

# THE BOOMERANG CLUE

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

**Chapter Five**  
**THE INQUEST**

THE INQUEST on the body of Alex Pritchard was held on the following day. Dr. Thomas gave evidence as to the finding of the body.

"Life was not then extinct," asked the Coroner.

"No, deceased was still breathing. There was, however, no hope of recovery. The— Here the Doctor became highly technical.

The Coroner came to the rescue of the jury. "In ordinary, everyday language, the man's back was broken?"

"If you like to put it that way," said Dr. Thomas sadly.

He described how he had gone off to get help, leaving the dying man in Bobby's charge.

"Now as to the cause of this disaster, what is your opinion, Dr. Thomas?"

"I should say that in all probability (falling any evidence as to his state of mind, that is to say) the deceased stepped inadvertently over the edge of the cliff. There was a mist rising from the sea, and at that particular point the path turns abruptly inland. Owing to the mist the deceased may have not noticed the danger and walked straight on—in which case two steps would take him over the edge."

"There were no signs of violence? Such as might have been administered by a third party?"

"I can only say that all the injuries present are fully explained by the body's striking the rocks fifty or sixty feet below."

"There remains the question of suicide?"

"That is, of course, perfectly possible. Whether the deceased walked over the edge or threw himself over is a matter on which I can say nothing."

Robert Jones was called next. Bobby explained that he had been playing golf with the Doctor and had sliced his ball towards the sea. A mist was rising at the time and it was difficult to see. He thought he heard a cry and for a moment wondered if his ball could have hit anybody coming along the footpath. He had decided, however, that it could not possibly have travelled so far.

"Did you find the ball?"

"Yes, it was about a hundred yards short of the footpath."

HE then described how they had driven from the next tee and how he himself had driven into the chasm.

Here the Coroner stopped him, since his evidence would have been a repetition of the Doctor's. He questioned him closely, however, as to the cry he had heard or thought he heard.

"It was just a cry."

"A cry for help?"

"Oh, no. Just a sort of shout, you know. In fact I wasn't quite sure I heard it."

"A startled kind of cry?"

"That's more like it," said Bobby gratefully. "Sort of noise a fellow might let out if a ball hit him unexpectedly."

"Or if he took a step into nothingness when he thought he was on a path?"

"Yes."

Then, having explained that the man actually died about five minutes after the Doctor left to get help, Bobby's ordeal came to an end.

The Coroner was by now anxious to get on with a perfectly straightforward business. Mrs. Cayman was called.

Bobby gave a gasp of acute disappointment. Where was the face of the photograph that had tumbled from the dead man's pocket? "Photographers," thought Bobby disgustedly, "were the worst kind of liars."

The photograph obviously must have been taken some years ago, but even then it was hard to believe that that charming wide-eyed beauty could have become this brassy-looking woman with plucked eyebrows and obviously dyed hair.

Time, thought Bobby suddenly, was a very frightening thing. What would Frankie, for instance, look like in twenty years' time. He gave a little shiver.

MEANWHILE, Amelia Cayman of 17 St. Leonard's Gardens, Paddington, was giving evidence. Deceased was her only brother, Alex.

ander Pritchard. She had last seen him the day before the tragedy, when he had announced his intention of going for a walking tour in Wales. He had recently returned from the East.

"Did he seem in a happy and normal state of mind?"

"Oh, quite! Alex was always cheerful."

"So far as you know he had nothing on his mind?"

"Oh, I'm sure he hadn't. He was looking forward to his trip."

"There have been no money troubles, or other troubles of any kind, in his life recently?"

"Well, really, I can't say as to that," said Mrs. Cayman. "You see, he'd only just come back, and before that I hadn't seen him for ten years, and he was never one much to take him over the edge."

"There were no signs of violence? Such as might have been administered by a third party?"

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## TOWNSEND PROBE NEARS APPROVAL

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8.—(AP)—Speaker Byrnes predicted today that

the resolution for an investigation of the Townsend and other old age pension movements comes before the house it will be approved.

The speaker said the matter was discussed yesterday at a meeting of house leaders and, while no definite action was taken, there appears to be considerable sentiment in the house for such an inquiry.

He added that he understood both Republicans and Democrats want an

investigation "and if everybody wants it there's no reason why we shouldn't have it."

Confirm Wool Sale.  
PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 8.—(AP)—The Journal said today that purchase of the Hyslop wool clip of approximately 150,000 pounds at 30 cents a pound by the Pendleton Woolen Mills Co., was officially confirmed.

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Of.



U.S. BATTLESHIPS ARE ALWAYS NAMED FOR STATES. CRUISERS FOR CITIES. DESTROYERS FOR MEN. AIRCRAFT CARRIERS FOR OLD SHIPS OR EARLY BATTLES. SUBMARINES FOR FISH. GUNBOATS FOR CITIES OR ISLANDS. MINESWEEPERS FOR BIRDS. COLLERS FOR MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS, AND OIL CARRIERS FOR INDIAN RIVERS...



LOWLY BLUE BLOOD—THE PLANORBIS SNAIL HAS BLOOD OF A PALE BLUE COLOR...

BIZET'S "CARMEN" WAS HIS MOST TRAGIC FAILURE AND HIS GREATEST SUCCESS—IT BROUGHT HIM DEATH AS WELL AS FAME!

Bizet today is remembered more for his "Carmen" than any other piece. It is his outstanding contribution to music. Yet, strange as it seems, to Bizet it was his most dismal failure—a failure which hastened his death. When the opera was first performed in Paris it was an utter failure, and hisses filled the opera house during the performance. Within three months the discouraged composer was dead—and authorities agree that his death was hastened by this "failure."

United States battleships, according to law, must be named for states of the Union. All other types of vessels are named by the secretary of

the navy as the president may direct. According to precedent, ships of various classes are named according to their class. Cruisers are named for cities, as the USS Brooklyn, USS Rochester, etc. Destroyers are named in honor of distinguished naval and marine corps officers, enlisted men, former secretaries of the navy and congressmen who have been closely identified with naval affairs. The USS Moffat, a destroyer just launched, was named for Rear Admiral Moffat who was killed in the crash of the Akron.

Aircraft carriers have the names of famous fighting ships or important battles of American history—as the Lexington and the Saratoga. Minesweepers are named for birds, as the USS Tern; collars for names in mythology, as the USS Medusa; tankers are given Indian names of rivers, as Cuyama and Neches; submarines for fish or other marine creatures, as the Bass and the Nautilus; and gunboats for cities or island possessions, as the August and the Guam in the Yangtze patrol.

Stars change their color according to their degree of heat, varying from red up to yellow, white, faint blue, faint green, and finally orange red. The changes of heat may be caused by changes of pressure in the body of the star.

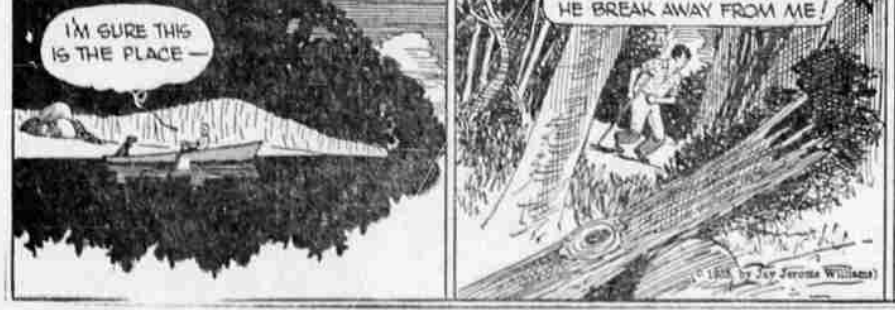
Tomorrow Redskin Pirates.

## TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Secret Passage!



AN IMPORTANT CLUE, WHICH MAY LEAD TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF TOMMY AND SKEETS, HAS BEEN PICKED UP AT A SMALL SEAPORT BY FRIENDS, WHO HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THE BOYS FOR DAYS. MEANWHILE, LET'S RETURN TO THE DUNGEON UNDER THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN—

## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—In Deadly Peril!



SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG / BEN, ROWING HARD, HAD REACHED THE PLACE WHERE CRIP WAS SUPPOSED TO AWAIT HIM— BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE BOY!

I'M SURE THIS IS THE PLACE—

I JUST GOTTA GET BRIAR 'CAUSE BEN WON'T LEAVE WITHOUT HIM. BUT IF I YELL FOR HIM I'LL GUM EVERYTHING—DARN IT, WHY'D HE BREAK AWAY FROM ME!

## THE NEBBS—Back Slider



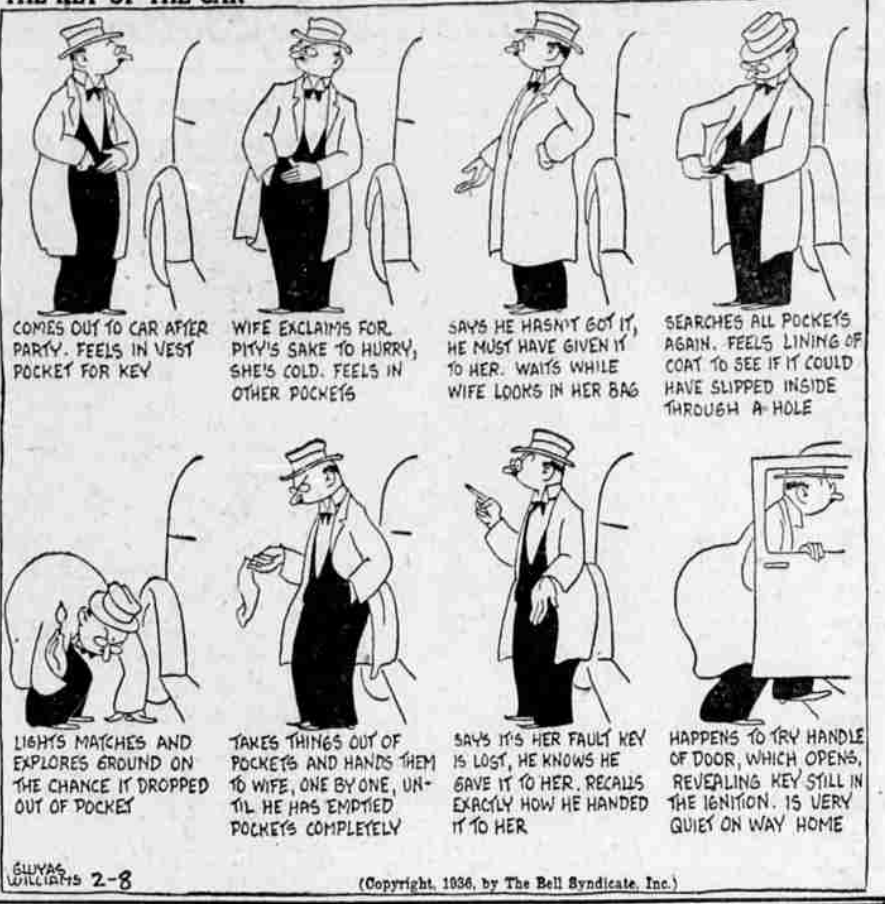
THERE'S THAT LITTLE SNEAK, THAT LITTLE DOUBLE-CROSSER... SNEAKS OUT AND GETS OPTIONS ON ALL THE FRONTAGE ON THE NEW ROAD NEAR MY HOTEL

AND THERE'S A GUY I TOOK INTO BUSINESS WITH ME? I WOULDN'T CARE IF HE GOT THE OPTIONS BUT WHY DIDN'T HE COME TO ME LIKE A SQUARE GUY AND TELL ME!! THE LITTLE SNEAK! HE COULDN'T SNEAK UP ON A FOX AND STEAL HIS TROAT BEFORE HE GOT WISE

I HAVEN'T GOT THE NERVE TO GO AND TELL HIM I KNOW ABOUT IT. I CAN SEE RIGHT NOW THAT SMIRKING SMILE AND WORDS OF SARCASM COMING OUT OF THAT UGLY MOUTH SO HOT THAT IT WILL BURN OUT ALL THE SELF-ESTEEM I HAVE LEFT

## THE KEY OF THE CAR

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



COMES OUT TO CAR AFTER PARTY. FEELS IN VEST POCKET FOR KEY

WIFE EXCLAIMS FOR PITY'S SAKE TO HURRY, SHE'S COLD. FEELS IN OTHER POCKETS

SAYS HE HASN'T GOT IT, HE MUST HAVE GIVEN IT TO HER. WAITS WHILE WIFE LOOKS IN HER BAG

SEARCHES ALL POCKETS AGAIN. FEELS LINING OF COAT TO SEE IF IT COULD HAVE SLIPPED INSIDE THROUGH A HOLE

LIGHTS MATCHES AND EXPLORES GROUND ON THE CHANCE IT DROPPED OUT OF POCKET

TAKES THINGS OUT OF POCKETS AND HANDS THEM TO WIFE, ONE BY ONE, UNTIL HE HAS EMPTIED POCKETS COMPLETELY

SAYS IT'S HER FAULTY KEY IS LOST, HE KNOWS HE GAVE IT TO HER. RECALLS EXACTLY HOW HE HANDED IT TO HER

HAPPENS TO TRY HANDLE OF DOOR, WHICH OPENS, REVEALING KEY STILL IN THE IGNITION. IS VERY QUIET ON WAY HOME

GLUYAS WILLIAMS 2-8 (Copyright, 1936, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

## SMATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



SLAM!

AH, YOUR EXPRESSION—NOW IF YOU ARE A BIT DISSATISFIED WITH CONDITIONS

I'D BE MORE THAN WILLING TO READ JUST ANYTHING!

WILLYUM, HE IS TOO BIG FER ME!

HM—THAT IS A NEW ANGLE—I'D HAVE TO THINK OF COURSE—HM-M!

I'LL WAIT!

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## By HAL FORREST



ONE HOUR LATER—

DARN!

NO USE, SKEETS, WE'RE STYMIED!

WAL—FOR GOSH SAKE!

...THE SECRET PASSAGE!

## By EDWIN ALGER



GOMEONE HAS BEEN ON THIS ISLAND! YOU ARE IN DANGER! I MUST GIVE YOU!

NOW, PETE PLEASE QUIET YOURSELF AND TAKE THESE CHAINS OFF ME—

NO, YOU ARE IN DANGER, BUT IF GOMEONE IS ON THE ISLAND THE DOGS WILL FIND HIM!

## By SOL HESS



THE EXAMINER SAID TODAY AL CAPONE AND GEORGE ("MACHINE GUN") KELLY REFUSED TO JOIN IN THE RIOTING OF AMERICA'S MOST GABERIOUS CONVICTS AT THE RECENT OUTBREAK IN ALCATRAZ ISLAND FEDERAL PENITENTIARY.

The Examiner said it had learned, from a source it did not disclose, the riot January 26 was far more serious than prison authorities had indicated and its aftermath continued today in the hunger strike of two of the leaders.

Among the leaders, the newspaper said, were Norman T. Whitaker, convicted with Gordon Means in the Lindbergh ransom case; Loren "Dutch" Schmidt; Roger Touhy

## CAPONE NOT PART ALCATRAZ RIOTS

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## Age Pension Tangle On November Ballot

SALEM, Ore., Feb. 8.—(AP)—Petitioners, Hix with the secretary of state late yesterday, bore sufficient signatures to refer to the people the bill passed by the special legislative session diverting to relief the appropriations previously voted for old age pensions.

The special legislative measure, which took away the old age pension funds, left the sales tax as the only medium for supplying relief to the aged. The tax bill was subsequently voted down at the special session.