith

‘This well-crafted, pacey, humorous whodunit from ex-judge Ian Simpson is an highly enjoyable read.’

LoveReading

‘An enjoyable, witty page-turner brought to life by the well-drawn, believable characters.’

Journal of the Law Society of Scotland

‘The twists and turns keep pace with the rising body count in what is a highly enjoyable piece of crime fiction. A follow-up encounter with Inspector No would be most welcome.’

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‘A superb read, following on the success of his first book, *Murder on Page One* ... The author weaves together two strong story lines ... (he) clearly has fun exposing and developing the bankers’ characters. St Andrews is defined to a tee. ... This is a rollicking read.’

Journal of the Law Society of Scotland

‘Definitely a series to watch out for from a new talent on the crime writing scene.’

Crime Fiction Lover

‘An engrossing mystery’

The Herald

MURDER
IN
COURT THREE

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MURDER
IN
COURT THREE

IAN SIMPSON



For Rosie, Matilda, Harry and Verity

What man was ever content with one crime?

Juvenal, Satires xiii

The characters you will meet (and those associated with them):

The Police

Deputy Chief Constable Stanley Davidson

Detective Chief Inspector Maclean, Edinburgh

Detective Inspector Flick Fortune, Cupar

Detective Inspector Fergus Maxwell, her husband, Dundee

Chief Superintendent Graeme Traynor, Edinburgh

Lynda Traynor, his wife

Detective Sergeant Lance Wallace, Cupar

Detective Constable Billy di Falco, Cupar

Detective Constable 'Spider' Gilsland, Cupar

Detective Sergeant Bagawath Chandavarkar, 'Baggo', Serious Fraud Office

Constable Alex McKellar, St Andrews

Detective Inspector Bryan Hepburn, Coatbridge

Detective Sergeant Kelly, Glasgow

Sergeant Smith, Glasgow

The Lawyers

Lord Hutton, a judge

The Dean of the Faculty of Advocates

Kenneth Cuthbert QC

Jen Cuthbert, his wife

Rob Bertram, Advocate

Molly Bertram, his wife

Percy Oliphant, Advocate

John Logan, Advocate

The Fraud Trial

Lord Tulloch, the judge
Farquhar Knox QC, crown counsel
Eloise Knox, his wife
Ranald Knox, his son
Reginald Buchan, his brother-in-law
Mark Radcliffe QC, substitute crown counsel
Melanie Arbuthnot, Advocate, crown junior counsel
Lachlan Smail, a farmer
Nicola Smail, his wife
John and Ellie Primrose, his friends
Gideon Maltravers, a planner
Joe Thomson, a builder
John Burns, a timeshare salesman

The Others

Ex-Detective Inspector Noel Osborne
Pete Bothwell, a journalist
Tam Walker, a forger
Mona McBride, his girlfriend
Father Neil, a priest
Johnny Dolan, a waiter
Gary Thomson, a waiter
Brenda Lenaghan, an artist
Lord and Lady Craigdiller, the chief Archer and his wife
Dr MacGregor, a pathologist

1

‘... and you will be hanged by the neck until you are dead.’ Speaking quietly, Farquhar Knox QC glared through sepulchral darkness towards the empty dock which, over the years, had held many of Scotland’s most notorious criminals. For a moment he wished he had sat as a judge when trials were short and sentences could be for ever. How times had changed. He leaned back in the high-backed leather chair, well-padded for today’s softer judges, and checked his fly zip. It was nearly time to go.

He heard a creak to his right and swung round, prepared to bully an intruder into going away. But the blustering tirade died on his lips as the sharp point of an arrow pierced his dinner shirt, entered his torso below the ribs and was pushed up until it penetrated his heart.

A few gurgles were the last sounds Farquhar Knox made. His own day of judgement had arrived.

2

‘This is a nightmare,’ Stanley Davidson stated. Scotland’s Deputy Chief Constable in charge of Crime and Operational Support swivelled his chair away from his desk and looked out at the lawns of Tulliallan Castle, where the country’s senior police officers were based. The sun shone on grass that was green and carefully striped by the mower. The trees were in leaf and still had the yellow tinge of new growth. It was Sunday morning and Davidson had missed his tee time on a day perfect for golf. But that was not the cause of his nightmare.

He turned to the two officers, one from Edinburgh the other from Fife, on the other side of the desk. ‘So after a glittering function at Parliament House on Friday night, with half the great and the good present, an eminent QC who is prosecuting a high-profile trial is found dead in the judge’s chair of Court Three. He has an arrow in his heart and we are told he probably had sex minutes before he died. The arrow was one used by the Royal Company of Archers and now there are rumours that he was having an affair with the wife of the Divisional Commander responsible for the inquiry. Have I missed out anything?’

Detective Inspector Flick Fortune said nothing. The shock on receiving the phone call informing her of

Farquhar Knox's murder had given way to anxiety. He had been prosecuting the big fraud trial in which she was the senior investigating officer. The effect on the trial might be drastic. The later call the previous evening, from the DCC himself, summoning her to this emergency meeting, had perplexed her. She was a Fife officer and the murder had taken place in Edinburgh. Now she was beginning to understand, and she was apprehensive. Instinctively, she put her hand on her swollen stomach. Her baby kicked out in the womb, as if to protest.

'Well, there's the press, sir.' Chief Inspector Maclean from Edinburgh had a lantern jaw and a lugubrious manner. 'They're still obsessed by the fraud and the missing four point five million pounds, but it won't be long till they realise there are other lines of inquiry. Involving sex,' he added mournfully.

'What is the evidence that Knox had sex just before he was killed?' Davidson asked.

Maclean cleared his throat. 'There were stains on his clothes, the front of his shirt and his boxers.'

'And what about Mrs Traynor's involvement?'

'She was seen conversing with the deceased in a confidential manner after dinner. A number of witnesses noticed them. Kenneth Cuthbert QC, a friend of the deceased's admitted there were rumours of an affair between them. When pressed, Mr Cuthbert conceded the deceased had a reputation as a ladies' man.' He paused, looked down and cleared his throat again. 'There have been rumours circulating about Mrs Traynor and men, sir.'

'I know that,' Davidson said sharply. He knew those rumours were true. The woman was a liability to her long-suffering husband, Chief Superintendent Graeme Traynor, and the further he climbed the more embarrassing she had become. Six months earlier, she had seduced then harassed a good-looking young detective sergeant before he put in an urgent request for a transfer. Her behaviour had been a matter of official concern before this situation arose. When he had been appointed Deputy Chief Constable, Davidson had been particularly thankful his wife was quiet and supportive in company, a rock for the family at home.

'Do we know the time of death?' he asked.

Maclean said, 'The body was found about three on Saturday morning by a security guard and he had been dead for some hours, sir. Knox was observed talking to Mrs Traynor shortly before ten, and we think that is the last time he was seen alive. There was an archery competition which finished about twenty past ten and all the bows and arrows were stored in a room not far from Court Three immediately after that. The murder could have taken place from, say, ten twenty-five onwards. We'll have a clearer picture after the post mortem, sir.'

'How advanced is your inquiry?'

'We've managed to interview some of the people present, but it was a while before we realised there was a, well, a problem. And it's impossible to focus inquiries on our own Divisional Commander and his wife and remain discreet. The crime scene has been thoroughly gone over but when I heard about the complication I got Dr

MacGregor from Dundee to do the post mortem. It'll be taking place now.'

'Is there a Mrs Knox?'

'Yes, sir, quite a grand lady, I gather. When the function ended at half past twelve she left with the Cuthberts. She was angry with her husband and assumed he had gone off without her. It wouldn't have been the first time, apparently.'

'And you are unable to exclude Graeme Traynor as a suspect?'

Maclean shook his head. 'I wish I could, sir. After the meal everyone seemed to mill about. I haven't spoken to the Chief Superintendent. Or his wife. I thought it best not to.'

'You're probably right.' Davidson grimaced. It was as bad as he had feared. 'Do you have any suspects at all apart from the Traynors and Mrs Knox?'

'Not really, sir, except if you count two of the accused Mr Knox was prosecuting who were at the function.' Flick sighed and shifted in her seat. Nearly six weeks from her delivery date, she was uncomfortable for much of the time and looking forward to winding down during her last two weeks before going on maternity leave. A rugby fan, this conversation made her feel like a full-back waiting to catch a high ball with the opposing scrum thundering towards her.

Maclean referred to a note. 'Lachlan Smail and Gideon Maltravers were there. So was Mrs Smail.'

'What exactly was the occasion?' Flick asked, feeling the need to become involved in the discussion.

‘Very grand,’ Maclean said. ‘The Faculty of Advocates and The Royal Company of Archers had a celebration to mark their long, shared history. It was held in Parliament Hall, drinks then dinner. After dinner the tables were cleared and there was an archery contest, Advocates against Archers, down the length of the hall with a bullseye target at one end. The Archers won. The bows and arrows were stowed in the judges’ retiring room shortly after ten-twenty and a band started. There was dancing till it ended at half past midnight.’

‘How did Smail and Maltravers come to be there?’ she asked.

‘I believe Smail is an Archer and Maltravers was on the table of a QC who does a lot of planning work.’

Davidson asked, ‘How has the trial been going?’ He looked at Flick. ‘And remind me what it’s all about.’

‘Well, sir, the fourth week starts tomorrow. It’s in the High Court building across the road from Parliament House. Knox seemed quite happy with the way the evidence has come out. You probably know it was an elaborate fraud, well thought-out with good technical knowledge, graphics, artist’s impressions and so on. The accused persuaded the Scotgrow Enterprise Loan Fund to advance them four point five million pounds for a golf course near St Andrews designed by Jack Nicklaus.’ She paused, conscious of her South of England accent, then grinned. ‘Only I doubt if there was ever going to be a golf course and for sure Jack Nicklaus had never heard of it. The accused told the Loan Fund that to get the detailed plans Nicklaus had prepared, they needed to lodge two

million in a Cayman Islands account before Christmas. Once they had the plans they could submit a planning application early in the New Year. The Loan Fund had been criticised for not lending enough to new enterprises, so, for political reasons, they paid the whole four point five million to the fraudsters before Christmas. All the money was sent to the Caymans and just disappeared. We have a case against Smail, who owns the land, Maltravers, a planning consultant, and a builder called Thomson. They are all out on bail. The brains behind it, Burns, has been in custody since his arrest in January. We've been watching the trial in the hope of getting some idea where the money might be, but nothing's come up. Our best guess is that Burns has salted it away for when he gets out.'

'There's been a lot of press interest,' Maclean said. 'They're gunning for the Loan Fund managers and the Scottish Government are watching closely as it's public money that's missing.'

Davidson leaned on his desk and looked hard at Maclean. 'Do you have any instinct about this murder? Do you think it was some Black Widow killing her lover, a jealous partner, or something else, perhaps something to do with the fraud?'

Maclean scratched his jaw. 'I can't say I do, sir.'

A concerned look on his face, Davidson looked at Flick. 'I'd forgotten you were pregnant. When do you go on maternity leave?'

'In a fortnight's time, sir.'

He grimaced. 'Do you have a good team?'

'Yes, sir. Small but very good.'

Davidson leaned back in his chair and turned again to the window, staring out but seeing nothing. After some thought, he faced the officers. 'It is impossible for Edinburgh officers to continue to investigate this murder given the position of their Divisional Commander. I am going to place Inspector Fortune in charge of the inquiry, using Fife personnel.'

A knot formed in her stomach. She wanted to scream, refuse to accept the assignment. Her life was about to change. For the next year or so she was going to be a mother first, a detective inspector second. She saw the DCC searching her face for a reaction. She closed her eyes. 'Alright, sir,' she heard herself say. She felt a hard kick in her womb.

The DCC continued, 'The press will be told that we believe the murder could be connected to the fraud trial, and that an officer familiar with that is in the best position to identify the killer. And we will stick to that story. Every effort is to be made to keep Chief Superintendent Traynor's name out of the press, including the internet. Any officer found leaking details will be prosecuted. Please let that be known. Any questions?'

Flick said, 'I have one or two, sir, but they don't concern my Edinburgh colleague.'

She swapped contact details with Maclean, who promised to e-mail everything he had to her. As the door closed behind him, Davidson looked at her and smiled.

'I can see that this may be the last thing you want to land in your lap right now, but the reputation of the force is at stake, and if there was anyone else who could credibly take this on I would have given it to them.'

There was a kindly expression on his face. She remembered he was a family man himself. Feeling tears were not far away, she swallowed and managed a grin.

‘You must give this absolute priority,’ he said earnestly. ‘I’ll shift officers from other Divisions if you need cover in Fife. I don’t want any Edinburgh input into the inquiry apart from what’s already been done. And I rely on you to be thorough. If Graeme Traynor murdered Knox, you must get evidence to convict him. If it was someone else, and I hope it was, their QC will doubtless try to say you never properly investigated Traynor. You must be able to demonstrate that you left no stone unturned to see if he murdered his wife’s lover, if Knox was his wife’s lover. Right?’

‘Right, sir.’

‘Hopefully you will discover it was not Lynda Traynor that Knox had sex with before he was killed, but it’s common knowledge that she led her husband a merry dance. I have never been close to him, and what I know I’ve heard from others, but I can give you this file which sheds some light on her behaviour and their marriage.’ He removed a thin, brown folder from a drawer and slid it across his large, highly polished desk. ‘It’ll be a good starting point. As you will realise, it’s very sensitive. It was not stored electronically in case it was shared inappropriately. I rely on you to be as discreet as possible, though that will not be easy.’

Flick picked up the file and opened it. It contained a few sheets of A4 paper covered in typescript with scrawled marginal notes.

Davidson continued, 'I think your Incident Room should be in Cupar. It's near St Andrews so it will look as if we think the murder is connected to the fraud. You'll have your own computers there and it'll keep you away from Edinburgh.'

'Right, sir.'

'Can you think of any reason connected to the fraud why someone should want to kill Knox?'

She shook her head. 'Honestly, no. Do you think this will end the trial, sir?'

He snorted. 'With lawyers you can never tell.' Flick knew he was himself a qualified solicitor, and was interested to hear disgust in his voice. He smiled at her. 'I've heard a lot of good things about you, Inspector, including that you're a rugby fan. I wouldn't be throwing you this hospital pass if I didn't think you could cope. But keep me informed of developments. If there's anything I can do to help, anything, let me know.'

She had heard that before from senior officers who had ducked below the parapet as soon as the going got tough. She looked in the DCC's eyes and thought she recognised sincerity. 'Right, sir. There is one thing. An officer from the Serious Fraud Office helped our original investigation. An old colleague of mine from our days in Wimbledon. He knows all about money laundering and stuff like that. I'm sure he'd be a huge help in our inquiry, particularly with the tight deadline. He's actually in Scotland as Knox wanted him around to comment on Burns's evidence. Knox was cross-examining Burns on Friday afternoon and was due to continue tomorrow morning.'

'I'll make the call to the SFO tomorrow. What's his name?'

'Detective Sergeant Bagawath Chandavarkar. His family come from Mumbai,' she added, seeing Davidson's raised eyebrows.

After spelling the name for him, Flick left the Deputy Chief Constable. She had not met him before and he struck her as being intelligent and practical. When he had been appointed, there had been mutterings that he did things too much by the book and would not tolerate what some termed 'old-fashioned methods'. If that was true, he was absolutely her idea of what a senior police officer should be like.

Tulliallan is on the west border of Fife. As she drove east to her home in St Andrews, Flick adjusted her mental vision of the next few weeks and planned how she should start this challenging and high-profile inquiry. But why, oh why, had it come at this particular time in her life? She wondered what Fergus would say. And her dad. She dreaded telling him when she phoned him that evening.

As she approached St Andrews, on her left were the flat fields where the Jack Nicklaus Diamond Links were to have been laid out. Cows and sheep grazed contentedly on new grass and pigs snuffled about on bare earth beside the sludgy mudbanks of the Eden Estuary. The bank of a railway line, disused since the 1960s, created a weal across the otherwise featureless ground supposed to become 'one of the greatest finishing stretches in the world'. The fraudsters had produced inspired paintings of how the

finished project would look, a metamorphosis of heroic proportions. A song title from the musical *Barnum* came to her, '*There's a Sucker Born Every Minute*' and she wished she could remember the words.