

THE PHONE BOOTH MURDER

by Phoebe Atwood Taylor

Chapter 31 Caught

IT DAWNED ON Asey, that after a moment or two, that Lady Boop was really driving! She wasn't seasawing or weaving or swaying as she had in the big sedan. She was driving like a human being, on her own side of the road, and her rate of speed was steadily increasing.

"If she should ever find out what that car can do!" Asey murmured unhappily. "Oh!"

The thought made him shudder, and his foot to jam down on the accelerator.

Like the other instruments on the dashboard, the speedometer didn't work, but Asey estimated that the car was going just a little slower than it had been. Like Sylvia's truck, the coupe's engine made a lot of noise and throbbed violently, but apparently nothing could compel it to pick up speed.

And meanwhile the Porter's taillights had decreased to mere pin points, barely visible in the thick fog.

Lady Boop, Asey decided, was finding out what the car could do, all right!

He practically stood on the accelerator, but the coupe continued to slow down, little by little.

At the North Quisset fork, the coupe's engine gave a little cough and stopped entirely, just as the red light flashed off and Lady Boop started across the intersection.

Asey got out, raced for the rear door, grabbed at the top bracket and hung on, and at the same time kicked forward at the door button with his foot.

A moment later he swung himself inside the car and landed heavily on the leather seat beside Mrs. Clutterfield.

"Oooh!" she said.

"What do you think you're doing?" Asey demanded breathlessly as he reached forward and snapped off the ignition. "What do you—"

"Did you see me?" Mrs. Clutterfield turned a beaming face toward him. "I drove!"

"You certainly did! You—"

"I hit eighty," Mrs. Clutterfield said with simple pride.

"I don't doubt it!" Asey said.

"What—"

"I never saw anything like it before in my life!" Mrs. Clutterfield told him. "No feet!"

"What?"

"No feet! You don't have to do anything at all with your feet! That's what the trouble was, Mrs. Clutterfield said. "I was always so worried about my feet, I couldn't think to watch the road! Did you see how wonderfully I steered? Did you see me—what kind of car is this?"

"It's a Porter Sixteen, an' it belongs to me," Asey said. "I might add that it's a special custom-built job, that it don't grow on trees, an' if you'd hurt it, the cost would have been something more than considerable, Mrs. Clutterfield. What in time made you take—"

"What will you sell it for?"

"What'll I sell it for? I won't," Asey said. "With Bill Porter going into the tank an' airplane engine business, the chances of my gettin' another car like this for some time is mighty slim. Now, why'd you take this? Where'd you get the nerve to—"

The Soldier

"MR. MAYO—see, you I know who you are!" Mrs. Clutterfield wagged an arch finger at him. "I found out all about you! Mr. Mayo, I'll pay any price you ask for this car. I've got to have this car! I've got to!"

"Wa-el," Asey said. "I'll order you one like this. But you can't have this particular model. It's got sort of special innards. I can have Bill get the stream-lined model he's got, an' have it doped up any way that strikes your fancy. Plated with silver, if you want. But in return—don't you think you might fork out something to some worthy cause, maybe, an' kind of show your gratitude in a nice, practical way?"

"Why, if I didn't have Alfred," Mrs. Clutterfield said, "I could afford to do lots of things! Alfred costs so much!"

"How much?"

"She told him, and Asey whistled at the sum she named.

"I don't think," he said, "that you'd even feel an ambulance a month! Golly, Mrs. Clutterfield, he's been bleedin' you! An' to think I let him ease me out of that century note! Huh! Well, now we got this settled, you get over here an' I'll drive back to the Inn!"

Mrs. Clutterfield absolutely refused to move.

"You said I could have this until you got me another, and I'm going to have it, and I won't move! I won't stir from this wheel!"

Asey sighed.

"Well, I s'pose if you got here, you can get back," he said. "Look, what impelled you to take this anyway?"

"I saw someone outside," Mrs. Clutterfield said, "when I opened the living-room window for a breath of air—it was so stuffy in

there with all those policemen! I slipped out without saying a word to anyone, because I thought from his cap that it was—"

"Washy Doane," Asey said.

"Oh, no, not Mr. Doane! I thought it was Alfred. But it wasn't! It was a soldier!"

"A soldier?" Asey said. "You mean, one of Hanson's troopers?"

"No, a soldier. A regular soldier. It rather surprised me, too," Mrs. Clutterfield said. "He didn't see me at first, and I followed him across the lawn to your car. He stood looking at it several minutes, and then he caught sight of me, and walked quite quickly away up the road. And it was such a beautiful-looking car, and so unusual, that I went over and looked at it. And then I got in—so easy to get into, isn't it? No steps to trip over, and I pressed this little button, and away it went. Just like a saucy little whiff of down!"

"That's the first time in my memory," Asey said, "that anyone ever called a Porter Sixteen a whiff of down! Huh. A soldier—now I wonder if it's humanly possible that Jennie an' I got caught up with Mrs. Clutterfield, where do you think we'd be likely to find the Hingham? Neither of 'em had come back to the Inn when you went out, had they?"

"Oh, they never get home from the Theater till all hours! Perhaps if you wait a few minutes now," Mrs. Clutterfield said eagerly. "I could drive you over to the Theater?"

Asey hesitated.

"Wa-el," he said, "a bargain's a bargain, I s'pose. Drive me over there. Only, till you get the feel of this craft, don't let it hit eighty, huh? It's kind of foggy, you know."

Mrs. Hingham

EN ROUTE to the South Pocket Barn Theater, Mrs. Clutterfield's driving was nothing less than masterly, and Asey told her so when he got out.

"I won't be long," he added.

"Mind waitin'?"

"Oooh!" Mrs. Clutterfield said. "I'm just so happy, I don't care how long you are, Mr. Mayo! I always knew I could drive, if I just kept on trying!"

Asey bent over and removed the ignition key.

He paused for a moment in the Theater's little lobby and looked thoughtfully at two pictures of Ann Joyce tacked on a portion of the pine building.

Then he went on inside.

A pale, tired-looking young man in shorts and a striped blazer was coming wearily up the center aisle. He didn't even notice Asey until the latter put out his hand and stopped him.

"Say, son, is Mrs. Hingham here?"

"Backstage," he ran a hand through his rather long blonde hair. "If it's more telegrams, don't wait for an answer. She's in a hideous mood."

"How'd you get backstage?"

The tall young man waved his hand vaguely toward the bare stage.

"There's a door. You can't miss it. You can't miss her, either."

He stumbled on past Asey and out of the Theater, and Asey, with a shrug, walked down the inclined floor to the door the young man had apparently meant.

Mrs. Hingham swung open the door as Asey reached for the knob, and for a moment the two of them stood looking at each other.

She was in a hideous mood all right, Asey thought. There were spots of dark color on her high cheekbones, and her eyes were flashing with anger.

She recognized him, too, and that seemed to add to her general state of bad temper.

Before she could explode a word of the speech she was obviously preparing to fire at him, Asey pointed his finger at her and wagged it in Hanson's best menacing manner.

"I want you!" he said sharply. "I'm Asey Mayo. Sent here by Lieutenant Hanson of the state police. He wants to see you about the murder of Ann Joyce this afternoon. Come along!"

If he had announced his firm determination to tar her, feather her, and hang her from the nearest tree, Asey thought, Mrs. Hingham couldn't have willed any quicker than she did.

After taking a stumbling little step backwards, she put both hands against the wall as if to prop herself up, and stood there, wide-eyed and trembling.

In the glare of the unshaded overhead light she looked much older, Asey noticed, than he'd guessed at first. She wasn't any thirty-five. She was nearer fifty, and probably a lot more.

"You mean I'm—under arrest?" she almost choked over the words.

"You will be, soon as you get to the barracks," Asey decided to lay it on thick. "Unless you can explain a lot of things Lieutenant Hanson wants to know about."

"I can explain anything! Anything! Anything at all! Anything!"

"Sit down!" Asey pointed to a crate on the floor.

Then, adopting Hanson's favorite prosecuting-attorney pose, he started in.

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) 1510, Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 620, Portland; KJR (NBC-Blue) 1060, Seattle; KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles; KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver; KOIN (CBS) 870, Portland; KOMO (NBC-Red) 890, Seattle; KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco; KSL (CBS) 1150, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Tuesday

5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Are You a Missing Heir, KSL; Jane Arden, KOMO; News, KOIN; Adventure in Toyland, KEX; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KJR, KEX; Bob Burns Show, KSL; Horace Heidt's Treasure Chest, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Today's Best Buys, KNX; Eyes of the World, KOIN.

6:00 p. m.—Burns and Allen, KPO, KOMO, KGW; We, the People, KSL; Ken Stevens and Erwin Yeo, KOIN; Cinnamon Bear, KEX; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR; Second Husband, KNX.

6:30 p. m.—Symphony Concert, KOIN.

KEX, KJR: Report to the Nation, KNX, KOIN; Pibber McGee and Molly, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

7:00 p. m.—Bob Hope Variety Show, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Glenn Miller's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN.

7:30 p. m.—Red Skelton, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Treasury Chest, KJR, KEX, KGO; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; Second Husband, KSL.

8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

8:15 p. m.—Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

8:30 p. m.—Johnny Presents, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Information Please, KGO, KEX, KJR; Are You a Missing Heir, KNX, KOIN; News, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—We, the People, KNX, KOIN; Easy Aces, KGO, KJR, KEX; Adventures of the Thin Man, KPO, KOMO, KGW, Sports, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Mal Hallett's Orch., KGO; Battle of the Sexes, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Bob Burns Show, KNX, KOIN; News, KJR, KSL; Moonlight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Henry Busse's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Masterworks of Music, KSL; News, KNX; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Howard Barlow's Orch., KSL; Charles Dant's Orch., KGW; Stanley Kenton's Orch., KGO, KJR; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Masterworks of Music, KNX; The

World Today, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Chuck Wagon Days, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Anita Carol, KSL, KOIN; News, KNX; Reveries, KOMO.

Wednesday

5:00 p. m.—Vagabonds, KGO, KJR; Big Town, KSL; Ken Stevens, KOIN; Jane Arden, KOMO; Adventures in Toyland, KEX; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KJR, KEX; Doctor Christian, KSL; Cocktail Hour, KGW; Bill Henry, KJR; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Parent-Teachers Ass'n, KOMO; Waltz Rhythm, KPO.

6:00 p. m.—Fred Allen, KSL; Fred Waring's Orch., KPO, KGW, KOMO; Joe Bathcourt's Band, KJR; Cinnamon Bear, KEX; Judy Spintners, KGO; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR; Tonight's Best Buys, KNX, KOIN.

6:30 p. m.—Penthouse Party, KGO, KJR, KEX; Concert by Kalash, KPO; Big Town, KNX, KOIN; Highlight Hour, KOMO.

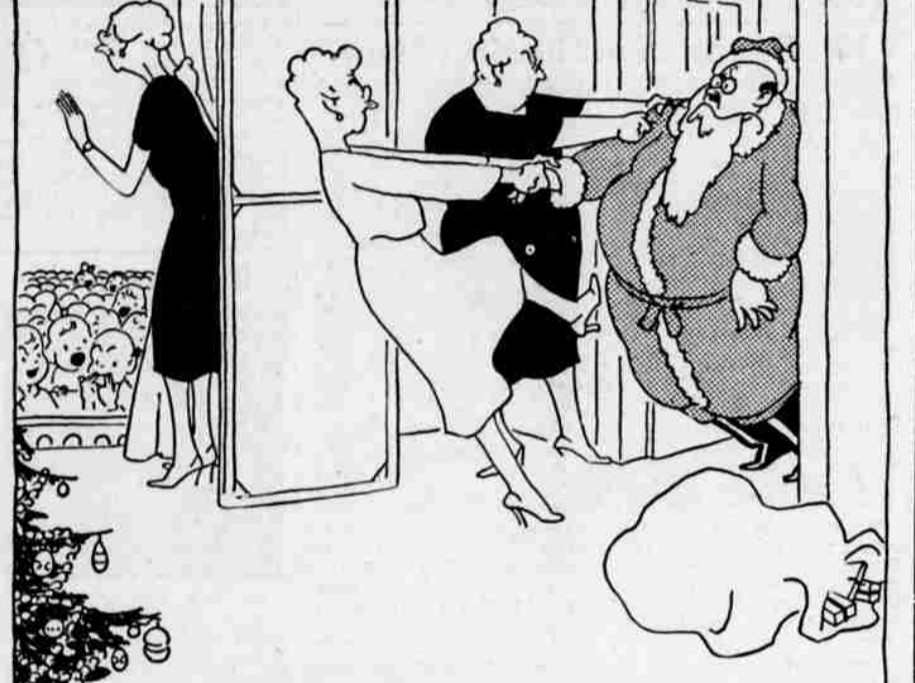
7:00 p. m.—Glenn Miller's Orch., KNX, KSL, KOIN; American Melody Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Ray Kyser's Musical Quiz, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:30 p. m.—News Here and Abroad, KGO, KJR; Romance of the Ranchos, KNX; Modern Music Box, KEX; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; Clark and Spray-nozzle, KSL.

8:00 p. m.—Quiz Kids, KGO, KEX.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY, SPONSORED BY THE WOMEN'S CLUB, SORT OF FIZZLED BECAUSE FRED PERLEY DID SUCH A THOROUGH JOB OF MAKE-UP AS SANTA CLAUS THAT HE GOT STUCK IN THE DOORWAY, AND BY THE TIME HE WAS FINALLY FREED THE IMPATIENT AUDIENCE WAS IN FULL RIOT

LIL' ABNER—When A Yokum Weeps



TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Awakening!



THE NEBBS—The Plotter



KJR: Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Point Sublime, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

8:30 p. m.—Dr. Christian, KNX, KOIN; Plantation Party, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Manhattan at Midnight, KGO, KJR, KEX; News, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Time To Smile, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Easy Aces, KGO, KEX, KJR; Fred Allen, KOIN, KNX; Hymn Service, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Basin Street Chamber Music, KGO; Mr. District Attorney, KPO, KGW; Wilbur Hatch's Orch.,

KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KJR, KSL; Moonlight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Paul Whiteman's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KNX, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—Howard Becker's Orch., KSL; Music for Listening, KGW; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Bill Clifford's Orch., KGO; Rev. Peterson, KJR; Public Affairs, KNX; The World Today, KOIN; Christmas Fund, KOMO; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Dancing with Clancy, KPO, KGW; Wilbur Hatch's Orch.,

KOIN, KSL; This Moving World, KJR, KEX; News, KNX, KGO; Evening Reveries, KOMO.

Roosevelts Arrive

Beverly Hills, Calif., Dec. 23.—(AP)—Capt. James Roosevelt, eldest son of the president, and his wife have arrived from Washington, D. C., for a brief visit before going to San Diego, where Roosevelt is to resume active duty with the marines.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

by JOHN HIX



SEAFARING FAMILY! THE 5 CROWNSHIELD BROTHERS OF SALEM, MASS., ALL CAPTAINED SHIPS BEFORE THEY WERE OLD ENOUGH TO VOTE! THE BOYS' FATHER AND GRANDFATHER WERE SEA CAPTAINS BEFORE THEM... Early 1800's...

BETWEEN 1870 AND 1891 THE STAMPS OF AFGHANISTAN WERE CANCELLED BY HAVING A PIECE TORN OUT OF THEM!



SECRET PLANT! THE TOOTHWORT GROWS UNDERGROUND ON TREE ROOTS AND IS SEEN ONLY FOR A BRIEF TIME IN SPRING WHEN IT SENDS UP 16-INCH FLOWER STALKS!

JOCKEYETTE! ANNA LEE WILEY, 21, IS THE FIRST GIRL EVER LICENSED AS A JOCKEY IN NORTH AMERICA! IN HER MAIDEN RACE AGAINST MALE COMPETITION SHE FINISHED SECOND...



GIRL UP Sister of former jockey Hank Mills, one of America's leading apprentice riders, Anna Lee Wiley was born on a ranch near Brush, Colo. For the last three years she has been riding in state fair races against male jockeys, where she did not need a license. In October she entered her first race as a licensed jockey against male competition, for though she had ridden before, in the "Powder Puff" events, at Caliente, licenses were not required for the girls in those runnings. Strangely, one of her handicaps is her weight—for she tilts the scales at 122, more than most male riders. Tomorrow: One in a Million!

12-22

By AL CAPP

LITTLE BOY DIES FROM PLAY NEAR FIREPLACE

Ukiah, Calif., Dec. 23.—(AP)—Mark Dana Gray, 6-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. John Gray, Fort Bragg, died today from burns

received yesterday when his bathrobe caught fire as he was playing near a fireplace. The child was the grandson of Dana Gray, who was superintendent for many years of the Union Lumber company, Fort Bragg.

BOARD GOLF BALLS

New York, Dec. 23.—(AP)—New York had a shortage of good golf balls today after the city's largest sporting goods stores experienced a buying spree of record proportions. The rush for the golf balls began last Thursday when Price Administrator Leon Henderson announced a war ban on the production of non-essential rubber items.

Give Him . . . A SWEATER \$3.95 to \$12.50 Barkers Store for Men