

THE PHONE BOOTH MURDER

by Phoebe Atwood Taylor

Chapter 11 Rumping Rankin

"NOW look, Mayo, who has been killed," Rankin demanded. "Elissa Hingham?" "What makes you think she might've been?" Asey countered with another question. "You've heard of people who were born to be killed, haven't you?" Rankin said. "Well, Elissa is one of those. She's been asking to be killed all her life, and I shouldn't be at all surprised to find her lifeless body crumpled in a little heap somewhere, under the present circumstances. Was it Elissa?"

"What do you mean by the present circumstances?" Asey wanted to know. Rankin took a few steps down the driveway.

"Right around here is where I lost that lighter," he said. "I had my raincoat slung over my shoulder, and it popped out of the pocket—ah! I thought I'd find it!"

He bent over and picked something up from the side of the driveway.

"What about the present circumstances?" Asey persisted. "See?" Rankin displayed a small chromium pocket lighter.

"I mean her husband, Mayo. And if you don't know about him, then I don't think it was Elissa after all. And if there's really been trouble here, I'm not going to prejudice you against her by bandying her private life about. If she hasn't been killed, her domestic problems don't matter. I wish you'd tell me—I say, it wasn't Lady Boop, was it?"

"Who?" Rankin laughed. "That's my own private name for Mrs. Clutterbuck, Violet Clutterbuck. You know her, don't you? You don't? Really? Mayo, I'm beginning to think that you don't get around much in Quisset's upper crust."

"I don't," Asey told him. "For the last six months, I've been so busy trailing Bill Porter around that I haven't even been on the Cape at all very much. I know some folks here, of course, but Quisset's never been killed, her domestic problems don't matter. I wish you'd tell me—I say, it wasn't Lady Boop, was it?"

"About the only place you're visible from now," Rankin said, "is my bathroom window. Why don't you want to be seen?" "I'm tryin' out the enough-ropes theory," Asey said. "It's been about all I can do till Lieutenant Hanson of the state cops shows up. What about Lady Boop?"

Rankin smoothed his neat Van-Dyke and looked at Asey reflectively.

"D'you think it's entirely fair," he asked, "to pump me this way, without telling me who's been killed? I can only give you my opinions, which are largely biased, and might not coincide at all with someone else's opinions. For all I know, I may be either maligning the dead or slipping a noose around someone's throat! You're out of sight here, by the way, but you can still get a pretty good view of the place, if that's what you're after."

"It is," Asey paused by a clump of pines and looked back at the Inn. "I'm also after a kind of panoramic view of the people here; I want to get 'em sorted out in my mind. An' like I told you, I don't even know who the body is that we haven't got. But I'm considerably interested in Lady Boop."

Lady Boop
"WELL, she's a large, plucky lady," Rankin said, "whose husband died ten years ago and left her a fortune, and since then her mother and two sisters have all died and left her their fortunes. Also a grandmother and a great-aunt. And last month, I believe it was another great-aunt who contributed. As a Freddy Doane quipped, everyone who goes to their reward seems to kick back a good share to Lady Boop."

"Rich as that, is she?" "She pays more taxes annually," Rankin said with a trace of bitterness, "than you and I will ever earn in all our lives. I can easily picture her dying of apoplexy, but I suppose people with all that money are a constant invitation to murder. Was it Lady Boop? Because if it wasn't, by the process of elimination, that leaves only Horace and—"

"Boy!" Asey said suddenly. "What's the matter?" "Asey drew Rankin back into the shadow of the pines and pointed up toward the roof of the Inn.

"Look up there, D'you see somebody on the catwalk by the small chimney?" Rankin put on a pair of glasses. "Yes! Yes! I do! It's a woman! For God's sake, it's Elissa! What's she up to?"

"Not so loud!" Asey cautioned. "She's crazy! She can't get down from there! What's she doing?" "Shush!" Asey said. "She'll hear!"

"She's dragging something—Mayo," Rankin said in horror, "it's a body!"

"Can't be!" Asey seemed to be trying to convince himself rather than Rankin. "Can't be!" "It certainly is a body!" Rankin insisted.

Asey peered up at the roof. When the wind blew them just the right way, the leaves of the maple trees in front of the Inn swayed and let the street light shine on the figure on the catwalk. It was Mrs. Hingham, all right, although she'd changed her billowing, satin house coat for something more practical. A trench coat or a polo coat, it looked like. And she certainly wasn't killed. She was alive, and she wasn't a body.

But it couldn't be a body, Asey told himself. At least, it couldn't be the body he and Jennie had seen. That had been downstairs, and its removal up a flight of stairs was a physical feat beyond the ability of Mrs. Hingham. It couldn't be the body, and yet Asey couldn't imagine what Mrs. Hingham was alternately tugging and dragging at if it wasn't a body.

"Rankin," he said suddenly, "would there be an elevator in the Inn?"

"Two of 'em. Let's—"

"Two?" Asey asked in surprise. One was unusual enough in a Cape Inn.

"One to the dining room, and one in the alcove off the living room. For the aged and gouty. They're more what you'd call lifts than elevators, Mayo, let's go and look into this!"

Hanson Arrives
Asey took his arm and pulled him back.

"For the love of God, what for?" "If we surprise her now," Asey said, "I have a horrid feeling that by the time we get to the Inn we'll find Mrs. Hingham back in her bed, sufferin' terrible with migraine."

"So she's been pulling her migraine act again, has she?" Rankin demanded. "Hm! But we can see her! She can't deny being there when the two of us saw her there!"

"Maybe she can't," Asey said, "but I bet you she will. Wait, Mr. Rankin. Wait an' see what she's aimin' to do. After all this to-do, I want to see what her underlyin' plan was."

Rankin said in exasperated tones that he didn't see that waiting and watching and generally prolonging the agony would get Asey or anybody else anywhere at all.

"Get her," he added, "get the body, and get to the root of the thing!"

"I'll admit it's sort of the first impulse you get," Asey said. "But consider. If she finds a body in her room, say, an' she thinks it's the best thing to put the body elsewhere, she'll probably drag it along to that adjoinin' sun deck an' leave it there. Could happen, you know. But, on the other hand, if it's a body she's responsible for, as you might say, she's probably got some idea of removing it to as far distant a place as she can manage. The more effort she makes to take it away, an' the further she takes it, the redder her hands are, an' the harder it's goin' to be for her to deny anythin'. Then you really got her."

"I think that's nonsense," Rankin said flatly.

"Maybe so, but you," Asey said, "ain't seen what I seen tonight in the line of bodies bein' one place one minute an' elsewhere the next, an' nobody seemin' to know anythin' about it, or bein' involved with it. Now that I got someone with a body, I want to run 'em to the ground with it I think—what in time!"

"She's running back to that 'save door'!" Rankin said. "Something's frightened her!"

Asey pointed to the man marching down the middle of the driveway.

"It's Hanson! Golly, he would turn up now!" he said. "If he goes bargin' into the Inn, he'll spoil everything. An' if Mrs. Hingham spots us rushin' up an' hailin' him, that won't work out, neither—hey, gimme your little lighter, quick, will you?"

Rankin looked puzzled, but he dropped the lighter in Asey's outstretched hand, and Asey promptly raised his arm and pitched the lighter straight at Hanson.

It hit him on the shoulder, and Hanson stopped and looked around him curiously.

"Keep on walkin', Hanson," Asey said as he neared them. "Don't stop. Keep walkin' about six feet more, an' then turn around an' march out the way you come. Go down the road as far as that locust grove, then circle around back here to us so's you won't be seen from the Inn. We'll wait here. I'll explain later."

Hanson obeyed without question.

"D'you mind my saying," Rankin sounded amused, "that this seems really rather involved?"

"Nope," Asey told him. "I don't mind a speck. It is involved. But I hope it's going to have a simple endin', which you wouldn't get if you barged inside the Inn right now an' started slatin' around, yellin' for explanations. Think of all the Doanes an' Mrs. Hingham, all denyin' an' affirmin' an' talkin' at once."

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:
Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:
KALE (MBS) 1330, Portland
KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland
KGA (NBC-Blue & MBS) 1310, Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 820, Portland; KJR (NBC-Blue) 1000, Seattle; KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles; KOB (NBC-Red) 850, Denver; KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland; KOMO (NBC-Red) 850, Seattle; KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco; KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Sunday
5:00 p. m.—Edgar Bergen, KPO, KGW, KOMO, Blue Echoes, KGO, KEX; Columbia Workshop, KNX, KOIN; Gospel Clinic, KJR; Off the Record, KSL.
5:30 p. m.—Floyd Wright, KJR, KEX; One Man's Family, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Spelling Bee, KNX; Musical Highlights, KGO; Defense Back Home, KOIN; Off the Record, KSL.
6:00 p. m.—Sunday Evening Hour, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Grandpappy and His Pals, KGO, KEX; Menhatten Merry-Go-Round, KPO, KOMO, KGW.
6:30 p. m.—Bookman's Notebook, KGO; American Album of Familiar Music, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KEX; Conf. of Jews and Christians, KJR.
7:00 p. m.—Hour of Charm, KPO.

KOMO, KGW; Goodwill Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Take It Or Leave It, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
7:30 p. m.—Helen Hayes Theater, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, KPO, KGW, KOMO.
8:00 p. m.—Crime Doctor, KNX, KOIN; Vera Varie, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Inner Sanctum, KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KSL.
8:30 p. m.—Jack Benny, KGO, KEX, KJR; I Was There, KNX, KOIN; Beau Soir Musical, KGW; Highway Night Express, KOMO; Etchings in Brass, KPO.
9:00 p. m.—Walter Winchell, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Irene Rich, KGO, KJR, KEX; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; String Ensemble, KSL.
9:30 p. m.—Richard Himber's Orch., KGO; What's It All About, KNX; Quiz of Two Cities, KGW, KOMO; Baker Theater, KOIN; Regal Amblings, KPO; Sunday Evening on Temple Square, KSL.
10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Screen Guild Theater, KNX; Stanley Kenton's Orch., KGO, KEX; News, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL; National Vespers, KJR.
10:30 p. m.—Paul Whiteman's Orch., KGO; Harry Owen's Orch., KNX, KOIN; Amen Corner, KEX; Sabbath Reveries, KSL.
11:00 p. m.—Bill Clifford's Orch., KEX; Ken Stevens, KOIN, KSL; String Quartet, KPO, KGW; News, KNX, KGO.

Monday
5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KEX, KJR; Vox Pop, KSL, KOIN; Stars of Today, KGW; Jane Arden, KPO; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.
5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KEX, KJR; Cocktail Hour, KGW; Bill Henry, KNX; Scattergood Baines, KOIN; November Overcoaters, KOMO; Waite Rhythm, KPO; Voices of Yesterday, KSL.
6:00 p. m.—Radio Theater, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Dr. I. Q. Jim McLean, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Secret City, KGO, KEX; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR.
6:30 p. m.—For America We Sing, KGO, KJR; That Brewster Boy, KPO, KOMO; Best of the Week, KJR.
7:00 p. m.—Mercury Theater, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Monday Merry-Go-Round, KEX, KJR; Contended Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO.
7:30 p. m.—Cavalcade of America, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Blondie, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Modern Music Box, KEX; Greater Washington Hour, KJR.
8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Herbert Marshall, KGO, KEX, KJR.
8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Lum and Abner, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Shall-Bert Wheeler, KJR.
8:30 p. m.—I Love a Mystery, KGO, KEX, KJR; Voice of Richard Crooks, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gay Nineties Review, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

9:00 p. m.—Telephone Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO; True or False, KGO, KJR, KEX; Vox Pop, KNX; News, KOIN; Sports, KSL.
9:30 p. m.—Hawthorne House, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Hollywood Showcase, KNX, KOIN; News, KSL, KJR; Moonlight Sonata, KEX.
10:00 p. m.—Paul Whiteman's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Masterworks of Music, KSL; News, KNX; Five Star Final, KOIN.
10:30 p. m.—Ed Sticker's Music, KGO, KOMO; Stanley Kenton's Orch., KJR; John Sullivan's Orch., KJR.

KSL: Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Ran Wilde's Orch., KGO; Masterworks of Music, KNX; The World Today, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.
11:00 p. m.—Bob Bradley and Erwin Yeo, KSL, KOIN; String Serenade, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; News, KNX, KGO; Reveries, KOMO.
ZELLERBACH PAYS
New York, Nov. 29.—(P)—Crown Zellerbach Corp. and subsidiaries, Pacific coast paper manufacturers, have reported

net profit for the October quarter of \$2,224,233, after \$2,055,711 provisions federal and Canadian taxes, equal to 69 cents a common share.
Aix En Provence, Unoccupied France, Nov. 29.—(P)—Three residents of Nice and one from Grasse on the French Riviera were sentenced today to prison terms up to three months for listening to the British radio.
See Mail Tribune WANT ads.

SEARCHING PARTY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



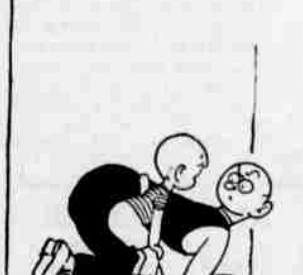
COMES INTO BATHROOM WHERE FATHER IS PUTTING UP A NEW FIXTURE AND ASKS CAN HE HELP, CAUSING FATHER TO DROP A SMALL SCREW



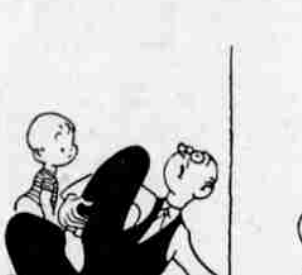
SAYS CHEERFULLY HE'LL HELP LOOK FOR IT AND AFTER A WHILE REPORTS HE SEES IT UNDER THE TUB



AFTER TEN MINUTES OF FISHING UNDER THE TUB, WITH JUNIOR LEANING HEAVILY ON HIS BACK, FATHER DRAGS OUT A SMALL BIT OF TIN FOIL



SEARCH CONTINUES, FATHER AT LAST TELLING JUNIOR FOR PITY'S SAKE NOT ALWAYS TO STAND DIRECTLY IN HIS LIGHT



JUNIOR SCRAMBLES TO OTHER SIDE, IN SO DOING STEPPING SQUARELY ON FATHER'S ANKLE



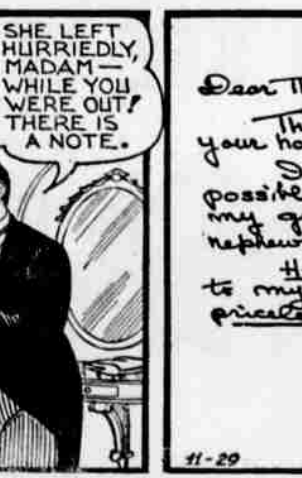
AT THAT MOMENT BOTH SPY THE SCREW WHICH JUNIOR HAD APPARENTLY BEEN STANDING ON, AND DIVE FOR IT, CRACKING HEADS, DURING THE EXCITEMENT SCREW DISAPPEARS FOR GOOD

11-29 (Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

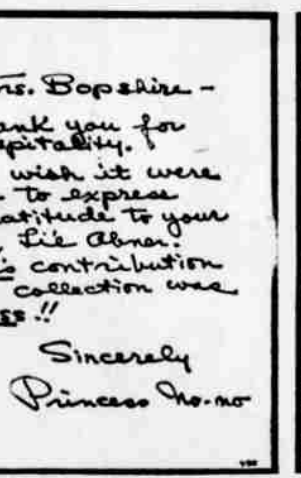
L'L ABNER—No Head



OH! IT WAS A DELIGHTFUL PARTY. I WISH THE PRINCESS HAD COME!—WHERE IS THE PRINCESS?



SHE LEFT HURRIEDLY, MADAM—WHILE YOU WERE OUT THERE IS A NOTE.



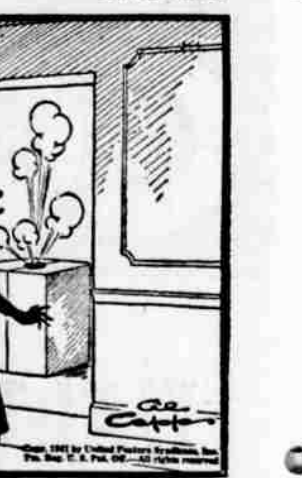
Dear Mrs. Bopshire—Thank you for your hospitality. I wish it were possible to express my gratitude to your nephew, L'il Abner. His contribution to my collection was priceless!! Sincerely Princess No-no



WHERE IS L'L ABNER?



G-GOOD HEAVENS, MAMAM! HE LEFT HIM IN THE STEAM CABINET THREE HOURS AGO!!—I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT HIM!!



By AL CAPP



WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH US? IT'S YOUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE ALSO.



I CANNOT! MY WIFE AND CHILDREN ARE HELD AS HOSTAGES IN FRANCONIA BY THE PIG VERSALIANS!



ADIEU, MY FRIENDS! DO NOT LOSE THE PAPERS I GAVE YOU! THEY MAY PROVE OF VALUE TO YOUR COUNTRY!



HE WAS A BRAVE MAN—I HOPE THE BARON WON'T DISCOVER THAT HE HELPED US GET AWAY!



YEAH... BUT OUR WORRIES ARE STARTIN' ALL OVER AGAIN! WE DIDN'T GET ANY GAS FROM THAT DERNED STEAMER... AN' WE AIN'T GOT MUCH LEFT!



BUT SKEETS IS GOING TO HAVE MORE THAN JUST FUEL TO WORRY ABOUT SOON!

11-29-41

THE NEBBS—No Sentiment



FANNY, WILL YOU ARRANGE TO SEND SOME FLOWERS TO EMMA? IT WOULD BE A NICE GESTURE



WHY SHOULD YOU SEND FLOWERS TO HER?



WHY, SHE'S VERY SICK—HAVEN'T YOU ANY SENTIMENT?



NOT WHEN I THINK SHE GOT SICK CRAWLING UNDER THE SIDEWALK FOR A FEW PENNIES—AND AREN'T YOU PAYING HER HOSPITAL BILLS? THAT'S NO BARGAIN



LET'S FORGET THE SENTIMENT AND CHARGE IT TO GOOD SOUND BUSINESS—SHE'S AN EXCELLENT COOK AND IT WILL COME BACK IN APPRECIATION!



YOU GO OUT INTO THE WOODS AND GET A BRANCH OFF A BRAMBLE BUSH AND STICK FIVE PAPER DOLLARS ON THE TWIGS AND SEND IT TO HER—THAT WILL BRING MORE APPRECIATION THAN A WASHBASKET FULL OF ORCHIDS!

11-29 (Continued by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

Great British Ships Available in Pacific

London, Nov. 29.—(P)—United States aid in the battle of the Atlantic has enabled Britain to delegate to the Pacific the sort of ships (that is, battleships) needed to meet a "really great naval power," an authoritative source said tonight.
The informant meant Japan, whose strength in capital ships is far superior to that of the Italian or German navies. Against the axis Britain needs lighter craft.

More than 45,000 campers made use of public campgrounds in national parks in western Canada during July and August.

Warm, wrinkle-free fleece overcoats with the new water-proofing process.
\$27.00
Barkers
Store for Men