

THE BOOMERANG CLUE

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

SYNOPSIS: Convinced that Dr. Nicholson is the murderer of Miss Corstair, Bobby Jones and Frankie Derwent determine to prove their case. But Bobby is cracked on the head while exploring Nicholson's place, and Frankie, coming to Tudor Cottage, Chipping Somerton in response to a letter purportedly from Bobby, is chloroformed. They wake up tied and lying unconsciously on the floor of an attic room. Nicholson comes in to tell them that he plans to arrange an "accident" which will kill them both. Frankie says that Roger Bassington-French knows where she is.

Chapter 33 INSPIRATION

NICHOLSON was silent for a moment. Then he said, "A good bluff—but I call it."
He turned to the door.
"What about your wife, you swine!" cried Bobby. "Have you murdered her too?"
"Mofra is still alive," said Nicholson. "How much longer she will remain so, I do not really know. It depends on circumstances."
He made them a mocking little bow.
"An revoir," he said. "You may enjoy talking the matter over. I shall not gag you unless it becomes necessary. Any calls for help and I return and deal with the matter."

"My God!" cried Bobby.
"What is it?"
"Frankie, that wasn't Nicholson who came here just now!"
"Have you gone quite mad? Who was it then?"
"I don't know—but it wasn't Nicholson. All along I felt there was something wrong—but couldn't spot it, and your saying 'ears' has given me the clue. When I was watching Nicholson the other evening through the window I specially noticed his ears—the lobes are joined to his face. But this man to-night—his ears weren't like that."
"But what does it mean?" Frankie asked hopelessly.
"This is a very clever actor impersonating Nicholson."
"But why—and who could it be?"
"Bassington-French," breathed Bobby. "We spotted the right man at the beginning and then—like idiots, we went astray after red herrings."
"Bobby, you're right. He was the only person there when I taunted Nicholson about accidents."
"Then it really is all up," said Bobby. "I've still had a kind of sneaking hope that possibly Roger Bassington-French might nose out our trail by some miracle. But no—the game's up, Frankie."
As he finished speaking there was



"A good bluff—but I call it," said Roger.

He went out and closed and locked the door behind him.
"In books there's always an eleventh-hour rescue," said Frankie at last, trying to speak hopefully.
"The whole thing's so implausible," said Bobby as though pleading with someone. "So fantastic, I wish an eleventh-hour rescue were possible, but I can't see who's going to rescue us. Frankie, do you know what annoys me most about this business?"
"No. What?"
"That even now, when we're going to be hurled into the next world we still don't know who Evans is."
"Let's ask him," said Frankie. "You know—a last-minute boon. I agree with you that I simply can't die without having my curiosity satisfied."
There was a silence, then Bobby said, "I've got you into an awful mess, Frankie."
"Oh, that's all right. You couldn't have kept me out. I wanted to come in. Bobby, do you think he'll really pull it off? Us, I mean."
"I'm terribly afraid he will. He's so damnably efficient."
"Bobby, do you believe now that it was he who killed Henry Bassington-French?"
"If it were possible—"
"It is possible, granted one thing—that Sylvia Bassington-French is in it too."
"Frankie!"

I KNOW. I was just as horrified when the idea occurred to me. But it fits. Why was Sylvia so dense about the morphia? Why did she resist so obstinately when we wanted her to send her husband somewhere else instead of the Grange? And then she was in the house when the shot was fired—"
"She might have done it herself."
"Oh, no—surely!"
"Yes, she might. And then have given the key of the study to Nicholson to put in Henry's pocket."
"It's all crazy," said Frankie in a hopeless voice. "Like looking through a distorting mirror. There ought to be some way of telling criminals—eyebrows or ears or something."

PANGBORN PLANNING NON-STOP HOP FOR RUSSIA NEXT JUNE

Copyright 1936 by United Press. NEW YORK, March 18.—(UPI)—Clyde E. Pangborn, first to span the Pacific by air, last night announced a projected flight from the United States to Russia in June in an attempt to break the world non-stop distance record of 5904.2 miles. Pangborn said he might make the 80 hour flight alone if he gets an automatic pilot for his "Vance flying wing."
Pangborn has just returned from Oakland, Calif., where he made arrangements to fly the ship to Keyport, N. J., early next month.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

FOR THE DISCOVERY OF NEWFOUNDLAND, JOHN CABOT WAS PAID ONLY £10 (\$50) BY THE KING OF ENGLAND

ADULT SQUIDS VARY IN SIZE FROM ONE INCH TO 75 FEET...

EVERYBODY CASHED IN, BUT NOBODY WON IN THE DEAD HEAT RACE BETWEEN APPRENTICE AND PARDEE

Empire City, N.Y., July 30, 1932

CENSORED!

THE FIRST PHONOGRAPH DEMONSTRATED IN RUSSIA WAS SMASHED BEFORE THE CZAR BECAUSE THE OPERATOR INADVERTENTLY PLAYED A RECORD OF KIRLOFF'S FABLES, BANNED BY CENSORS 50 YEARS PREVIOUSLY.. THE OPERATOR WAS FINED AND PUT IN JAIL 3 MONTHS...

3-15-36

A strange trick of betting odds, together with a dead heat finish at Empire City, New York, in July, 1932, resulted in some bettors breaking even, others losing a little, but in spite of it everybody was able to cash in their tickets.
The race was between three horses—Star Fire, Apprentice and Pardee. Star Fire and Apprentice ran coupled as Butler Entry against Pardee. Odds at the track were 9 to 10 on the entry and even money on Pardee. Apprentice and Pardee ran a dead heat, and the race was declared a draw. Those who bet on the entry lost five cents on the dollar, those who bet on Pardee broke even.
Fifty years before the first phonograph was heard in Russia, for some reason or other, the old fables of Kirloff came under the ban of the censors. Then came the amazing new American invention—the phonograph. A demonstration in court was arranged for the strange new device that spoke like a man.
During preparation for the demonstration recordings in Russian were made—and by chance the recordings were of Kirloff's fables. When these banned words were spoken by the

IF YOUR THROAT FEELS DRY AND DUSTY TRY WRIGLEY'S

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT

THE FLAVOR LASTS

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Treachery of Texcomac

AWAY BY THE MENACE OF TOMMY'S GUN, TEXCOMAC LEADS OUR FRIENDS THROUGH THE SECRET PASSAGES BELOW THE MOUNTAIN OUT OF THE ISLAND IN THE SKY—BUT HE CUNNINGLY LEAVES THE DOOR OF THE TUNNEL OPEN FOR A PURPOSE—

WE'VE BEEN WALKING THROUGH THIS TUNNEL FOR HOURS—I HOPE THIS SAVAGE HASN'T LOST THE TRAIL—

HOPE HE DON'T KNOW YOU USED UP TH' LAST BULLET IN YOUR GUN—

A LIGHT—AHEAD!

YES—BUT TEXCOMAC SAYS IT LEADS INTO THE DESERT OF DESOLATION—WHERE WE MAY ALL DIE OF THIRST—

LISTEN!—SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF VOICES—BEHIND US—YELLING—

WE'VE BEEN DOUBLE-CROSSED! LET'S START RUNNING!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Admission Granted

YOUR WISHES DOCTOR—

VISITORS ARE APPROACHING AND I WANT THEM ADMITTED—

FATHER, IS SOMEONE COMING HERE?

YES, OLGA, BUT YOU MUST NOT MEET THEM, FOR THE PRESENT—PLEASE GO TO YOUR APARTMENT—

WELCOME TO MYSTERY HOUSE—DR. KILOVITCH IS EXPECTING YOU—

ENTER, PLEASE!

EXPECTIN' US? HOW COME?

THE NEBBS—It's Too Bad

WELL, JUST WHEN EVERYBODY WAS HOPING THEY SAW THE LAST OF YOU THIS GUY FLUNT KEEPS YOU IN TOWN!

WELL, HE TOOK YOU OUT FROM UNDER A TRUNK AND MADE A HOME ACTOR OUT OF YOU!

SO YOU AND THIS LITTLE RUNT, SLIDER GOT THE WHOLE HIGHWAY BOUGHT UP—TRYIN' TO HOG ALL THE BUSINESS—WELL, IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GOIN' TO CHASE ME OUT, YOU'RE DUMBER THAN PEOPLE GIVE YOU CREDIT FOR!

I DON'T WANT TO CHASE YOU OUT—I WANT YOU AROUND—LIFE IS SO SERIOUS I GOT TO HAVE A LAUGH ONCE IN AWHILE

CONTRARY

OBSERVES MOTHER AND AUNTS COMING INTO NURSERY TO SEE WHY HE DIDN'T WANT HIS MILK

CAN'T HELP SMILING BECAUSE THEY ALL LOOK SO SOLEMN AND SERIOUS

AND MOTHER'S SURE SOMETHING IS THE MATTER WITH HIM, WHEREAS HE REALLY FEELS FINE

BUT THE AUNTS THINK HE IS MERELY NAUGHTY, AND THEY ALWAYS LOOK FUNNY WHEN THEY HAVE THEIR SCOLDING FACES ON

IN FACT THE SIGHT OF THEM STANDING AROUND SHAKING THEIR HEADS SENDS HIM INTO GALES OF LAUGHTER

NOTICES THAT THEY ARE BEGINNING TO SMILE TOO AND MOTHER DECIDES HE'S ALL RIGHT

AND ONE OF THE AUNTS IS GETTING PLAYFUL, TALKING BABY TALK AND SHAKING HER FINGER AT HIM

DOESN'T THINK THEY ARE NEARLY SO FUNNY THIS WAY

THEY TROOP OUT SHAKING HEADS AND MUTTERING SOMETHING ABOUT BEING CONTRARY WHICH FOR SOME REASON MAKES HIM SMILE AGAIN

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S'MATTER POP—

WELL, BRING HIM IN AS I TOLD YOU

HE WANTS THIS!

TAWAW!

WELL, BRING IT IN TOO!

HOLE

WOW!

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By HAL FORREST

By EDWIN ALGER

By SOL HESS