



THE MAN WITH THE THUMB. BY W. C. HUDSON. (BARCLAY NORTH)

### Synopsis of Previous Chapters.

**CHAPTER I.**—John Dorison, son of the head of the house of Dorison & Co., decesses, returns after eight years of wandering under a cloud, to the old home in New York city. The basement is used as a saloon, and stepping in Dorison makes a chance acquaintance with Job Nettlesman, who knew the Dorisons in their best days.

**CHAPTER 2.**—Nettlesman leaves the scene and in a few moments blood is seen trickling from the ceiling. The saloon keeper and his customers rush to the front doorway to reach the floor above. Dorison goes up the rear stairs and finds a young woman weeping in blood. He also discovers a miniature portrait of his father and a familiar ring on a hand, both of which he secures. A scrap of paper in the dead woman's hand and another on the floor are also taken and secured. The entry of detectives and police places him under suspicion. The room is used as a restaurant establishment by Mme. Delamour.

**CHAPTER 3.**—Dorison, using the alias James Dudley, calls on Nettlesman's office. He meets Simon Cathcart, a private detective, who engages him to assist in working up the murder case. Dorison's father died while writing a letter which apparently accused the son of grave crimes. The scraps found in the customer's room are in the hand writing of Dorison, senior, and appear to relate to the subject broached in the unfinished letter.

**CHAPTER 4.**—Madame Delamour, the customer, is Mrs. Farish. Cathcart goes to her private home and finds that she has been murdered in the same manner as the young woman in the customer's shop. The latter was Mrs. Farish's daughter Annie. A mysterious young man called on the Farishes at intervals and on his last visit went away angry. Cathcart finds a man's glove near Mrs. Farish's body.

**CHAPTER 5.**—Mystery in Farish house. Mrs. Farish assumes mourning. Annie withdraws from society and a son disappears. All about the date of Dorison's death. The glove found near Mrs. Farish's body has an extraordinary long thumb.

**CHAPTER 6.**—Cathcart starts Dorison out as a young man of fashion to discover the wearer of the glove with the long thumb.

**CHAPTER 7.**—Cathcart and Dorison see a young lady from being run down by a carriage on Broadway. She is the daughter of an old friend of his father, Mr. Eastace.

**CHAPTER 8.**—Cathcart goes to a woman from insight and arrest, and discovers a man with a long thumb.

### CHAPTER X. BY WAYS UNKNOWN.



The name of the gentleman you inquired about in Eastace.

Early the next morning, even before he had been addressed, Dorison sought to old detective at his room.

"Have you found your glove-maker?" asked Cathcart as he entered.

"I have something much better," replied Dorison. "The man with the thumb."

"You are expeditious," said the old man, so glad as to furnish the name of the younger one, who had anticipated in an outburst of surprise and excitement.

"It was purely by accident," he said.

"Well, tell me the story, and begin at the beginning."

"I was in the street, and I was oppressed by the heat of the day, and the other, Dorison, went in with the entrance into the house, and I was in the hall."

"When he had finished, Cathcart shook his head and said:

"What is wrong?" anxiously queried Dorison. "Do you think I erred in perceiving the young fellow to get away without learning his name?"

"No, that can be easily obtained. But I distrust the conclusions of your information."

Dorison was puzzled and said so.

"I mean this," said the old detective. "Not only did you find a hand which answers perfectly to the one I want, but you found an exact match to the glove which you examined yesterday morning. You have found too much. If you had found the hand without the glove, or the glove without the hand, I would feel better satisfied. You have found so much at the first blush, which being established would almost justify immediate arrest, it strikes my confidence. I am afraid your imagination ran away with you."

"Not in this instance," said Dorison, highly displeased and disposed to resent. "There could possibly be no mistake."

"My sensation is one of disappointment, and I give great heed to my sensations. Perhaps you may be entirely right. But let me present a consideration to you. You do not doubt that the man who lost the glove failed to discover his loss, do you?"

"No."

"Then having done so, recollecting where he removed it, and having committed the murders, don't you think he

would be worried over the loss and would fear that by it he had given a clue to a search for himself?"

"Very probably."

"Do you think a man so worried would don an identically similar pair and go into so conspicuous a place as a theater?"

"Well, what do you argue then?"

"Either that you have been grossly mistaken, or that the man with the thumb is not the man wanted."

"You are discouraging."

"I do not mean to be so; we must be cautious in so important a matter as an arrest."

"You must see the man yourself then," replied Dorison, much nettled. "I can do no more than tell you I have found a man whose right hand corresponds precisely in every particular, even to the peculiar prominence of the second knuckle, to the hand you want, and who wears a glove precisely similar to the one I saw yesterday morning. Now," continued Dorison, growing more earnest, "when I examined that glove I paid least attention to the form of the hand it indicated than to the make, kind and color of the glove—particularly the color. I accepted your description of the hand as true. On seeing it I saw it was one of the kind a man of fashion would wear in the evening."

"Ah!" cried Cathcart, interested. "Follow up that point. Tell me what you mean?"

"The man who wore it was in full dress. Fashion's laws are inexorable. At present it prescribes just that kind of a glove for evening wear, just that color. Probably ten thousand men wear just such a glove last night in the cities of the east. Now, that young man, putting on full dress, would naturally draw on one of that kind. You said the man who wore the glove was a bit of a dandy. This man is."

"You have made a point," said the old man. "The man we want, besides having a big thumb and prominent joints, was tall and slim, with brown hair."

Dorison's face fell. He had forgotten this requirement. He hesitated to reply.

"Well," said Cathcart, "does your man answer to that?"

"No," replied Dorison sullenly. "He was short and plump, his hair was light, a golden color."

"Then he is either not the man we want, or we have come upon a variation in our theory. However," added Cathcart, "that is not to say your information is not important. Upon the contrary, it is highly so. You must follow him up, make his acquaintance, gain his regard, and if possible get on terms of intimacy with him. When you have found out his haunts I must get a look at him."

"You would do all this believing he is not our man?" asked Dorison, with some showing of a sneer.

"I believe nothing," replied the old man testily. "But I disbelieve nothing. You jump at conclusions. It is a bad fault, especially in an inquiry like this where we are engaged in. You came here certain you had found the murderer. Now, upon the expression of a possible doubt, you are certain he is not. Yet you have shown me a flaw in my reasoning. I neither believe nor disbelieve at this stage of the game. I am open to a conviction on all sides. This man with the thumb must be followed up, obtain his name—all about him."

"I had two chances at him last night. I saw him afterward at the Hoffman."

"Indeed? Was he alone?"

"Yes, at the Hoffman. Though a man who had crossed my path twice before during the day accosted him."

"A friend?"

"Evidently not. My man was cold and haughty toward him—came as near getting him a dead cut as he could without doing so."

"Who and what was the other?"

To answer that question involved a statement of the episode of rescuing Miss Eastace, the call of the father, and the strange incident upon the corner of Third avenue and Twenty-ninth street.

When Dorison finished, the old man, who had been an attentive listener, said:

"The meeting of these two men was mysterious. Something wrong there. So this man spoke to your man, eh?"

"Yes, attempted to, but was repelled by the other."

"Mr. Eastace discovered your strong resemblance to your father. You must follow that up. You must cultivate his acquaintance."

"To what end?"

"He was intimate with your father, and you may find him valuable in solving the mystery of that unfinished letter."

"Oh," exclaimed Dorison, with peculiar emphasis, "I had supposed that inquiry was lost sight of in the superior importance of the other."

The old man keenly regarded the other as he gave expression to the slight sarcasm.

"Do you not know," said Cathcart impressively, "that in the revelation of the mystery of one the mystery of the other will be revealed?"

Somewhat abashed, Dorison hesitated before he replied:

"You have not been particularly communicative as to your theories. I have followed you blindly."

"I believe success is more surely attained by keeping my plans to myself," replied Cathcart calmly.

"I do not complain," replied Dorison hastily. "I recognize my own want of skill, and therefore am content to obey implicitly."

"And thereby be most useful. Now seek this man until you have learned all you can. Let me tell you for your own satisfaction, that notwithstanding your belief that the one thing in which you are particularly interested is being overlooked, that I have devoted the past three days, and will possibly for several days to come, to a most searching inquiry into the relations your father maintained for the years immediately preceding his death. What I have learned I shall not tell you, for I have not yet digested it. As soon as you can accomplish it, arrange so I can get a good look at your man."

Dorison, as he walked away from Cathcart, felt as if he was a very inexperienced man, and had much yet to learn of the ways of the world.

It was in this frame of mind that he sought the Hoffman House for breakfast. The hour was not early, and he was enabled to obtain one of those tables adjoining the windows looking out on Broadway, where he could watch the tide of humanity as it floated by. He was so much engrossed in this watching that he did not observe a gentleman rising from a table near him, and cross the room to his own table. It was Bushnell, the one whom he had seen in the theater the previous evening with the man with the thumb.

"I suppose an apology for my abrupt departure last evening is due you, Mr. Dudley," he said.

Dorison replied courteously:

"The apology was made in the very cause of interruption."

"I am glad you take it so politely. I'll answer your question now. The name of the gentleman you inquired about is Eastace, and there is no better fellow alive than Charles Eastace."

"Eastace? Indeed. What Eastace?"

"He is the son of Herbert Clavering Eastace, an old New York family of wealth and social position. Charles has been abroad for many years, having only returned a few months ago. Do you know the family?"

"I can hardly say I do, although I had a call from Mr. Eastace yesterday evening. Earlier in the day I had the honor of saving his daughter from being run over on Broadway, and he called to acknowledge the service."

"Indeed?" replied Bushnell. "Was she injured? I heard last evening she was ill—I presume it was she who was ill—there are two daughters, you know."

"I did not know it," answered Dorison. "Miss Eastace was not injured, though she was knocked down by a horse; but that she might be ill from the shock she received, I can readily believe."

"Yes, it must be so," returned Bushnell. "Charles, who had not been home to dinner—indeed he maintains bachelor apartments—did not know of it last night when we were together. She is a charming girl."

Dorison did not reply for a moment or two. His mind was busy with thoughts of how singularly the affairs of these people were becoming tangled with his own.

His companion rattled on:

"I saw you were much attracted to Charles last evening. Evidently so. He carries the stamp of his good-fellowship on his face."

"I was much interested in him. Does he have a profession?"

"No; he has studied surgery here and abroad."

Dorison gave such a visible start that his companion stopped in wonderment and looked at him.

"It is nothing," said Dorison, casting about for a reason for his involuntary manifestation of surprise. "I saw a man at that moment on the street I could have sworn was two thousand miles from here. You say your friend studied surgery abroad?"

"Yes, here and abroad. But I doubt if he will ever practice it. He is independently wealthy by the will of an uncle, and he has his share in his father's estate, which is not small. Would you like to meet him?"

"Very much indeed."

"He will dine with me tonight here at six, and if you will join us in this room at that hour I will be pleased to have you."

Accepting the invitation gladly the two young men parted at the door of the restaurant.

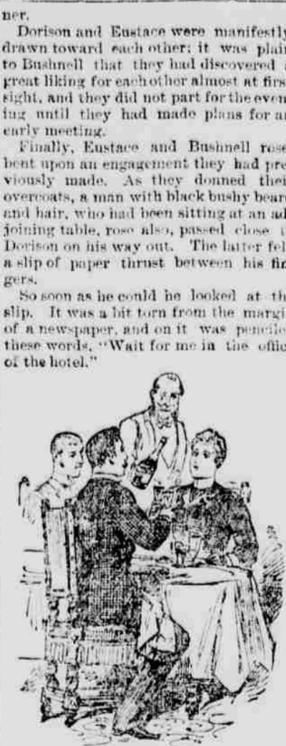
"Fortune favors me," muttered Dorison to himself. "The opportunity to observe the young man Cathcart desired is made for him. I must find him and give him notice."

The work of finding the old detective was not so easy, and the greater part of the day was consumed in the search. Indeed, when he was found, there was barely time left Dorison in which to prepare for dinner and meet his engagement.

### CHAPTER XI. TALL, SLIM, WITH BROWN HAIR.

Cathcart had said he would be present at the Hoffman cafe at the time of the dinner.

Consequently, when the three gathered about a round table in the middle of the room on the corner of Broadway and Twenty-fifth street, Dorison looked about for the old detective. He was not present as yet. Noting his absence, but believing he would soon appear, he gave himself up to the enjoyment of the din-



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Dorison and Eastace were manifestly drawn toward each other; it was plain to Bushnell that they had discovered a great liking for each other almost at first sight, and they did not part for the evening until they had made plans for an early meeting.

Finally, Eastace and Bushnell rose, bent upon an engagement they had previously made. As they donned their overcoats, a man with black bushy beard and hair, who had been sitting at an adjoining table, rose also, passed close to Dorison on his way out. The latter felt a slip of paper thrust between his fingers.

So soon as he could be looked at the slip. It was a bit torn from the margin of a newspaper, and on it was penciled these words: "Wait for me in the office of the hotel."

Wondering who the stranger could be, and what business he could have with him, and speculating as to what the message so strangely communicated could portend, Dorison lit a cigar and wandered into the office. Pacing up and down the long corridor he thought upon the singularity of events which had crowded upon him during the previous forty-eight hours.

While he was speculating upon the possible outcome of these events, Cathcart suddenly appeared before him.

"You were wholly right," he said quietly, before Dorison could remark upon his failure to appear in time. "It is the hand and the glove as well. I observed the gloves as he put them on."

Dorison stared at him in astonishment. A light broke upon him.

"You were the man with the black hair and beard," he said.

"Yes; didn't you know me?"

"Know you. I did not dream it was you. You were completely disguised."

"You did your work excellently well," said Cathcart, ignoring the compliment, as if disguises were matters of hourly occurrence. "But I was never more puzzled than I am now. If one could only trust to appearances, if I were to do so in this case I would dismiss all idea of young Eastace being implicated in that murder as preposterous. I had my lesson, however, twenty years ago. I was given the work of tracing the murder of a whole family in a town in Illinois. Indications pointed to a young girl living to the family. When I saw her sweet, soft, innocent eyes, her face almost angelic in its expression, and her pretty, coaxing manner, I dismissed suspicion of her and went off on a theory which led to nothing. She moved away, and two years after was caught in the very act of crime. Having been convicted, she confessed these murders, and an examination into her life showed her to be a monster of depravity. It was inconceivable that one so young and tender could be so black."

"You have returned to the theory then that Eastace is the man you want," commented Dorison, disappointment and regret plainly visible.

"I have neither returned to nor abandoned that theory," replied Cathcart. "I hold everything in abeyance pending further inquiry. Our puzzle does not fit—the pieces do not match. We supposed that the wearer of that glove was tall and slim, with brown hair. In other words, that the wearer of the glove, the tall, slim man, and the walker in Union square were one and the same man. What we have discovered is that the wearer of the glove is one person. Whether the tall, slim man and the expulsive of Union square are one or two persons has yet to be determined. My theory has gone astray just so far. What was it we learned in school? 'Falsus in uno falsus in omnibus.' If I am wrong in one particular I may be wrong in all."

"Eastace could not have been either the caller at stated intervals nor the exquisite of Union square, exquisite though he is."

"Why?"

"Because he has been continuously absent from the country for six years until four months ago."

"Another complexity. Why should he return home after so long an absence to murder two inoffensive women?"

"He is a surgical student, having studied here and abroad," said Dorison.

"The devil!" said Cathcart. "The proofs accumulate against him. You know that to be true?"

"His friend Bushnell told me so."

"The case presents more perplexities than any I ever was engaged in."

"Those gloves were not made in this country," said Dorison irrelevantly, though thoughtfully.

"Just what I have been thinking since you told me he has but recently returned from Europe. Well," continued the old detective, "there has been substantial gain. We have discovered the owner of the glove, and at the proper time we can

compel him to explain its close proximity to the body of the murdered woman. He must have had some relation to the woman, and, if not guilty of the murder, must be possessed of knowledge concerning them. You must gain his confidence. You are in a fair way to do it."

"I never entered upon an enterprise with greater reluctance or loathing," replied Dorison. "I freely confess I have an extraordinary liking for the young fellow. It seems like treachery to seek his friendship to his own undoing."

"That does not necessarily follow. You must put aside all such notions if you propose to succeed in your search. Recollect the interest you have at stake—the rehabilitation of your own good name."

"I know, I know," hastily responded Dorison. "Nothing shall swerve me from that. But even with this before me I cannot repress a feeling of regret for that proud father and tender sister when disaster shall overtake the son and brother, nor the remorse I feel in anticipation that I shall be an instrument of his precipitation."

"Better curb that imagination of yours until you see that you have precipitated disaster upon them," said Cathcart contemptuously, evidently annoyed at what he thought was a lack of proper spirit.

A moment later, his mind having reverted to the practical bearings of the matter, he said:

"Cultivate an intimacy; become a visitor to his family; impress yourself upon the father, and get him to talk of your own father if possible."

Nettled, stung indeed, by the way the old man had treated his sentimental outburst, Dorison steeled himself and replied curtly:

"Give me your instructions. They shall be obeyed to the best of my ability."

The old man fixed his keen eyes upon the younger one for a moment, and turned as if to leave him. As he did so Dorison hastily placed his hand on the detective's arm, detaining him and whispering:

"Do you see that man who has just entered alone?"

"Yes."

"That is the one who crossed my path three times yesterday—first, when I rescued Miss Eastace; second, when I saw him have that mysterious meeting at Twenty-ninth street and Third avenue and lastly when he attempted to speak with Eastace and was rebuffed."

"Ah!" said Cathcart, as he closely watched the young man walk up the long corridor.

"Tall, slim and brown haired," he muttered.

Dorison started with surprise.

"Dressed in clothes of extreme fashion," added Cathcart.

Dorison felt his heart bound.

"Dissipated and fast in appearance," the pertinency of the old detective's words.

"He answers to the description of both," continued Cathcart. "Stay where you are and keep yourself out of sight."

Cathcart sauntered after the young man, who had disappeared in the direction of the art gallery.

Dorison retired behind the pile of trunks which encountered a part of the corridor. The old detective was not gone long. When he returned it was with a letter.

"There is a letter to Captain Lawton," he said. "Jump into a cab and promise the driver three times the amount of his fare to get you quick to headquarters. That letter asks for a discreet and intelligent shadow. Bring him back with you in the cab. I will wait for you here, unless the man goes out, when I will follow him. In that event let the shadow go to my rooms and await me there."

Dorison without question did as he was bid. Reaching headquarters he delivered his letter, and a moment later was leading the way to his cab, followed by the man hastily summoned, and was soon driving back as rapidly.

Entering the hotel, Cathcart met them.

"He is still here," he said to Dorison. "Stay where you are. I will rejoin you in a moment."

To the shadow he said:

"I will, in a moment, point out a man to you. I want to know his name, his business, his associations, his habits, in fact all you can learn about him. Report to me at any hour of the day or night you may happen to have information. Here's my address. Now follow me."

He went directly to the art gallery and pointed out the man sitting at a table near the door, which the young man was watching, without being observed by the object of their attention.

"That is your man," said Cathcart. "Find out especially where he lives and what places he haunts."

Cathcart returned to Dorison, who was awaiting his return with impatience.

"What has occurred?" he asked anxiously.

"Nothing," replied the old detective curtly. "I shall go to bed now. I am tired. You have done a good day's work today."

What further might have passed between them was prevented by the appearance of the young man on his way out of the hotel.

The shadow was behind him.

"Good night," said Cathcart, as he, too, moved off.

Dorison had already learned not to question him, and so he did not seek to detain the old man.

He, too, went out in the night air to cool his burning excitement.

**CHAPTER XII. NARROWING THE CIRCLE.**

The days immediately following the exciting events which have been detailed in the previous chapters were uneventful. Dorison had fallen again into what he called aimless dawdling. The high hopes of rapid progress he had begun to entertain died within him and despair took possession.

The shadow had faithfully followed his man and had reported to Cathcart.

"The name of the man was Harry Langdon; he had come from Chicago three years previously, and was supposed to be a man of independent means, since he had no occupation; lived generally a fast life; associated to some extent with professional gamblers; seemed to know a good many loose characters and 'crooked' men without associating with any of them; visited a woman who claimed to be his wife in Twenty-sixth street, near Third avenue, but yet had separate apartments at number 2 Twenty-eighth street, between Third and Lexington avenues; was intimate with a Dr. Fassett, a physician of repute, who called upon him every morning either at Twenty-eighth street or Twenty-ninth street, always seeming to be well informed as to which place he was at; after this call Langdon walked up Twenty-eighth or Twenty-ninth street, as the case might be, to Madison avenue, thence to Madison square, crossing diagonally to the corner of Twenty-third street, thence to Sixth avenue, and a restaurant, where he breakfasted and where he read the papers for an hour or two, and met one or two of a half dozen who came to see him there; from thence he went whither chance or fancy led him; he had the entire to all the gambling saloons, where he played frequently, but irregularly, and always faro; his haunts were places of fashionable resort, and he was a frequent attendant upon the theaters."

In telling Dorison of this report, Cathcart says it was the best shadow work that had ever been done for him.

While these days were passing, the acquaintance between Dorison and young Eastace was fast ripening into intimacy. The two young men saw much of each other's apartments, and frequented the theaters together.

Carried by his friend to the Eastace residence, he had been received with great civility and with every apparent disposition to treat him as a friend of the young gentleman of the house. He had been presented to the ladies of the family and had been received cordially, and especially by the one he had resented, with all the warmth his service deserved and all the reserve modesty demanded.

Charmed with the household, he forgot the part he was playing while within it.

In time he was invited to a formal dinner and gladly accepted the invitation as determining his status as a friend of the family.

On this occasion, after the ladies had retired from the table, the elder Mr. Eastace, moving to a seat beside Dorison, again referred to the extraordinary resemblance the latter bore to his father. In an endeavor to avoid denying a relationship, Dorison tried to divert the conversation. Mr. Eastace, however, was politely persistent, seeking to inquire into the antecedents of his guest, with a view to finding if he could not establish a blood connection.

Dorison was not adroit in his fence and contented himself with simply saying that he was from Dubuque, and therefore could not be supposed to bear any relation to so old a New York family. Indeed, his effort to escape a discussion of the subject was so marked that Mr. Eastace forebore further questioning. Dorison saw at once that he had committed a blunder, for the old gentleman froze to him immediately. Too scrupulously polite to offer indignity to a guest whom he had deliberately invited to his table, nevertheless Mr. Eastace made Dorison feel uncomfortable, so uncomfortable, indeed, that he seized the first opportunity to steal away.

The episode greatly annoyed Dorison, first, because it foreshadowed an interruption in the relations he had just established with the Eastace household, and, secondly, because he had stupidly evaded the very opportunity to induce Mr. Eastace to talk about his own relations to the elder Dorison, Cathcart had so earnestly desired him to make.

As it was, he went to bed thoroughly disgusted with himself, and wholly dissatisfied with the life he was leading.

Quite early, that is to say early for the habits he had fallen into, he was aroused by a message from Cathcart, brought him by the officer who had shadowed Langdon, and who seemed permanently attached to the old detective. The message bade him go as soon as he could to number 2 East Twentieth street.

Dorison had now been long enough in association with the old man not to be



As he approached, he fixed his eyes upon Dorison.