

The Creeping Man

by Frances Shelley Weas

YESTERDAY: Higgins denies knowledge that Murchison was murdered, but says he saw a bloody paper on the path. The next day Gordon Deane's dog drops dead from meat the Forresters were planning to eat.

Chapter 27 Dog Burial

AS MICHAEL put the car into the garage at the side of the house he heard the sound of hammering coming from the Deanes'. He went to the house, called in to Tuck. "I'll be out for a while, honey. Over with Gordon," and went down the path and around to the other house. There, as he expected, he found Gordon out in the yard, finishing the lid on the box that was to serve as Fred's coffin. Gordon's eyes looked as if they might have brimmed over at some not distant time; but Michael took no notice. He dropped down on one knee beside the lid, and put out a hand to the box.

"Good job there," he muttered. "Taken manual training lessons?" "Yes," said Gordon. He got up and carried the box to the gate, then lifted the dog's body, lying there beside the hedge wrapped in a torn blanket, and laid it gently in the coffin.

"Give me one end," Michael said briefly, and picked it up. Gordon led off into the woods, toward the river bank, and Michael followed. The box was very light. Fred had been only a small dog. The world, Michael reflected, was full of small dogs; but in Gordon's eyes, there would never be another one exactly like Freddie.

The grave was already dug, lying open underneath a great pine tree almost on the edge of the river. They put the box down, and Gordon lifted it to set it softly in the hole. He turned away for a minute before they started heaping dirt upon it. Michael gathered an armful of pine branches, while Gordon was finishing, and brought them to lay on the top. Gordon stood up. He blew his nose, and took out his cigarette case, looked at it, then turned and held it out to Gordon.

"Have a cigarette," he said, as man to man. Gordon shook his head. "Don't smoke," he said gruffly, and straightened his shoulders. Through the thin fringe of trees between them, and the river, the sunset was visible as through heavy lace. Gordon leaned his back against a tree and looked at it.

"Funny thing a fellow can't even have a dog," he said at last, with what started out as a nonchalance and ended with a hint of a catch in his throat. Michael did not answer. "Maybe they'll let me have a bike," Gordon said. "Mom thinks they're not safe."

"Not any too safe, the way some kids ride through the traffic," Michael replied. "Notin's safe. I had a boat once. Mom never found it out. She'd have thrown a fit. Dad did have a fit when he found out I had it."

"How'd you get a boat without their knowing?" "Found it. It floated down one spring, and stayed here all summer without anybody coming after it. I took it. Saved my money, and gave it a swell paint job, and fixed it all up." He scuffed at the pine needles. "Can't have nothin'," he said.

"They take it away from you?" "Who? Dad? No. Somebody swiped it." "Maybe the owner found it." "I'll get even!" "NO CHANCE. I had that boat hid. I kept it up a ravine with branches over it. If the owner had wanted it he ought to come for it sooner. It was my boat. No, somebody that saw me in it took it. Watched where I put it, and swiped it. I'd like to find out who, that's what I would like to do. It was the same guy poisoned Fred. You just wait. I'll get even with him."

"You're crazy," Michael said. "Who'd have it in for a kid?" Gordon looked at him sidewise. "That's all right," he said at last, as if a little ashamed of himself. "I'll take care of that. I'm not such a kid. I'll show him."

come in. Tuck was obviously relieved when he did come in and sit down beside him. Bunny, sitting in the big armchair under a reading lamp, shut her magazine and put it on the table. She looked at Tuck. Tuck nodded her head slightly.

"Michael," Bunny said quietly, "you're going about this mystery business in your own way, aren't you?" "My own way, Bunny?" "Yes. Telling about half what you think. Keeping the most important things to yourself. Getting a grip on the whole thing and saying very little about it. But I want to know something. Will you tell me?"

Michael considered. "Glad to, if I know the answer." "Thank you. Now—is that letter from Chicago a fake or is it not?" "I don't know. The Commissioner is tracing it. He's written a letter to Police Headquarters there. We ought to know in a few days."

"Yes, I thought so. And the logical next question is... why do you think it's a fake? Because of all this suspicious air, or have you any proof that... Dr. Murchison... might have been murdered? Real proof?"

Michael thought that over carefully. He decided. He told them about Higgins, the rockeries, the watch. "It is Edgar Murchison's watch," he said. "There isn't the slightest doubt. It was Edgar Murchison's hat that someone left at the Deanes' the night he disappeared. Who? Why, I don't know. But taken all together, I doubt if a man would go off and leave his hat, his watch, and fifty thousand dollars worth of diamonds, to say nothing of his wife... voluntarily."

"Charming person?" "I SEE." Bunny put the tips of her long graceful fingers together and contemplated them carefully. Tuck got up from her chair, went over to Michael's, sat on his knee, pulled her feet up off the dark floor and put both hands under the edge of his coat. She put her head on his shoulder. She was safe.

"Why, Bunny?" "Well... I might as well tell you this. It's just that... she was having a little trouble with her words. It's just that... I'm afraid you'll be suspecting Duncan Murchison as well as the rest of them, and I wanted you to know that I've been out walking with him several times lately. He isn't trying to pump me or get information from me, and I don't think he has any ulterior motive in asking me. I'm going because I want to go. I find him a charming person. I like him very much. He isn't a bit sulky and rude when the Deaves or Mrs. Murchison aren't around."

"She paused. Michael was stroking Tuck's hair gently. "I wanted you to understand," Bunny said at last. "Thank you, Bunny. Were you, by any chance, with him this afternoon?" "I was."

"Between what hours?" "He came shortly after three, and he left about half past five." Michael stirred restlessly. Tuck shifted her position to one less likely to precipitate her on the floor.

"There's something I want you to understand too," he said slowly. "I can't count Duncan out because he's a charming person. I liked him too. He's a fine upstanding sort of young chap. Everybody has a good word for him. But, as dad says, this is a queer unlikely sort of business we're engaged in, and I've got to follow where the track leads. Bunny. Likes and dislikes don't count so much in an affair like this. I haven't got a thing against young Murchison yet. Not a thing. But if I do get the end of a string leading his way, I've got to follow it. Personal considerations can't be counted when it's murder, Bunny."

"She flushed. "No," she said quietly. "I just didn't want you to think I was trying to put anything over on you. I want you to have the facts. I have the utmost confidence in your judgment and common sense."

"I wish his tongue were looser," Tuck said wistfully. She put her hand up and patted Michael's face. The telephone shrilled suddenly. Michael lifted Tuck, and dropped her unceremoniously to the couch, and made one leap for the receiver. "Hello!" he said. Then— "Yes, yes. Forrester speaking."

On the RADIO CHAINS

Where to Find Them or the Dial. Kex, Portland, 1180; KFI, 640. Los Angeles; KGA, 1470; Spokane; KGO, 790; San Francisco; KGW, 620; Portland; KJR, 970; Seattle; KXN, 1050; Los Angeles; KOA, 430; Denver; KOIN, 940; Portland; KOMO, 920; Seattle; KPO, 630; San Francisco; KSL, 1180; Salt Lake.

Monday
5:00—Quaker Party, KPO, KFI, KGW; Frank and Archie, KJR.
5:30—Time and Tempo, KGW, KFI; Kelsey's Orch., KGO, KJR; Master Singers, KPO.
6:00—Civic Orch., KGO, KEX; Radio Theater, KSL, KNX, KOIN; Quiz Program, KPO, KGW, KFI.
6:30—Concert Orch., KGO, KEX; News, KJR; Templeton Time, KPO, KGW, KFI, KMED.
7:00—Hall of Fun, KGO, KEX; Josef Pasternack, KPO, KGW, KFI; Lombardo's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN.
7:30—Blonde, KEX, KSL, KOIN; Sensations and Swing, KPO, KFI, KGW; Radio Forum, KGO, KJR, KEX.
8:00—Amos and Andy, KNX, KOIN; KSL; Doe's Music, KGO, KEX; Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KFI.
8:15—I Love a Mystery, KPO, KFI, KGW; Lum and Abner, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Courtneys Orch., KEX.
8:30—Richard Crooks, KPO, KFI.

Tuesday
5:00—Aldrich Family, KPO, KFI, KGW; Frank and Archie, KJR.
5:30—Sherlock Holmes, KGO, KEX, KJR; Held's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Tuesday Night Party, KSL.
6:00—Hollywood, KGO, KEX; Music Room, KPO, KGW, KFI.
6:30—Fibber McGee, KPO, KFI, KGW; Crosby's Orch., KNX, KSL, KOIN; Human Side of Literature, KGO, KEX, KJR.
7:00—Shield's Revue, KGO, KEX; Variety Program, KPO, KGW, KFI; Calling All Cars, KNX.
7:30—Sports Huddle, KNX, KOIN; Drama, KGO, KJR; Dog House, KPO, KEX, KGW; News, KSL.
8:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KFI, KGW; Amos and Andy, KEX, KOIN, KSL; Information Please, KGO, KEX, KJR.

KGW; Breeze's Orch., KEX; Bug Band, KGO; Model Minstrels, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
9:00—Sherlock Holmes, KPO, KFI, KGW; Tune Up Time, KNX, KOIN, KSL; True or False, KGO, KJR.
9:30—Hawthorne House, KPO, KGW, KFI; Hawkins' Orch., KGO; Welk's Orch., KSL, KNX, News, KJR.
10:00—News Reporter, KPO, KFI, KGW; Madriguera's Orch., KGO; News, KSL, KNX; News, KOIN.
10:30—Music by Woodbury, KPO, KGW; Roland's Orch., KOIN, KSL, KNX; Foster's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX, KFI.
11:00—Ravazza's Orch., KPO, KFI; This Moving World, KJR, KEX; Organist, KOIN, KSL; News, KGO, KNX, KGW.

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7:00—Shield's Revue, KGO, KEX; Variety Program, KPO, KGW, KFI; Calling All Cars, KNX.
7:30—Sports Huddle, KNX, KOIN; Drama, KGO, KJR; Dog House, KPO, KEX, KGW; News, KSL.
8:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KFI, KGW; Amos and Andy, KEX, KOIN, KSL; Information Please, KGO, KEX, KJR.

8:15—Jimmy Fidler, KSL, KNX, KOIN; I Love a Mystery, KPO, KFI, KGW.
8:30—Aldrich Family, KGO, KEX, KJR; Johnny Presents, KPO, KFI, KGW; Drama, KOIN, KNX.
9:00—Dance Hour, KGO, Tuesday Night Party, KOIN, KNX; Good Morning Tonight, KPO, KFI, KGW.
9:30—Battle of the Sexes, KPO, KGW, KFI; We, the People, KNX, KOIN; Messner's Orch., KGO, KEX, News, KJR.
10:00—News Reporter, KPO, KFI, KGW; News, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
10:30—Foster's Orch., KGO, KJR, KGW; Saunders' Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR.
11:00—Ravazza's Orch., KPO, KFI; This Moving World, KEX; Gray's Orch., KSL, KOIN; News, KGO, KNX, KGW.

Settle, Dec. 11.—(P)—John Frederick Wunders, 22, told jurors, who convicted him of asphyxiating his own 16-month-old daughter, he is "now going to have to name the real murderer."

Soon after the jury's verdict, which imposed a penalty of life imprisonment on the young father, Wunders stepped up to the moving file of jurors and exclaimed: "You've made a mistake. I know who did this, and so does my wife, and unless that party confesses within two weeks I'm going to tell who the real murderer is. I have

the proof to show who is the murderer. I'm not going to give my life to protect 'em." Deputy Prosecutors Charles C. Ralls and James W. Mifflin, who conducted the trial, said they were unimpressed by his statement. Mrs. Isabel Frances Wunders, his 23-year-old wife, who arrived in the courtroom soon after the verdict was read, appeared mystified, court attaches

said, by her husband's statement. **Loses Health Suit** Oklahoma City (U.P.)—The state supreme court has allowed damages of \$100 against a gas company on the allegation of two women that they caught cold when the gas pressure failed during a cold wave. The court held that the company was liable for damages if service failed because of faulty lines.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

MARCH BUGGY—
USED IN LOUISIANA SWAMPS,
IS LICENSED BOTH AS AUTO AND BOAT!
IT CARRIES RUNNING LIGHTS AS WELL
AS HEAD AND TAIL LIGHTS...
THE TIRES ARE 10 FEET IN DIAMETER

DICTATOR AGAINST HIS WILL!
KONSTANTIN PATS—president of Estonia, WAS FORCED INTO A DICTATORSHIP BY A FASCIST PARTY WHICH TRIED TO WREST THE GOVERNMENT FROM HIM! INSTEAD, HE REFUSED TO RESIGN IN ORDER TO RESTORE PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

HOLLY SPRINGS—MISS.
WAS RAIDED 61 TIMES DURING THE CIVIL WAR!

Answer to Saturday's problem:
CUTTING ALONG THE LINES OF THE FIGURE ON THE LEFT TO FORM TWO PIECES WHICH, WHEN REARRANGED, MAKE A PERFECT SQUARE...

DICTATOR AGAINST HIS WILL
Strange as it seems Estonia, tiny Baltic state bordering on Russia and Latvia, is ruled by a dictator who never wanted power. Konstantin Pats became president in 1934 under an exceedingly democratic constitution which provided a one-chamber parliament with a president and prime minister and permitted many parties. Unfortunately this system hindered effectual government and in protest a Fascist party sought a new president. But the new constitution provided the president be elected for an "indefinite term." As Pats was already in office he had his job as virtual dictator to fight the new Fascist party from the top. **TOMORROW: Biggest Secret!**

GOOD-NIGHT KISS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

VOICES SMALL DAUGHTER GOOD-NIGHT AND CLOSES DOOR

HEARS PLAINTIVE CRY THAT SHE HASN'T KISSED DADDY GOOD-NIGHT

GOES BACK IN TO EXPLAIN THAT DADDY ISN'T HERE, HE HAD TO GO TO A BANQUET

CLOSES DOOR AS CALL COMES THAT AT LEAST SHE WANTS TO KISS ALUNT EUNICE GOOD-NIGHT

OPENS DOOR TO EXPLAIN THAT AUNT EUNICE HAS A HEADACHE AND IS LYING DOWN, AND SHE WOULDN'T DISTURB HER, WOULD SHE?

STARTS DOWNSTAIRS, AS WILL COMES. SHE HASN'T SAID GOOD-NIGHT TO ROVER! PRETENDS NOT TO HEAR

THIS IS FOLLOWED BY A TEARFUL SHOUT THAT MOTHER HASN'T KISSED HER GOOD-NIGHT, AT LEAST NOT AFTER THE LAST TIME SHE WAS IN

DECIDES IT'S USELESS TO ARGUE, GOES BACK, KISSES HER AND GETS OUT OF EAR-SHOT AS FAST AS SHE CAN

(Released by The Ben, Avondale, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Spinning In!

TOMMY IS GIVING CHUCK HIS FIRST DUAL INSTRUCTION!

HAUL BACK ON THAT STICK!!!... WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS IS... A KIDDIE CAR?

YOU BIG TRUCK DRIVER... NOT ALL THE WAY BACK! GET THAT NOSE DOWN BEFORE WE STALL!

HEY! EVERYTHING'S MIXED UP!

WE'RE SPINNING! LET GO THAT STICK... QUICK!

LET GO, YOU DOPE! YOU'RE FREEZING THE STICK!

WHO-EE! I'M... GITTIN' DIZZY..

STOP YER YELLIN! I'LL GIT IT... IN A MINUTE!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Warner's Message

MR. MOOCHEM, I CAN'T OFFER YOU NO ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO WHEN BALLINGER TAKES OVER AS MAYOR—POLITICS AINT MY LINE!

I'M AN OIL MAN AN' IT'S REGARDIN' OIL I'VE COME TO SEE YOU TONIGHT!

WELL, COME TO THE POINT... SPIT IT OUT!

OKAY! I'M HERE TO TELL YOU THAT LONG ABOUT THE TIME BALLINGER'S TAKIN' THE OATH TOMORROW AS MAYOR O' HAPPY VALLEY THAT...

...LESSN MY EXPERIENCE O' THIRTY YEARS IS HOG-WASH, I'LL BE BRINGIN' IN THE BIGGEST GUSHER IN THE HISTORY O' THE NATION!

THE NEBBS—Not on My Life

HERE'S THIS SCRAP PILE YOU ORDERED—WHERE DO YOU WANT IT DUMPED?

I ORDERED?

I ORDERED THAT MR. NEBBS ONLY \$15.

WHAT DID I BUY THAT FOR?

THAT'S FOR OUR NEXT DEMONSTRATION—WE WONT TAKE A CHANCE WITH YOUR NEW CAR

THE ENGINES ALL RIGHT—IT NEEDS TUNING UP A BIT—YOU WONT TAKE ANY CHANCE WHEN YOU DRIVE IT—I CUT DOWN THE POWER TO ONE-FOURTH—WHAT I USED FOR THE FIRST DEMONSTRATION

ME DRIVE? NIX! I'M TAKING A CHANCE WITH MY DOUGH BUT I HAVENT GOT ANYTHING AGAINST STAYING ALIVE!

581 INCREASE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Eugene, Dec. 11.—(P)—Enrollment in Oregon universities and colleges increased 581 students or 6.3 per cent over last year, a final survey showed Saturday. Fall registration was fixed at 9,767, a record. Oregon State had 4,618 students, a 4.8 per cent increase; University of Oregon 3,615, an 8.4 per cent increase; Oregon College of Education 480, 8.4 per cent increase; U. of Oregon medical school 424, 7 per cent

decrease; Eastern Oregon College of Education 331, a 17.3 increase; Southern Oregon College of Education 298, a 12.9 per cent increase.

Weather

Northern California: Fair to night and Tuesday but becoming cloudy in extreme north portion Tuesday; cooler in the interior tonight with light frosts; light northerly wind off the coast.

Church Leader Dies

Portland, Dec. 11.—(P)—Dr. Eben Samuel Johnson, 73, retired Methodist Episcopal bishop died at the veterans' hospital Saturday. He served 20 years in African missions where he became bishop and general superintendent. He retired in 1936.