

THE BOOMERANG CLUE BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

SYNOPSIS: Frankie Derwent and Bobby Jones race to find the murderer of Alan Carstairs. They thought they had found him in the person of Roger...

death. But what is she frightened of? "She's sure her husband's trying to murder her," said Frankie abruptly.

Chapter 29 THE PICTURE

FORTUNE favored her, for she fell in with Roger not far from the house. "Hello," he said. "You're back early from London."

"I wasn't in the mood for London," said Frankie. "Have you been to the house yet?" he asked.

"Look here, Frankie," said Roger. "Henry has absolutely got to be cured. It isn't as though this drug habit had a real hold on him."

"I know," said Frankie. "They were both together in the library when I came in. She was—very much upset."

"Do you mind telling me whether you took a photograph of that man's pocket—the one who fell over the cliff at Marchholt?"

"Now how on earth did you come to guess that?" he said. "Or did Moira tell you?—But then, she doesn't know—"

"I suppose I'll have to admit it," Roger said. "Why?"

"Well, look at it as I did. Here I am mounting guard over a strange dead body. Something is sticking out of his pocket. I look at it. By an amazing coincidence it's the photograph of a woman I know—a married woman—and a woman who I guess is not too happily married."

"I don't know that I can tell you just now," said Frankie. "I may later. It's all rather complicated. I can quite see why you took the photograph, but was there any objection to your saying you recognized the man? Oughtn't you to have told the police who he was?"

"Recognized him?" said Roger. He looked bewildered. "How could I recognize him? I didn't know him."

"Alan Carstairs—you did know Alan Carstairs?"

"Oh, yes. Man who came down with the Rivingtons. But the dead man wasn't Alan Carstairs."

"But he was!"

THEY stared at each other. Then Frankie said, with a renewal of suspicion. "Surely you must have recognized him?"

"I never saw his face," said Roger. "What?"

"No. There was a handkerchief spread over it."

Frankie stared at him. Suddenly he remembered that in Bobby's first account of the tragedy he had mentioned putting a handkerchief over the face of the dead man.

"You never thought of looking?" went on Frankie.

"No. Why should I?"

"Of course," thought Frankie. "If I'd found a photograph of somebody I knew in a dead person's pocket, I should simply have had to look at the person's face. How beautifully incurious men are!"

She gave him a clear and careful narrative of all that had occurred since the day Bobby and Dr. Thomas had found the body. She kept back only the fact that her accident had not been genuine, but she let it appear that she had lingered at Merroway Court through her intense desire to get to the bottom of the mystery.

"Is this really true?" he demanded. "All this about the fellow Jones being poisoned and all that?"

"Absolute gospel truth."

"Sorry for my incredulity—but the facts do take a bit of swallowing, don't they?"

He was silent for a minute, frowning.

"Look here," he said at last. "Fantastic though the whole thing sounds, I think you must be right in your first deduction. This man, Alex Pritchard, or Alan Carstairs, must have been murdered. If he wasn't, there seems no point in the attack upon Jones. So far that seems sense—but I don't see by what process of reasoning you fix on Nicholson as the criminal."

"He's such a sinister man, and he's got a dark-blue Talbot, and he was away from here on the day that Bobby was poisoned."

"That's all pretty thin as evidence."

"There are all the things Mrs. Nicholson told Bobby."

She recited them—and once again they sounded melodramatic and unsubstantial repeated aloud against the background of the peaceful English landscape.

Rogers shrugged his shoulders. "She thinks he supplies Henry with the drug—but that's pure conjecture. She's not a particle of evidence to pay that belief of hers," he said. "It's a creepy sort of place, the Grange, full of queer customers. Living there would tend to upset a woman's balance, especially if she were of the timid, nervous type."

"Then you don't think it's true?"

"I don't say that. She probably believes quite honestly that he is trying to kill her. But is there any foundation in fact for that belief?"

Frankie remembered with curious clearness Moira's saying, "It's just nerves." And somehow the mere fact that she had said that seemed to Frankie to point to the fact that it was not nerves; but she did not know how to explain her point of view to Roger.

Meanwhile the young man was going on: "Mind you, if you could show that Nicholson had been in Marchholt on the day of the cliff tragedy, that would be very different—or if we could find any definite motive linking him with Carstairs. But it seems to me you're ignoring the real suspects."

"What real suspects?"

"The—what did you call them—Haymans?"

"Caymans."

"That's it. Now, they are undoubtedly in it up to the hilt. First, there's the false identification of the body. Then there's their insistence on the point of whether the poor fellow said anything before he died. And I think it's logical to assume, as you did, that the Buenos Aires offer came from them or was arranged for by them."

"Oh!" cried Frankie. "I've just thought of something. Up to now, you see, I've been assuming that the photograph of Mrs. Cayman was substituted for the one of Moira Nicholson."

"I can assure you," said Roger, "that I have never treasured the likeness of a Mrs. Cayman."

"Well, she was handsome in a way," admitted Frankie. "A sort of bold, coarse, vampish way. But the point is this: Carstairs must have had her photograph on him as well as Mrs. Nicholson's."

Roger nodded. "And you think—" he suggested.

Events tend darkly toward tragedy, tomorrow.

REDS RADIO USE RAISES PROTEST

NEW YORK, March 7.—(AP)—A storm of protest today enveloped the granting of free radio time to the communist party of America for a discussion of political problems.

Earl Browder, secretary of the party as he spoke on a coast to coast Columbia hookup, was picketed by 10 flag-bearing persons and snubbed by a New England network.

He also had been told his speech would be cut off the air if he loitered from his prepared manuscript by so much as one word.

Browder was offered the facilities as part of the broadcasting company's program of sponsoring discussion by all recognized political parties.

He urged farmers, laborers and the "middle class" to unite in a third party.

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McAllister Files Campaign Notice

SALEM, March 7.—(AP)—Carl Blitup, Junction City, filed notice with the secretary of state Friday of his candidacy for delegate to the Republican national convention.

Other filings included: William M. McAllister, Medford, Republican, for state representative from Jackson county.

R. S. Anderson, Grants Pass, Democrat, for district attorney of Josephine county.

HELP IN PARKING

DRIVES LADIES OF THE FAMILY TO THE MOVIES. STARTS TO PARK THREE BLOCKS AWAY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

WIFE SUGGESTS HE PARK NEARER BECAUSE COUSIN AMELIA DOESN'T LIKE TO WALK, AND THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM IN BLOCK AHEAD

SPACE INDICATED BY WIFE PROVES TO BE BRISTLING WITH "NO PARKING" SIGNS. DRIVES ON

WIFE POINTS OUT VACANT SPACE IN NEXT BLOCK, WHICH TURNS OUT TO BE THE ENTRANCE OF AN ALLEYWAY

WIFE EXCLAIMS THERE'S ROOM DOWN THAT SIDE STREET, CALLING HIS ATTENTION TO IT TOO LATE FOR HIM TO MAKE THE TURN

AT WIFE'S SUGGESTION TURNS DOWN NEXT SIDE STREET, DISCOVERING THAT IT'S A ONE-WAY STREET. EXTRICATES HIMSELF AT LAST

FINDS AN EMPTY PLACE AT LAST, WHICH AFTER FIVE MINUTES STRUGGLING, PROVES TO BE SIX INCHES SHORTER THAN THE CAR

FINALLY PARKS FIVE BLOCKS FROM THEATER, IN TIME TO MISS FIRST HALF OF PICTURE, EVERYONE FEELING THAT IT'S ALL HIS FAULT

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

Illustration of Theodore Roosevelt with text: THEODORE ROOSEVELT WROTE NEARLY 3000 PIECES FOR PUBLICATION AND MORE THAN 150,000 LETTERS! SALT SOUR SWEET BITTER ARE THE ONLY TASTES KNOWN TO MAN!!! THE GRAND CANAL OF CHINA—A WATERWAY REACHING FROM HANGCHOW TO PEIPING—IS 850 MILES LONG!

Strange as it seems, there are only four tastes known to humans—for taste buds respond only to saltiness, sweetness, sourness, bitterness. All taste, in the exact use of the term, are varying degrees or combinations of these. Most of the sensations of taste, as we generally call them, are really sensations of smell.

S'MATTER POP—

GO AND SEE IF POP IS UP YET

YUP?

YUP!

YUP!

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Emperor Decides!

WHILE TOMMY AND SKEETS ARE BEING RECEIVED WITH WILD ENTHUSIASM AS GODS BY THE LOYAL FOLLOWERS OF PRINCE CALTUMAK, LET'S PEER INTO THE ROYAL PALACE WHERE WE SEE EMPEROR POPOEWATL IN CONFERENCE WITH TEXCOMAC, THE HIGH PRIEST—

O, MOST HIGH RULER, THE WHITE STRANGERS, WHOM WE THOUGHT WERE GODS— HAVE FLED—

IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE GOLDEN GIRL, WHOM WE KNOW AS THE GODDESS OF THE SUN—AIDED THEM TO ESCAPE!

ENOUGH!—I HAVE LONG SUSPECTED SHE WAS MORTAL—NOW WE SHALL PROVE IT!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Hunter

THIS IS AS FAR AS WE CAN GO BY CAR SO I'LL STRETCH THIS CANVAS OVER THE BUGGY—WE'LL CAMP HERE TONIGHT—

GUESS I STARTLED YOUR DOG COMIN' OUT OF THE WOODS JUST NOW, SON—

WANT TO STAY AND HAVE SOME SUPPER WITH US?

DIDN'T THINK I'D EVER WANT TO EAT FOOD AGAIN, MUCH LESS HAVE A CHANCE TO AFTER WHAT I BEEN THROUGH—BR-R-R! IT'S LIKE A BAD DREAM!

THE NEBBS—Going Away

WERE WE HAVE THE NEBBS PACKING... GETTING READY TO MOVE SOMEWHERE

WELL, I SUPPOSE YOU'RE JOYOUS NOW THAT WE'RE LEAVING THIS HORRIBLE PLACE—YOU HAD A HARD TIME HERE—SO DEEP IN—

YOU NEVER SOLD OUT ON ACCOUNT OF ME—IT WAS BECAUSE YOUR FRIEND SLIDER OUTSMARTED YOU AND GOT THOSE OPTIONS—

I GUESS SHE'S RIGHT—I'M A MISTAKE THAT NEVER SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED—HERE WITH OLD AGE HOLDING ME BY THE HAIR—SAYING HURRY ALONG—WHY DO YOU HANG BACK? WHAT DIFFERENCE WHAT PATH YOU TAKE—YOU'RE NOT GOING TO A HOOD-ROLLING CONTEST!

SPANISH WAR VETS TO MEET IN DALLES

THE DALLES, Ore., March 7.—(AP)—The United Spanish War veterans will hold their 1936 state convention here July 19 to 25, state department officers announced today.

PORTLAND, March 7.—(AP)—The county grand jury indicted four men today on assault and robbery charges for a series of recent streetcar hold-ups here.

STADELMAN TO DECIDE CANDIDACY IN 10 DAYS

SALEM, March 7.—(AP)—F. J. Stadelman, former secretary of state and prominent business man of The Dalles, said here today he would announce within 10 days whether or not he would seek the Republican nomination for state treasurer.

Be correctly corrected in an Artist Model by Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann.

By SOL HESS