THE BOOMERANG CLUE
By Agatha Christie

SYNOPSIS: At first Frankie Derwent and Bobby Jones suspected Roger Bassington-ffrench of pushing the stranger over the cliff to his death at Marchbolt. But now that Frankie has faked an accident with Bobby's help, and gotten herself into the Bassington-ffrench house, she believes she has discovered the dead man to be the explorer Alan Carstairs, and suspects Dr. Nicholson rather than Roger. Nicholson runs a drug cure near the Bassington-ffrench country house.

Chapter 21

NEW CHAUFFEUR

"I BELIEVE Dr. Nicholson's cured drug-takers in the most marvelous way," Sylvia Bassington-ffrench went on. "People whose relatives despaired utterly."

"Yes," cried Henry Bassington-ffrench suddenly. "And do you know what goes on there? Do you know the awful suffering and the torment? A man's used to a drug and they cut him off it—cut him off it—till he goes raving mad for the lack of it and beats his head against the wall. That's what he does, your 'forceful' doctor, tortures people—tortures them—sends them to Hell—drives them mad. . . ."

He was shaking violently. Suddenly he turned and left the room.

Sylvia Bassington-ffrench looked startled. "What is the matter with Henry?" she said wonderingly. "He seems very much upset."

Frankie and Roger dared not look at each other.

"He's not looked well all the evening," ventured Frankie.

"No, I noticed that. He's very moody lately. I wish he hadn't given up riding. Oh, by the way, Dr. Nicholson invited Tommy over tomorrow, but I don't like his going there very much—not with all those queer nerve cases and dope-takers."

"I don't suppose the Doctor would allow him to come into contact with them," said Roger. "He seems very fond of children."

"Yes, I think it's a disappointment he hasn't got any of his own. Probably to her too. She looks very sad—and terribly delicate."

"She's like a sad Madonna," said Frankie.

"Yes, that describes her very well."

"If Dr. Nicholson is so fond of children, I suppose he came to your children's party?" said Frankie carelessly.

"Unfortunately he was away for a day or two just then. I think he had to go to London for some conference."

"I see."

They went up to bed. Before she went to sleep Frankie wrote to Bobby.

BOBBY had had an irksome time. His enforced inaction was exceedingly trying. He hated staying quietly in London and doing nothing.

He had been rung up on the telephone by George Arbuthnot, who in a few laconic words told him that all had gone well. A couple of days later he had a letter from Frankie delivered to him by her maid, the letter having gone under cover to her at Lord Marchington's town house. Since then he had heard nothing.

"Letter for you!" called out Badger.

Bobby came forward excitedly, but the letter was one addressed in his father's handwriting and postmarked Marchbolt. At that moment, however, he caught sight of the neat, black-gowned figure of Frankie's maid approaching down the mews. Five minutes later he was gazing upon Frankie's second letter.

Dear Bobby:

I think it's about time you came down. I've given them instructions at home that you're to have the Bentley whenever you ask for it. I got a chauffeur's livery—dark green ours always are. Charge it to Father at Harrod's. It's best to be correct in details. Concentrate on making a good job of the moustache. It makes a frightful difference to anyone's face.

Come down here and ask for me. You might bring me an ostensible note from Father. Report that the car is now in working order again. The garage here only holds two cars and as it's got the family Daimler and Roger Bassington-ffrench's two-seater in it, it is fortunately full up, so you will go to Staverley and put up there.

Get what local information you can when there—particularly about a Dr. Nicholson who runs a place for dope patients. Several suspicious circumstances about him: he has a dark-blue Talbot saloon, he was away from home on the 16th when your bear was doctored, and he takes altogether too detailed an interest in the circumstances of my accident.

I think I've indentified the corpse!!!

Au revoir, my fellow sleuth.

Love from your successfuly concussed

FRANKIE.

P. S. I shall post this myself.

Bobby's spirits rose with a bound. Discarding his overalls and breaking the news of his immediate departure to Badger, he was about to hurry off when he remembered that he had not yet opened his father's letter.

The Vicar gave conscientious news of doings in Marchbolt, described his own troubles with the organist and commented on the un-Christian spirit of one of his churchwardens.

There was a postscript.

By the way, someone called who asked for your address in London. I was out at the time, and he did not leave his name. Mrs. Roberts described him as a tall, stooping gentleman with pince-nez. He seemed very sorry to miss you and very anxious to see you again.

A tall stooping man with pince-nez— Bobby tried to think of anyone he knew who was likely to fit that description, but could not. Suddenly a quick suspicion darted into his mind. Was this the forerunner of a new attempt upon his life?

They, whoever they were, had only just discovered that he had left the neighborhood. All unsuspecting, Mrs. Roberts had given his new address. So that already they—whoever they were—might be keeping a watch upon the place. If he went out he would be followed—and just as things were at the moment that would never do.

"Badger," said Bobby.

"Yes, old lad."

"Come here."

The next five minutes were spent in genuine hard work. At the end of ten minutes Badger could repeat his instructions by heart.

When he was word-perfect, Bobby got into a two-seater dating from 1902 and drove dashingly down the mews. He parked in St. James's Square and walked straight from there to his club.

There he did some telephoning, and a couple of hours later certain parcels were delivered to him.

Finally, about half-past three a chauffeur in dark-green livery walked to St. James's Square and went rapidly up to a large Bentley which had been parked there about half an hour previously. The parking attendant nodded to him—the gentleman who had left the car had remarked, stammering slightly as he did so, that his chauffeur would be fetching it shortly.

BOBBY let in the clutch and drew neatly out. The abandoned Fiat still stood demurely awaiting its owner. Bobby, despite the intense discomfort of his upper lip, began to enjoy himself. He headed north, not south, and before long, the powerful engine was forging ahead on the Great North Road.

It was only an extra precaution that he was taking. He was pretty sure that he was not being followed. Presently he turned off to the left, and made his way by circuitous roads to Hampshire.

It was just after tea that the Bentley purred up the drive of Merroway Court, a stiff and correct chauffeur at the wheel.

"Hullo," said Frankie lightly. "There's the car."

She went out to the front door. Sylvia and Roger came with her.

"Is everything all right, Hawkins?"

The chauffeur touched his cap. "Yes, m'lady. She's been thoroughly overhauled."

"That's all right, then."

The chauffeur produced a note. "From his lordship, m'lady."

Frankie took it. "You'll put up at the—what is it—Anglers' Arms in Staverley, Hawkins. I'll telephone in the morning if I want the car."

"Very good, your ladyship." Bobby backed, turned and sped down the drive.

"I'm so sorry we haven't room here," said Sylvia. "It's a lovely car."

"You get some pace out of that," said Roger.

"I do," admitted Frankie.

She was satisfied that no faintest quiver of recognition had shown on Roger's face. She would have been surprised if it had. She would not have recognized Bobby herself had she met him casually.

The small moustache had a perfectly natural appearance, and that, with the stiff demeanor so uncharacteristic of the natural Bobby, completed the disguise enhanced by the chauffeur's livery.

The voice, too, had been excellent, and quite unlike Bobby's own. Frankie began to think that Bobby was far more talented than she had given him credit for being.

Meanwhile Bobby had successfully taken up his quarters at the Anglers' Arms. It was up to him to create the part of Edward Hawkins, chauffeur to Lady Frances Derwent. He mentioned Frankie's "accident."

"Young Reeves, he was there and saw it happen," declared Mr. Askew, landlord at the inn.

Bobby blessed the natural mendacity of the young.

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Bobby makes a thrilling discovery, Monday.

TRAGEDY REVEALS CLANDESTINE LOVE

CHICAGO, Feb. 27.—(AP)—Pretty Mary H. Carter, red-haired, 30, and single, was found fatally wounded today beside the body of Basil E. Cole, young railroad executive, in the tragic ending of a clandestine romance.

The dying girl's hand clutched a revolver, said Police Sergt. Ralph McKenna.

He put forward the theory that Miss Carter, believed to be a former Decatur, Ill., nurse, killed Cole and then shot herself as they lay side by side in a hotel room shared since Sunday.

A note believed to be in the woman's handwriting made it appear, however, that the two died in a suicide pact because they rebelled at being forced into a "back street" affair.

The note was not signed.

Cole was married and the father of two children. His wife, at Clinton, Mo., said she did not know she and Miss Carter had been having a romance.

To Name Solon

SALEM, Ore., Feb. 27.—(AP)—The secretary of state today called a meeting of the county courts of Crook and Jefferson counties to Prineville March 4 to name a successor to Millard Rodman, who recently resigned from the state legislature.

SHREVEPORT, La., Feb. 27.—(AP)—Capt. Carl G. E. Gimmler, pilot of the first pursuit group of Selfridge Field, Mich., was killed at Barksdale Field today when his single-seater army fighter crashed during gunnery practice.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

The strange and undescriptive name by which the famous gambling resort of Monte Carlo is officially known was not given to it by mistake or inadvertence—it was a deliberate attempt on the part of the founder to cloak his institution in an inoffensive name. At first it was called simply "Bathing Society of the Sea of Monaco" but later the owner expanded his name to make it even more strange. It was called "The Association of Sea-Bathing and Stranger's Club of Monaco."

Behind this strange name and other strange rules and regulations of the gambling resort lies the attempt to correct mistakes that ruined Francois Blanc's gambling place in Bavaria. Blanc, who founded Monte Carlo's "sea-bathing and stranger's resort" began his gambling institutions in and near Paris. Police there would not let him alone, so he moved to Bavaria where he established a successful place in 1843.

He made the mistake here, however, of letting local citizens play. Several family fortunes in the immediate vicinity were ruined by losses in Blanc's place, and public feeling ran so high that he was forced to re-establish himself elsewhere. When he finally settled at Monaco he made it a point to keep the people contented with his enterprise. He arranged for lightened tax burdens, gave the town beautiful churches, and most important of all he refused to let any residents of Monaco gamble at his casino. As a further cloak of innocence, he adopted the strange name the gambling resort bears.

Tomorrow: Changes in History by a Single Vote.

BELONGINGS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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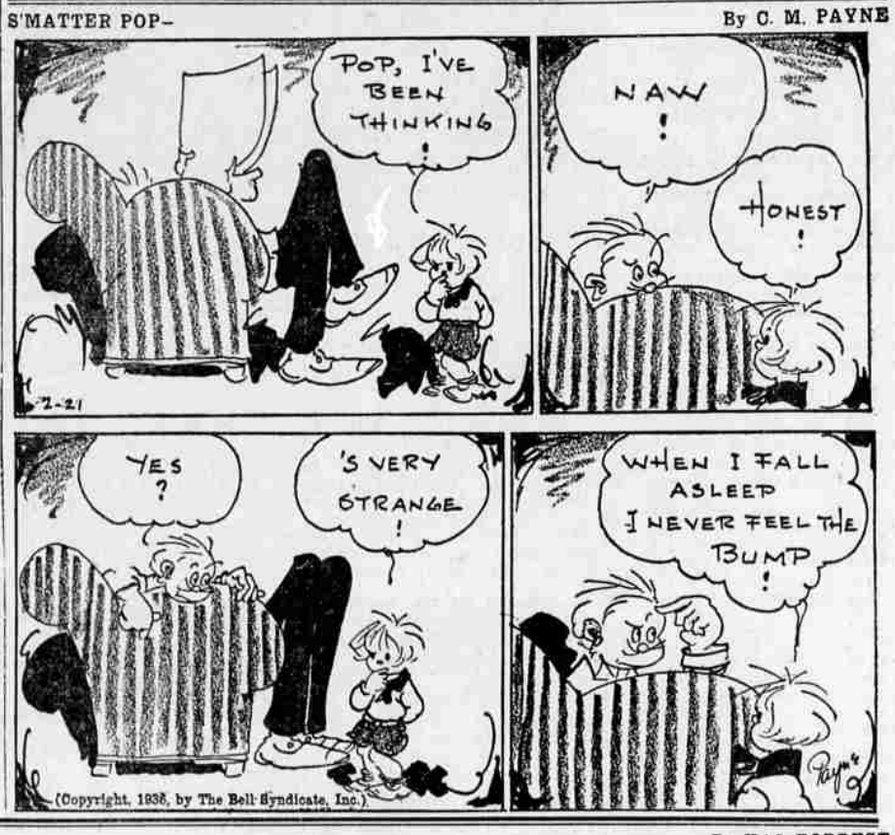
S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Connecting Link!

By HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Proposal

By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Big Mr. Me

By SOL HESS

PORTLAND CRITICIZES CALIFORNIA BLOCKADE

PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 27.—(AP)—The Portland city council branded the California transient blockade as an "atrocious condition and unconstitutional assumption of authority," and asked for its discontinuance.

The resolution which passed unanimously, termed the blockade a "blight on our civilization."

"Would Abraham Lincoln, who was as poor as Job's turkey, have been fingerprinted and turned back had he tried to enter California?" demanded the resolution.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

WORK AS DOMESTIC OFFERED TO GIRLS

Lewis Ulrich, manager of the national re-employment service, today announced several openings in domestic work for young women, wages ranging from $10 to $20 a month.

Mr. Ulrich and John Patton, clerk, have just returned from Eugene where they attended a conference of managers and clerks of western Oregon over which Guy V. Lintner, state director, presided.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27.—(AP)—Faced with opposition that threatened prolonged debate, Senator Norris (R-Neb.) agreed today to a majority leadership suggestion to a week's postponement of further debate on the $1,000,000,000 rural electrification bill.