

THE BOOMERANG CLUE

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

SYNOPSIS: Every time Frankie Derwent and Bobby Jones think they are about to solve the mystery of the Carstairs' murder, an explanation of the mystery of Henry Hastings-French something sets them off on a fresh tack. While Bobby investigates the suspicious Dr. Nicholson, Frankie investigates the equally suspicious Caymans, in London. Frankie learns nothing about the Caymans, but in conversation with her father's lawyer she suddenly discovers that he knows a good deal about the mysterious Carstairs.

Chapter 35 NEW MYSTERY

"HE was. He consulted me when he was last in England a month ago. You know Mr. Carstairs, Lady Frances?"

"I think I may say I do," replied Frankie.

"A most attractive personality," said Mr. Sprague. "He brought quite a breath of the—er—wide open spaces into my office."

"He came to consult you about Mr. Savage's will, didn't he?" said Frankie.

"Ah!" said Mr. Sprague. "So it was you who advised him to come to me? I'm sorry I couldn't do more for him."

"Just what did you advise him to do?" asked Frankie. "Or would it be unprofessional to tell me?"

"Not in this case," said Mr. Sprague, smiling. "My opinion was that there was nothing to be done—nothing, that is, unless Mr. Savage's relatives were prepared to spend a lot of money on fighting the case—which I gather they were not prepared, or indeed in a position, to do."

"The whole thing was very curious," said Frankie thoughtfully.

"Such cases are less uncommon than you might think," said Mr. Sprague.

"Cases of suicide?" inquired Frankie.

"No, no, I meant cases of undue influence. Mr. Savage was clearly as wax in this woman's hands."

"I wish you'd tell me the whole story properly," said Frankie boldly. "I never seemed to get the thing clearly."

"Mr. Savage happened to be traveling back from the United States to England in November of last year. He was, as you know, an extremely wealthy man with no near relatives. On this voyage he made the acquaintance of a certain Mrs. Templeton. Nothing much is known about Mrs. Templeton except that she was a very good-looking woman and had a husband somewhere conveniently in the background."

"The Caymans," thought Frankie. "These ocean trips are dangerous," went on Mr. Sprague, smiling and shaking his head. "Mr. Savage accepted the lady's invitation to come down and stay at her little cottage at Chipping Somerton. There is no doubt that he came more and more under this Mrs. Templeton's influence."

"Then came the tragedy. Mr. Savage had for some time feared that he might be suffering from cancer. He was staying with the Templetons at the time. They persuaded him to go up to London and consult a specialist.

"That specialist swore at the instant that Mr. Savage was not suffering from cancer and that he had told him so, but that Mr. Savage was so obsessed by his own belief that he could not accept the truth when he was told it. Now, strictly without prejudice, Lady Frances, and knowing the medical profession, I think things may have gone a little differently. If Mr. Savage's symptoms puzzled the doctor he may have spoken seriously, pulled a long face, talked of certain expensive treatments, and while reassuring him as to cancer yet have conveyed the impression that something was seriously wrong."

"ANYWAY, Mr. Savage came back to Chipping Somerton in a state of great mental distress. He saw ahead of him a painful and lingering death. He sent for a solicitor—a very reputable member of an eminently respectable firm, and the latter drew up a will there and then which Mr. Savage signed and which he then delivered over to the solicitor for safe-keeping."

"On that same evening Mr. Savage took a large overdose of chloral."

"By his will Mr. Savage left the sum of seven hundred thousand pounds free of legacy duty to Mrs. Templeton, and the remainder to certain specified charities."

Mr. Sprague leaned back in his chair. He was now enjoying himself.

"Mr. Carstairs' contention was that such a will was completely uncharacteristic of Mr. Savage. Mr. Savage had no liking for organized charities and had always held very strong opinions as to money passing by blood relationship. However, Mr. Carstairs had no documentary proof

of these assertions and, as I pointed out to him, men change their opinions."

"There was no fuss made at the time?" asked Frankie.

"As I say Mr. Savage's relatives were not living in this country and they knew very little about the matter. It was Mr. Carstairs who took the matter up. He returned from a trip into the interior of Africa, and came over to this country to see if something could be done about it. I was forced to tell him that in my view there was nothing to be done. Possession is nine points of the law, and Mrs. Templeton was in possession. Moreover, she had left the country and gone, I believe, to the south of France to live. She refused to enter into any communication on the matter."

"I see," said Frankie. "And nobody knows anything about this Mrs. Templeton?"

Mr. Sprague shook his head and pursed his lips.

Frankie rose.

"Men are extraordinary creatures," she said.

"Good-bye, Mr. Sprague," she said. "You've been wonderful—simply wonderful. I feel too ashamed."

"You Bright Young People must be more careful," said Mr. Sprague, shaking his head at her.

"You've been an angel," said Frankie.

THE inexplicable absence of Moira worried Bobby more than he cared to admit. That she had left Stavlerley of her own free will Bobby did not for one minute believe. No, the sinister Dr. Nicholson was at the bottom of this. Somehow or other he must have become aware of Moira's activities, and this was his counter-move. Somewhere within the sinister walls of the Grange, Moira was a prisoner, unable to communicate with the outside world.

But she might not remain a prisoner long. Bobby believed implicitly every word Moira had uttered. Nicholson meant to get rid of his wife. Bobby believed he would. Moira's body would probably be found in some district far from Stavlerley. It might, perhaps, be washed up by the sea. Or it might be found at the foot of a cliff. The thing would appear to be, Bobby was almost sure, an "accident." Nicholson specialized in "accidents."

Nevertheless, Bobby believed that the planning and carrying out of such an accident would need time—not much time, but a certain amount. Before that interval had elapsed Bobby meant to have found Moira if she were in the Grange.

After he had left Frankie in Brook Street, he started to put his plans into operation.

That evening a young man with a moustache, dressed in a cheap dark blue suit, arrived at the bustling little town of Ambledere. He put up at a hotel near the station, registering as George Parker. Having deposited his suitcase there, he strolled out and entered into negotiations for hiring a motorcycle.

At ten o'clock that evening a motorcyclist in cap and goggles passed through the village of Stavlerley and came to a halt at a deserted part of the road not far from the Grange.

Then he sauntered along the wall till he came to the little door. Inside the grounds of the Grange everything seemed quiet.

He made a careful reconnaissance round the house. Some of the upstairs windows had lights in them and there was one lighted window on the ground floor.

Towards this window Bobby crept. The curtains were drawn across it, but there was a slight chink between them. Bobby put a knee on the window-sill and hoisted himself noiselessly up. He peered through the slit.

He could see a man's arm and shoulder moving along as though writing. Presently the man shifted his position and his profile came into view. It was Dr. Nicholson. Bobby saw every detail clearly, even to the Doctor's ears. They were practically without lobes, he noted—weren't criminals' ears supposed to be that sort?

The Doctor wrote on, calm and unharried. At last with a sigh, Bobby let himself slide noiselessly to the ground. From the look of it Nicholson would be writing for some time to come. Now was the moment to gain admission to the house.

If Bobby could force an entrance by an upstairs window while the Doctor was writing in his study, he could explore the building at his leisure later in the night.

He made a circuit of the house again and singled out a window on the second floor. The sash was open at the top; moreover a convenient tree promised a means of access.

Tomorrow, Bobby falls into darkness.

Martin Turns Dirt For Flax Plant

MT. ANGEL, Ore., March 14.—(AP)—Governor Charles H. Martin turned the first soil in a green field of growing wheat here yesterday as the first step toward construction of the new cooperative plant for flax retting and scutching.

The plant site, located in the midst of an area which has proved its worth as a flax growing district, was chosen because a creek with a good supply

France To Boost Quota On Apples

PORTLAND, Ore., March 14.—(AP)—The Journal's Washington correspondent said Senator Steiwer received word from the state department that France will add 3000 metric tons to its apple quota the first quarter, and possibly will double that quantity.

Drought Strikes Pitcairn Island

LOS ANGELES, March 14.—(AP)—Drought has struck the romantic island of Pitcairn, settled by mutineers of the British warship Bounty in the 18th century, word received here said today.

A letter from Fred M. Christian, descendant of the leading colonizer of the South Sea Island, told Philip Cook of how lack of rain had prevented a harvest.

STOPPING WITH JUNIOR

WALK IS INTERRUPTED WHILE MOTHER STOPS TO GOSSIP WITH NEIGHBOR. JUNIOR IS VERY MUCH BORED

TRIES TO LIVEN THINGS UP BY CHASING SQUIRREL, ALMOST PULLING MOTHER'S ARM OUT

AMUSES HIMSELF HANGING BY MOTHER'S HAND AND SWINGING IN CIRCLES

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

COMPLICATES MATTERS BY CIRCLING MOTHER WHO HAS TO INTERRUPT CONVERSATION TO UNWIND HERSELF



GLUYAS WILLIAMS 3-14 (Copyright, 1936, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



Nathan Bedford Forrest, who gained fame as a cavalry leader in the Confederate army during the Civil War, was born in 1821 in Tennessee. His entire schooling amounted to only about six months. He was first a horse and cattle trader in Mississippi, later died in slavery, and finally became a cotton planter, in which business he became wealthy.

Up to the time of the Civil War he had never had any army experience. When the South seemed ready to break away from the Union, Forrest was against it. Yet, at the start of hostilities he joined the Confederates as a private. He was 40 years old at the time. He was a soldier by natural instinct, and although he had absolutely no schooling in arms, he rose to the rank of brigadier general inside of 13 months.

Forrest, shortly after his enlistment, was named by Governor Harris of Tennessee to raise a cavalry unit. He was stationed at Fort Donelson during Grant's famous attack, and escaped with his cavalry under cover of darkness. He was given a roving commission with his cavalry, and soon the name of Forrest came to be known and dread throughout the North.

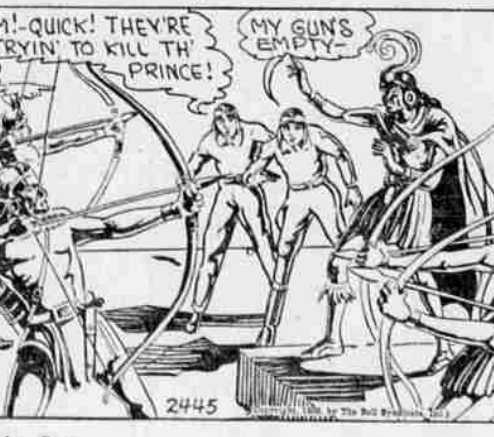
General Sherman knew Forrest's value to the South. He offered a reward for Forrest's capture—and said that he must be taken "if it costs 10,000 lives and breaks the treasury."

Forrest, however, was never taken. After the war he was a leader in the Ku Klux Klan, and when he believed its purpose accomplished, he was instrumental in disbanding that organization.

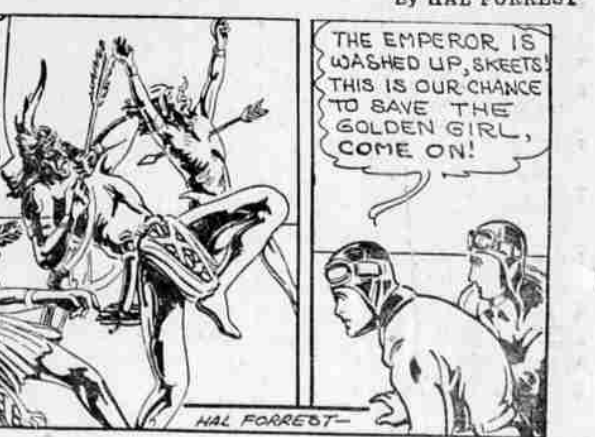
Tomorrow Punctuation by the Page.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Moves Fast!

TOMMY SHOT THE KNIFE FROM THE HAND OF TEXCOMAC, JUST AS THE HIGH PRIEST WAS ABOUT TO PLUNGE IT INTO THE HEART OF THE GOLDEN GIRL. PRINCE CALTMAC, TOMMY'S FRIEND THEN ADDRESSED THE AZTECS, BUT PRINCE CALTMAC, THE EMPEROR, CALLED HIS ARCHERS—



BUT THE PRINCE'S ARCHERS RELEASED THEIR ARROWS FIRST.



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—In Sight of the Goal

COME ON, CRIP! SHAKE A LEG AND WE'LL HAVE SOME BREAKFAST, THEN BE ON OUR WAY—

IS IT TIME TO GET UP?

S'POSIN' THIS HERE DOC KILOVITCH AINT ANY HAPPIER OVER SEEN' US THAN HE WAS OUR HUNTER FRIEND OF LAST NIGHT? WHAT'RE WE GOIN' TO DO?

EAGER TO BE MOVING, BEN SUGGESTED TO CRIP THAT ONLY BY VISITING DR. KILOVITCH WOULD THEY OBTAIN AN ANSWER TO THE BOY'S VARIOUS QUESTIONS—

ACCORDING TO THIS MAP OF MR. THORPE'S, WE OUGHT TO BE IN SIGHT OF THE PLACE PRETTY SOON, CRIP—

GAY, THAT MUST BE THE PLACE, BEN!

LET'S HURRY AND SEE IF WE CAN GET THERE BEFORE DARK—



THE NEBBES—Pals

HERE, I'VE GOT AN OPTION ON THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE JUNCTION OF THE OLD AND NEW ROAD—SWEET PLACE FOR REFRESHMENT PARLORS AND... OIL STATIONS

WE COULD OPEN AN OIL STATION AND LUNCH COUNTER AT BOTH PLACES AND FURNISH THE FOOD FROM THE HOTEL—THERE'S GOLD IN THEM CORNERS, STRANGER!

AS WE ARE SITTING HERE IN AN EASY CHAIR WITH A NICE SHINY DESK ON WHICH TO PARK OUR FEET, GIVE ME CREDIT FOR BEING A MAN WITH AN EYE FOR THE FUTURE—A MAN WHO LIVES IT, ACTS IT, DREAMS IT BEFORE IT COMES

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO—CHEER OR SAY AMEN?



Jacksonville

JACKSONVILLE, March 14.—(Sp.)—The Intermediate C. E. society of the Presbyterian church recently held a party in the church parlors. The little folks report a very good time.

Miss Bess Barry was a recent over-night guest of Alice Mason.

The school board held its annual meeting Tuesday evening.

Mrs. Helen Cooke Culy was visiting friends in Jacksonville last Saturday.

Mr. Lewis and Mr. Wetterer, who are officers of the local Townsend club, attended a meeting of the Townsend county unit at Medford Wednesday night. The next regular meeting of Jacksonville club No. 1 will be held Monday night at the city hall in Jacksonville. Outside speakers will be present and a most enjoyable evening is anticipated. Everybody is welcome at the local meeting and also at the county unit meeting.

4 CLUBS TO DISCUSS PARK SNOW CARNIVAL

Officers of the Rogue Snowmen, the Bend Skyliners, the Port Klamath Ski Club and the Klamath Snow Club will meet at 1 p. m. Sunday at the Presbyterian church today for a government headquarters in Crater Lake national park to discuss plans for the third annual Crater Lake winter carnival. The meeting will be addressed by David H. Casfield, park superintendent. Date of the carnival will be set and a program outlined.