

Screen Treatment—*Crown Hunt* (1st Book in a Series)

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Genre: Murder/Mystery.

Logline: *Three Kings* meet *China Town*.

Two detectives take on a case involving priceless crown jewels from the Silla Dynasty heisted in the Korean War and a psychopathic killer.

Reviewer Comments:

"The *Crown Hunt* is a riveting detective mystery written by a talented storyteller who incites readers to sleuth for the truth." Leonard Szymczak, Award-winning author of *Kookaburra's Last Laugh*.

"*Crown Hunt* has well-defined characters and a fast-moving plot that make this an enjoyable read and a compelling mystery. You won't want to put it down because you can't wait to see what happens next and there's always a surprise twist around the next corner. The book will keep you guessing as to whodunit right up until the end. I definitely recommend *Crown Hun*" for readers of detective mysteries." A five-star review on Amazon.Com by GaryB.

Main Characters:

Harriett Roth: She is a brainy, eccentric detective specializing in recovering lost objects. She leads a group of investigators from her headquarters in Asheville, NC. She guides with wisdom, compassion, and shrewdness. Her character is difficult at times: cranky, agoraphobic, and greedy. Roth solves mysteries in two steps: she sends her operatives to gather key information and guides the team using perceptive deduction. She frequently is clad in a dark, full-length dress of luxurious satin, with her alabaster white hair falling to the top of her shoulders.

Don Gannon: Protagonist, He is Roth's errant, fast-talking, right-hand investigator. He is large: 6-feet 4-inches tall and 210-pounds. He served as a military policeman in the first Iraqi War. Tongue-tied around women. The relationship between Roth and Gannon is complex: perhaps an older aunt mentoring a misbehaving nephew. Roth is a deep thinker; Don is action.

Bruce Seeker: Bruce is a sidekick to Don. They have known each other since high school in Asheville and served in the military police together. Like brothers, they spar night and day. Bruce is Roth's number two investigator and the computer and database guy. He is a black man of medium height and beefy build.

Taylor Ploughman: Taylor is Roth's cook at the mansion. The entire team works out of Roth's two-story mansion of gray brick, situated on ten acres in Asheville. Taylor is a cook extraordinaire and strange hillbilly lady. Petite with red hair and blue eyes, she had grown up deep in the mountains around Asheville, where her parents instilled a deep appreciation of Appalachia. Sort of a female Huckleberry Finn. As an old saying goes, she is "as different as chalk from cheese."

Mickey Ploughman: Mickey is Roth's number three investigator and husband of Taylor. He is a bear of a man at 210-pounds and muscular and hefty. Older than Don or Bruce, they see him as an older brother, albeit a drinking buddy. Has mechanical skills and is good with firearms. Mickey isn't very talkative, enjoys food, and nibbles when he gets a chance. He speaks in short, clipped phrases.

Carla Diaz: A young Hispanic lady with a mega-bright smile, mischievous grin, and smart. Don meets Carla, with her short but full-bodied figure, at a Residence Inn in Herndon, VA. He shoehorns in a rocking romance as he simultaneously searches for a lost crown. Carla has elevated interest in both Don and his mystery: as a young girl, she was fascinated by Nancy Drew novels.

Sook Park: In June 1950, Sook was a young man from a peasant family in South Korea. He served in a five-man mortar squad in the ROK army. During the Korean War, Sook and the team, four young South Korean soldiers, unearth a long-lost Silla treasure. They desert the army and bring their plunder to America. Fifty years later, a sadistic villain descends upon them to kill one

of them, claim their spoils, and disappear without a trace. Sook hires Harriett Roth and her right-hand investigator, Don Gannon, to recover the missing treasure.

Other Characters:

Five Members of ROK Mortar Squad in 1950: Corporal Seong-gi Kim, Sook Park, Bin Bie, Yeong-ho Park, and Sang-hun Lee.

Emmanuel Jackson: He is a student caretaker of the safehouse in Great Falls, VA, where the Koreans kept the crown for safety and viewing.

Detective Russell Powell: He is a senior detective in Fairfax County, VA. Investigates three deaths connected with the theft of the crown in the year 2000—clashes with Don Gannon.

Ji-hun Cho: Antagonist, He is a Korean bureaucrat sent to the U.S. by the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea. His mission is to locate the Korean relics heisted by Sook Park and his team back in 1950.

Wang Gang: Asian gangster with a deep appreciation of Silla art and artifacts. A major suspect in the theft of the crown in the year 2000.

Seong-woo Bie: Korean smuggler and uncle of one of the mortar team, Bin Bie. Needs money to replace his ship confiscated by the South Korean Coast Guard. A major suspect in the theft of the crown in the year 2000.

Locations/Settings:

Korea: Seoul is the city where burglars hatch the scheme to travel to the U. S. and steal the Silla crown in the year 2000. On 25 June 1950, the Korean War began. The five members of the ROK mortar squad fought the length of the South Korean peninsula. They unearth a Silla treasure near Gyeongju, the old capital of the Silla Empire.

Asheville, North Carolina Roth's detective agency operates from a mansion in this city.

Northern Virginia: The theft of the crown and other relics occurs at Great Falls. Don's investigation into Wang Gang takes place in Leesburg. A search for the crown occurs over much of this region.

Baltimore, Maryland Don interrogates Seong-woo Bie at his warehouse and loading facility for shipping. As Roth and Don locate the crown, a shootout erupts at the warehouse.

Synopsis—*Crown Hun*

Act 1—Setup—May 2000 in South Korea, an elderly Korean is kidnaped, forced to reveal a treasure location, and summarily executed. The antagonist shows a vicious mindset. Two mysteries face the reader: What treasure? Who is this violent villain?

The scene switches to a grey-stone mansion in Asheville North Carolina. Three Korean-American visitors—SOOK PARK, BIN BIE, and YEONG-HO PARK—arrive to meet the first of the story’s two protagonists, DON GANNON. The second protagonist, HARRIETT ROTH, unravels the visitors’ tale. Thieves stole valuable relics from the three, former soldiers in the Korean War. They propose a salvage operation to recover the stolen valuables. Half the salvage would go to the Koreans and a half to Roth. She undertakes the case because of her avaricious nature.

In the morning, Don flies to Northern Virginia. In the lobby of his motel, he meets an attractive, smart woman, CARLA DIAZ. Don goes to the crime scene and examines the site of the theft. The criminals got into the house through a dormer window, used a keypad combination to get past a secure door, and stole Silla relics, including a magnificent crown.

Don searches for a suspect during two periods: the present (2000) and back at the start of the Korean War. Don questions the three Korean-Americans about their experiences in the 1950 conflict. The three were part of a five-soldier mortar crew.

The next day, Don continues to dig into the history of the mortar squad led by SEONG-GI KIM. Don hears about the battles and the retreats down the Korean peninsula in June – July 1950. He watches for a suspect but finds none.

Continuing his interrogation of suspects in the current time, Don interviews two individuals: a Korean man, Bin Bie’s uncle, who smuggled the three soldiers out of Korea and Wang Gang, a criminal, in Leesburg, Virginia. Wang Gang is secretive, and Don’s suspicion of him grows.

In August 1950, the soldiers fought in a major battle near Gyeongju, the old capital of the ancient Silla Kingdom. Four soldiers survived, but the fifth soldier died in the fight. The battle’s artillery bombardment had unearthed an old Silla tomb. The four Korean-Americans examined the ancient Silla-Kingdom tomb and discovered a beautiful crown and many valuable artifacts. Weary of constant combat and destined to remain impoverished the rest of their lives, the four Korean soldiers deserted the battlefield with the treasure. Bin Bie’s uncle, a smuggler, got them out of the country, but Seong-gi stayed in Korea. The three entered America with the Silla relics.

Don and Sook Park call Seong-gi in present-day South Korea. He is missing.

That evening Don encounters Carla in the motel laundry room; he finds her quick-witted and sexy.

Once they had arrived in America in 1950, the three Koreans locked their crown and relics in a secure room. They had regrets about leaving their native country.

Act 2—Confrontation—The unexpected occurs. The South Korean government sends a cultural agent, JI-HUN CHO, to recover the Silla treasure stolen by the Korean-Americans. Confronted by the FBI and the cultural agent, Sook Park denies knowledge of any Silla relics.

Don continues his careful investigation. He inspects the residence of Wang Gang, a smuggler and suspect and escapes capture by Gang’s security.

The Seoul police find the body of Seong-gi, the leader of the old mortar squad, in the Han River. Roth dispatches Don to South Korea. He discovers the fifth soldier, SANG-HUN LEE, survived war injuries back in 1950 and is alive today. Don finds the house where Seong-gi had been murdered and suspected the fifth soldier traveled to America and stole the Silla treasure. Roth sends Don back to Northern Virginia, believing Sang-hun and the stolen relics are there.

Roth sends another investigator, Mickey Ploughman, to Northern Virginia. They search for the fifth soldier, Sang-hun. The killer strikes again and murders Yeong-ho. Don supposes the fifth soldier killed Yeong-ho as revenge for being deserted on the Korean battlefield long ago. Don, Mickey, and the Korean-Americans search for the whereabouts of the missing Sang-hun.

Don and Carla Diaz begin to spend time together. While socializing at a tavern after a day's work, they become intoxicated. Shortly after that, in Carla's room, the fire alarms go off. Don carries her on his shoulder out the building's front door.

Fearful of an attack on the two remaining Korea-Americans, Roth has security guards posted around them at night. The guards thwart an attack on Sook Park. Suspicion falls on the fifth soldier. An unidentified Korean is murdered and left on a jogging path. The dead man is Sang-hun, the fifth soldier. Where had he stayed in America?

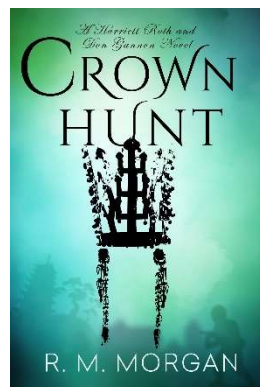
Act 3—Resolution—Finally, they get a breakthrough. The smuggler uncle sees a picture of Sang-hun and tells Don he, Sang-hun, slept at the uncle's warehouse in Baltimore, Maryland.

Searching in the dark warehouse, a man holds a pistol against Don's head and takes his weapon. The mysterious man is Ji-hun, the Korean cultural agent. Don realizes he had killed Seong-gi and Sang-hun. Ji-hun doesn't shoot Don but queries him to identify others at the warehouse. Mickey sneaks behind the Korean cultural officer and kills him in a firefight.

To report the death of the Korean cultural agent to the police would lead to Sook Park and Bin Bie being deported to South Korea for stealing national treasures. Also, Don and Mickey might well lose their private investigator licenses for shooting the agent, Sang-hun. Don chooses to have the uncle bury the agent's body at sea.

Don and Mickey turn the warehouse upside down to recover the Silla treasure: the crown and all the relics. Don says goodbye to Carla Diaz for the time being and returns to Asheville.

Author Bio/Head Shot



R. M. Morgan worked as an engineer in both the U.S. government and academia. In his job, he investigated mysteries like a detective, unraveling the physics of car crashes to establish how to save drivers and passengers. After years of writing articles in that world, R. M. Morgan discovered the joy of writing mystery novels. Currently, he lives in Southern California and is writing the third book in the Roth/Gannon series.

He writes for the reader's delight, seeking to ease their frustration with daily snags and tribulations. The perfect read entails curling up in a comfortable chair with a mystery, solving a puzzle, identifying and running down a cunning villain. A good mystery challenges the reader: can they solve the enigma before the detective?

Further information about R. M. Morgan is on his website, www.rmmorgan.com.