

THE BOOMERANG CLUE

By AGATHA CHRISTIE

SYNOPSIS: Frankie Derwent just has solved Roger Bassington-French from the suspicion of murder she and Bobby Jones have laid over him. He has explained everything about his connection with the corpse of Alan Carstairs. Frankie's idea that perhaps the murderer is Dr. Nicholson, keeper of the drug store to which Roger is about to send his brother Henry Bassington-French. Nevertheless, he is inclined to agree with Frankie that sending Henry to Dr. Nicholson might be dangerous.

Chapter 30

ANOTHER SNAG

"I THINK one was love and the other was business!" said Frankie. "Carstairs was carrying about the Cayman's photograph for a reason. He wanted it identified by somebody, perhaps. Now listen—what happens? Someone, the male Cayman perhaps, is following him and seeing a good opportunity, steals up behind him in the mist and gives him a shove. Carstairs goes over the cliff with a startled cry. Male Cayman makes off as fast as he can—he doesn't know who may be about. We'll say that he doesn't know that Alan Carstairs is carrying about that photograph. What happens next? The photograph is published—"

"Consternation in the Cayman ménage," said Roger helpfully. "Exactly. What is to be done? The bold thing—grasp the nettle. Who knows Carstairs as Carstairs? Hardly anyone in this country. Down goes Mrs. Cayman, weeping crocodile tears and recognizing body as that of a convenient brother. The two also do a little hocus-pocus of posting parcels to bolster up the walking-tour story."

"You know, Frankie, I think that's positively brilliant," said Roger with admiration. "I think it's pretty good myself," said Frankie. "And you're quite right. We ought to get busy on the track of the Caymans. I can't think why we haven't done so before."

This was not quite true, since Frankie knew the reason quite well—namely, that they had been on the track of Roger himself.

"What are we going to do about Mrs. Nicholson?" she asked abruptly. "What do you mean—do about her?"

"Well, the poor thing is terrified to death. I do think you're callous about her, Roger."

"I'm not really, but people who can't help themselves always irritate me."

"Oh, but do be fair! What can she do? She's no money and nowhere to go."

"The truth of the matter is that you would find something to do," said Roger with decision.

Roger, it was clear, did not like them helpless. Mtra. on the other hand, clearly did not think very much of Roger. She had called him weak and had scouted the possibility of his having the guts to murder anyone.

He was weak, perhaps—but undeniably he had charm. She had felt it from the first moment of arriving at Merroway Court.

Roger said quietly, "If you liked, Frankie, you could make anything you chose of a man."

Frankie felt a sudden little thrill—and at the same time an acute embarrassment. She changed the subject hastily.

"About our brother," she said. "Do you still think he should go to the Grange?"

"No," said Roger. "I don't. After all, there are heaps of other places where he can be treated. The really important thing is to get Henry to agree."

"Do you think that will be difficult?" asked Frankie.

"I'm afraid it may be. You heard him the other night. On the other hand, if we just catch him in the repentant mood, that's very different. Hello—here comes Sylvia."

Mrs. Bassington-French emerged from the house and looked about her. Then seeing Roger and Frankie she walked across the grass towards them. They could see that she was looking terribly worried and strained.

"Roger," she began, "I've been looking for you everywhere. Then, as Frankie made a movement to leave them—" "No, my dear, don't go. Of what use are concealments? In any case, I think you know all there is to know. You've suspected this business for some time, haven't you?"

Frankie nodded.

"While I've been blind—blind," said Sylvia bitterly. "Both of you saw what I never even suspected. I only wondered why Henry had changed so to all of us. It made me very unhappy, but I never suspected the reason."

"As soon as Dr. Nicholson told me the truth, I went straight to Henry. I've only just left him now." She paused, swallowing a sob. "Roger—it's going to be all right. He's agreed. He will go to the Grange and put himself in Dr. Nicholson's hands tomorrow."

"Oh, no!" The exclamation came from Roger and Frankie simultaneously. Sylvia looked at them, astonished.

Roger spoke awkwardly. "Do you know, Sylvia, I've been thinking it over, and I don't believe the Grange would be a good plan, after all."

"You think he can fight it by himself?" asked Sylvia doubtfully.

"No, I don't. But there are other places—places not—so—well, not so near at hand. I'm convinced that staying in this district would be a mistake."

"I'm sure of it," said Frankie, coming to his rescue.

"Oh, I don't agree," said Sylvia. "I couldn't bear to have him go away somewhere. And Dr. Nicholson has been so kind and understanding. I shall feel happy about Henry's being under his charge."

"I thought you didn't like Nicholson, Sylvia," said Roger.

"I've changed my mind." She spoke simply.

There was a moment's silence. The position was awkward. Neither Roger nor Sylvia knew quite what to say next.

"Poor Henry," said Sylvia. "He broke down. He was terribly upset at my knowing. He agreed that he must fight this awful craving for my sake and Tommy's, but he said I hadn't a conception of what it meant. Oh, Roger, it seems so awful! But Dr. Nicholson was really kind. I trust him."

"All the same, I think it would be better—" began Roger.

Sylvia turned on him. "I don't understand you, Roger. Why have you changed your mind? Half an hour ago you were all for Henry's going to the Grange."

"Well—I've had time to think the matter over since—"

Again Sylvia interrupted. "Any way, I've made up my mind. Henry shall go to the Grange and nowhere else."

They confronted her in silence. Then Roger said: "Do you know, I think I will ring up Nicholson. He will be home now. I'd like—just to have a talk with him about matters."

Without waiting for her reply he turned away and went rapidly into the house. The two women stood looking after him.

"I cannot understand Roger," said Sylvia impatiently. "About a quarter of an hour ago he was positively urging me to arrange for Henry to go to the Grange. Her tone held a distinct note of anger."

"All the same," said Frankie, "I agree with him. I'm sure I've read somewhere that people ought always to go for a cure somewhere far away from their homes."

"I think that's just nonsense," said Sylvia.

Frankie felt in a dilemma. Sylvia's unexpected obstinacy was making things difficult, and also she seemed suddenly to have become as violently pro-Nicholson as she formerly had been against him. It was very hard to know what arguments to use.

An airplane passed low overhead in the gathering dusk, filling the air with its loud beat of engines. Both Sylvia and Frankie stared up at it, glad of the respite it afforded, since neither of them quite knew what to say next. It gave Frankie time to collect her thoughts, and Sylvia time to recover from her fit of sudden anger.

As the airplane disappeared over the trees and its roar receded into the distance, Sylvia turned abruptly to Frankie.

"It's been so awful—" she said brokenly. "And you all seem to want to send Henry far away from me."

"No, no," said Frankie. "It wasn't that at all."

At a loss what to say or do next, Frankie relapsed into silence. Presently Roger came out again from the house. He seemed slightly breathless.

"Nicholson isn't in yet," he said. "I left a message."

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

THE YELLOW RIVER, IN CHINA, HAS CHANGED ITS COURSE 11 TIMES IN 2500 YEARS... IN A SINGLE YEAR IT MOVED 250 MILES OFF THE OLD COURSE

ALEXANDER III - Czar of Russia, SPENT 25 YEARS COLLECTING PEARLS TO MAKE HIS CZARINA A PERFECT HECKLE

MARY MAPES DODGE - WHOSE "HANS BRINKER," A JUVENILE STORY OF DUTCH LIFE, WAS A BEST SELLER IN MANY LANDS, NEVER SAW HOLLAND UNTIL AFTER THE BOOK WAS PUBLISHED

Strange as it seems, the firemen's greatest hazard is not fire-fighting. His greatest occupational hazard is making the run to and from the fire. Accidents to fast-moving fire apparatus and exposure during chilly runs through wintry nights, account for more sickness, disability and death than falling walls and choking smoke at the scene of the actual fire.

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT THE PERFECT GUM THE FLAVOR LASTS

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

WILEY TOMMY, WISKEYS AND PRINCE CALTUMAC WERE TRAILING THE GOLDEN GIRL TO THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN THEY ENCOUNTERED A BAND OF AZTEC WARRIORS WHO WERE LOYAL SUPPORTERS OF THE FUGITIVE PRINCE, AND PROMISED TO AID HIM GAIN THE THRONE OF AZTECO. 2440

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Hunter Talks

REYNOLDS IS MY NAME BOYS—LACEY REYNOLDS, AN' I'M A DECENT, LAW ABIDIN' CITIZEN FROM DOWN DEEP GULCH WAY—

SAY, YOU TWO LADS ARE JEST CAMPIN' HERE FOR THE NIGHT AN' GOIN' BACK, AIN'T YOU?

NO, WE'RE GOIN' TO SEE—

—WE'RE HEADING INTO THE SHADOW MOUNTAINS COUNTRY, MR. REYNOLDS—THIS IS BEN BROWN, BETTER KNOWN AS CRIP, AND MY NAME'S BEN WEBSTER

BOYS I'M PLEADIN' WITH YOU, HERE AN' NOW, TO STAY OUT O' THE SHADOW MOUNTAINS—THAT'S WHERE I LOST TEN YEARS OFF MY LIFE IN FIVE MINUTES LAST NIGHT!

THE NEBBS—A Grateful Friend

HI, MR. NEBB, I'M JUST HAULING THIS BARREL OF APPLES OVER TO YER PLACE. I'M GIVIN' EM TO YOU FREE—NO COST—THEY'RE WINE-SAPS AND RUSSETS

STE INTO THIS ONE AND GIVE YOUR FACE A SPRINKLE—I'M ALL BOWED DOWN ABOUT YOUR GOIN' AWAY—YOU WAS A GOOD CUSTOMER OF MINE ON VEGETABLES—NEVER GIVE ME NO LONG ARGUMENTS ON PRICES—I KNOW FROM NOW ON THE ASKED PRICE, AIN'T GOIN' TO BE FINAL

THANKS, MR. FABRICE

THAT WAS AWFUL NICE OF HIM, BUT WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH A BARREL OF APPLES—MAYBE I'D BETTER TAKE THEM ALONG—THEY'RE SOMETHING TO EAT ANYWAY

CHUMS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

3-9

WALKS AROUND BLOCK WITH BUD BEMIS TO SEE IF ANYTHING INTERESTING IS GOING ON

CONVERSATION LANGUISHING, THRUSTS HIS FOOT BETWEEN BUD'S LEGS

BUD GIVES CHASE, DETAILING JUST WHAT HE'S GOING TO DO TO HIM WHEN HE CATCHES HIM

IS OVERHAULED. RETALIATES WITH HICKS TO THE SHIN, AS BUD BENDS HIS ARM BEHIND

BOTH GO DOWN, PUFFING AND GRUNTING UNTIL TWENTY MINUTES LATER BUD REMARKS EDDIE SELZER'S MOTHER IS MAKING DOUGHNUTS TODAY

GET UP AND HEAD FOR EDDIE'S, AMIABLY DISCUSSING WHO WILL WIN THE PENNANT THIS YEAR (Copyright, 1936, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE

WHAT'S THA HOLES FOR, POP?

TO NAIL IT ON!

CAN'T THA HORSE TAKE IT OFF?

NO

AN' HE'S GOTTA GO TO BED WITH HIS SHOES ON?

YES!

?

(Copyright, 1936, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

BOMB MAILED TO SYRACUSE PREXY

SYRACUSE, N. Y., March 9.—(AP)—A package addressed to Chancellor Charles Wesley Flint of Syracuse University, containing a nitro-glycerine bomb and an ace of spades, was discovered in the Syracuse postoffice Sunday. No clues as to the sender were found immediately by postoffice inspectors.

Chancellor Flint, to whose Syracuse home the package was addressed, and Mrs. Flint are on a vacation trip to Miami, Fla. Postoffice officials said that if the bomb had not been discovered it would have been delivered to the chancellor's office this morning.

COURT SMITH NEW QUENTIN WARDEN

SAN QUENTIN PRISON, Cal., March 9.—(UP)—Court Smith, bluff and brawny peace officer who at present directs the affairs of Folsom state prison, was named warden of San Quentin prison, the largest penal institution in America, late today.

Smith was chosen to succeed James B. Holohan, whose formal resignation becomes effective April 15.

San Quentin's new boss is six feet, six inches tall. He weighs 280 pounds. For 35 years he has been a law enforcement officer, a peace officer of the old school.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

WE GO NOW—YOU SAVVY?—TO TEMPLE OF SUN—GOSH, I CAN'T MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND—

EDWIN ALGER

SOL HESS