

The Creeping Man

by Frances Shelley Wees

YESTERDAY, At the garden party Miss Lissey takes Duncan aside and speaks to him vehemently. Later she calls Michael, Tuck and Bunny over to her house, and tells them she knows the murderer.

Chapter 30

'I Know Too Much'

"I'll begin at the beginning," said Miss Lissey. "The night school closed. I had been at a party. It was a very stupid party, and I hadn't been enjoying myself, but I stayed late. Very late. It was after two o'clock when my taxi dropped me at the University, and I started to walk through the back path. She must have seen the interrogation in Michael's glance, for she interrupted herself to say, 'I had dismissed the taxi there, because I didn't want anyone to know how late it was when I got home. People are always looking for something about me to make gossip about—especially that little cat next door.'"

"Mrs. Murchison?" "Yes, So—you can see that if I didn't want to be seen or heard coming home at a taxi at that time of night, certainly I wouldn't want to be caught walking through the woods. And just after I passed the fork in the path and turned this way, I heard someone coming, distinctly. I slipped off the path, and hid behind a tree. Michael's eyes were dark. Tuck was leaning forward in his chair. Bunny was as pale as death. "For a minute I couldn't make out what I saw or who was coming. It didn't sound just right—there was a sort of squeaking noise, and as it got opposite me I realized that it was the wheel of a barrow squeaking. The moon was low, but there was just enough light down the path to make the outlines clear. The man wheeling the barrow was in a hurry."

"The man?" Tuck gasped. "Yes, a man... we all know. I knew him by his figure. But that wasn't what caught my eye. It was... what I saw in the barrow." "By his figure," Michael repeated strangely.

Miss Lissey shuddered. "I didn't realize then what I was seeing. It was such a strange mysterious business, I almost believed I was dreaming. When I saw that man, bent with the load, that heavy barrow, with a man's leg dangling from the end, and one white hand over the side near me, I thought... I thought someone had had too much to drink. I didn't stop to wonder where or who he was... that was the thought that flashed into my mind. The man and the barrow turned off and went down toward the river... and I slipped out and ran home. "The next day I heard that Professor Murchison had gone away on a trip... and for a minute I believed it, until I remembered that thing I had seen the night before. When it was dusk I went out, and looked at the Murchison gate, and there were the marks of the barrow, clear and deep in the path. So I knew."

Michael started to speak, but she held up her hand. "I'll tell it in my own way," she said. "There's a lot else you must understand first. She looked at him. "Where did that barrow go?" she asked sharply. "I've tried to find the path. I can't." She rubbed her head again with that same nervous gesture. "The Murchisons weren't happy," she began after a minute. "It wasn't his fault... it was hers. She's too fond of clothes and jewels, and... men. She has no breeding. You can see that. That's why she hates me. She knows that I know what she was when he married her. "A lady's maid?" "Yes. That was it. He met her in Williston, when he was a student. I saw her there, too, in a friend's house. It was humiliating for her to come here as a Professor's wife, and live next door to me, when I knew her secret. She's as common as dirt. If she'd tell the truth it wouldn't be so bad. I'm wandering again. Where was I?"

"Spoil His Life" "YOU were saying they weren't happy. But—I want to ask one question very much. Miss Lissey. How does it happen that Mrs. Murchison was a servant? The Devoes surely might have helped her." She looked at him sharply. "Why the Devoes?" "Her relatives?" "Humph. They're not her relatives." "What?" "Not a bit of it. She's always been scared stiff I'd tell that to you." "But... they say they are related, Miss Lissey." "Well, they're not. You won't catch old Mrs. Devoe owning to any such relationship. It's just some other tie, that's all, and Devoe and she have some devil's business together. She lived in fear that her husband would find out she'd lied to him." "Poof. It isn't very sweet," Michael said. "Not very."

"Does Duncan know...?" asked Tuck. "He may... He... I've got to get on. I want to tell it. I've some kind of queer feeling that I must hurry. There's something about him—Duncan... I must make it very plain. It will surely come up—later. I wasn't the only one who would never tell it... never tell. Duncan... he's a fine boy... this will spoil his life for him..." she stopped. "Please go on, Miss Lissey."

Tuck begged, almost in tears. "It was one day I went over there through the back gate for something. I heard loud voices in the study... I listened. It was Duncan talking to his sister-in-law. It nearly broke my heart. I thought—I never thought she could make him look at her. I thought he was... above her. But I was mistaken it seems. He was saying... 'Marie, Marie, this can't go on. I can't stand it. We've got to end it somehow. I'll kill him. I tell you. That's one way out!'" "Bunny's head went down slowly, as a flower droops on its stalk of water," Miss Lissey said queerly. Her eyes were strange. She held a hand to her forehead. "Tuck ran across and touched her hands. They were as cold as ice. 'Hurry, Michael. She's fainting!'"

Michael came with the water. He forced a few drops between the woman's clenched teeth. Her breath came in gasps. Her forehead was wet with perspiration. She opened her eyes and looked up at him. "Maybe I know... too much..." she muttered faintly. "Miss Lissey! Miss Lissey!" Tuck shook her shoulder in terror. "The... hat," she breathed, and her head dropped back against the chair. "Bunny was already at the telephone, and it was only a few minutes before they heard the doctor's car coming from the University. He ran in, put his hand on the unconscious woman's head, glanced into her eyes, and felt her pulse. He turned to Michael. "I'm afraid it's too late," he said. "She's dead."

"It's My Fault!" MICHAEL was in the Commissioner's office early, after a sleepless night. The District Attorney was there before him, standing at the window. He turned as his son entered, then turned back without a word. His mouth was tight. The Commissioner looked up from the paper in his hand. "It was poison, Michael. You were right." Michael went over and stood beside his father, surveying the landscape. "They ought to paint those old street cars, don't you think so?" he inquired. "His father thrust his hands deeper into his pockets and jingled his keys. The Commissioner spoke again. "You... had no trouble during the night, Michael? The house wasn't molested?" Michael did not answer. He threw his hat suddenly to the desk, and pounded his palm with a clenched fist. His gray eyes were bitter. "Damn it all!" he said. "It's my fault. I could have avoided it. There's no excuse for me—the needn't have died. It's my fault!"

Davies folded his papers together carefully. "I don't see how you make that out, my boy." "I do. I should have seen... I should have been watching more closely. That devil!" His father swung on him suddenly. "You know?" "I don't know. I can only guess. I can't prove it—yet. But I will! I will!" "You can't stay there, Michael." "I've got to stay there. It's just as safe for me as for anybody, and I know more. I know it, and I can't prove it—nobody else could step in now. And this last terrible business... he ran his fingers through his hair, and looked up sharply. "How long before she died did she take the poison?" "Not more than two hours, the coroner thinks." "That means about five o'clock. So she certainly got it at our place. She was there from quarter past four until seven." "Who had access to the food she ate?" "Everybody. That's the damnable part... I should have known better."

"What do you mean, everybody?" "Just that. Ourselves, of course; Charlotte Jean. All the men helped to serve, and the women were milling around. There's no possible way of sorting out any one particular action. We'll have to get at it differently. The person who killed Edgar Murchison killed her." "And won't stop there," his father said quietly. "But dad—do you want me to leave?" "No." "Well, there you are." "The girls?" "Michael groaned. "I've talked all night to you. It's no good. Tuck won't leave me, and Bunny won't leave Tuck."

Continued tomorrow

On the RADIO CHAINS

STATIONS Where to Find Them on the Dial. Kes, Portland, 1180; KFI, 640 Los Angeles; KGA, 1470, Spokane; KGO, 790, San Francisco; KGW, 620, Portland; KJR, 970, Seattle; KNX, 1050, Los Angeles; KOA, 830, Denver; KOIN, 940, Portland; KOMO, 920, Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1180, Salt Lake.

Thursday, 5:00—Rhythm Factory, KPO, KGW; Frank and Archie, KJR; Sunset Shadows, KGO. 5:30—Kelsey's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Army Band, KPO, KGW. 6:00—Major Bowes, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Good News 1940, KPO, KFI, KGW; Sketch, KGO, KEX, KJR. 7:00—Workshop, KOIN; Music Hall, KPO, KFI. 7:30—Sports Huddle, KNX, KOIN; Vicki Chase, KGO, News, KSL. 8:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KGW; KFI; Clinton's Orch., KEX, Aloha Land, KGO; Amos and Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN. 8:15—Sam Hays, KNX, Clinton's Orch., KGO; I Love a Mystery, KPO, KGW, KFI. 8:30—Symphony Hour, KPO, KGW, KFI; Ask-It-Basket, KNX, KSL, KOIN. 9:00—Strange as It Seems, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Sketch, KGO, KJR. 9:30—Those We Love, KPO, KFI.

KGW: Rogers Orch., KGW, KSL; Madrigal's Orch., KGO, KEX; Oppenetta Series, KNX, KOIN; News, KJR. 10:00—News Reporter, KPO, KGW; KFI; Foster's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Paul Sullivan, KOIN, KEX. 10:30—Bavazza's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; Nottingham's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Roland's Orch., KOIN, KNX. 11:00—Martin's Orch., KPO, KFI; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Gray's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Young's Orch., KOMO; News, KGO, KNX, KGW.

Friday, 5:00—Frank and Archie, KJR; Sunset Shadows, KGO; Melody Time, KPO; Don't Forget, KFI. 5:30—Etchings in Brass, KGO, KJR; Musical Vignettes, KFI. 6:00—Plantation Party, KGO, KEX, KJR; Waita Time, KPO, KFI, KGW; Prof. Quiz, KNX, KSL, KOIN. 6:30—First Nighter, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Jesse's Program, KPO, KFI, KGW; Who's in Town Tonight, KGO, News, KJR. 7:00—Drama, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Lombardo's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Boxing Bout, KGO, KJR. 7:30—Story Behind the Headlines, KGW; Young Man with a Band, KNX, KSL; Boxing Bout, KGO, KJR, KEX; Big Town, KPO. 8:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KFI; Amos and Andy, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Robinson's Buckaroo, KGO, KEX, KJR. 8:15—I Love a Mystery, KPO, KFI, KGW; Lum and Abner, KOIN, KNX, KSL.

8:30—Dance Orch., KEX; Death Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KFI; John by Presents, KNX, KOIN, KSL, Aloha Land, KGO. 9:00—Moffitt's Orch., KGO, KEX; Noble's Orch., KPO; Kate Smith, KNX, KOIN. 9:15—Football Forecasts, KGO, KEX. 9:30—Quintet Musical, KGO, KEX; University Explorer, KPO, KFI. 10:00—Martin's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; News Reporter, KPO, KFI. KGW, News, KNX, KSL, KOIN. 10:30—Madrigal's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; McDonald's Orch., KGO; Owens' Orch., KSL. 11:00—Nottingham's Orch., KPO; Gray's Orch., KSL, KOIN; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; News, KGO, KNX, KGW.

Stockholm, Dec. 14. — (AP) — Prime Minister P. A. Hansson, in announcing formation of a new coalition government to-day, expressed the people's "will" for material aid to Finland, but listed defense of neutrality and safeguarding of "vital supplies" as Sweden's predominant aims. The new cabinet was formed, he told the Rikstag, "in consideration of the international situation" and "the requirements it demands from our people." Hansson defined the government's aims as: "Independence, neutrality," continued cooperation with other neutral states "free of alliances, maintenance and extension of northern cooperation."

COOS TAX DELINQUENCY 42 NEWSPAPER PAGES Marshfield, Ore., Dec. 14. — (AP) — A sign of the times: They're advertising a tax delinquency sale in Coos county Friday—and it will take 42 newspaper pages, in fine type, to list all the parcels of land. Sheriff William Howell said the delinquencies in the county amount to \$3,000,000. It is the first such sale in Coos county in four years. Closing time for Tax Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

HUMANITY'S BENEFACTOR!

FREDERICK A. KORMANN—Glendale, Calif., chemical engineer, HAS DEVELOPED THE ONLY PERMANENT CURE KNOWN TODAY FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE BY UTILIZING ELECTRICITY!

THROUGH ELECTROLYSIS OF THE BLOOD STREAM HE HAS EFFECTED PERMANENT CURES IN 97 PER CENT OF HUNDREDS OF CASES TREATED OVER A PERIOD OF 7 YEARS...

"ZEND-AVESTA"—the original Persian Bible, WAS WRITTEN BY ZOROASTER ON 12,000 COWHIDES! ONLY FRAGMENTS REMAIN TODAY...

THE AIR-RAID TREE! NATIVES WILL NOT GO NEAR BRAZILIAN WALNUT TREES WHEN THE WIND BLOWS—BEST FALLING NUTS KILL THEM! THE HARD-SHELLED FRUIT IS OFTEN 6 INCHES IN DIAMETER...

THE LAST PIECE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

12-9

1. IS HAVING DINNER AT AUNT EUNICE'S. FINISHES PIECE OF CAKE AND LOOKS AT PLATE. ONLY ONE PIECE LEFT

2. WAYS HOPEFULLY FOR SOMEONE TO SUGGEST THAT HE HAVE IT

3. TRIES TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE SITUATION BY STARING LONGINGLY AT LONE PIECE OF CAKE

4. BECOMES MOROSE AS NO ONE NOTICES HIM

5. BRIGHTENS UP AS AUNT EUNICE REMARKS THAT SOMEBODY MUST FINISH THE CAKE

6. WAYS IN SOME ALARM AS SHE URGES IT ON ONE AFTER ANOTHER, BUT EVERYONE REFUSES

7. JUST AS SHE IS ABOUT TO OFFER IT TO HIM, A CRASH IN NEXT ROOM, WHERE CAT PLAYING, HAS URSEY VASE, BRINGS MEAL TO AN END

8. FOLLOWS OTHERS OUT, LOOKING WISTFULLY AT CAKE

(Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The "Punch-Drunk" Pilot

GIT ME... INTO ME CORNER... FER... TH NEXT... ROUND.

HAD TO HIT CHUCK WITH A WRENCH... HE FROZE THE CONTROLS, SKEETS!

THERE'S TH' BELL!... NOW WATCH ME... MOIDER THAT... UH... ???

OH! THAT'S WHY YOU ALMOST CRASHED!

Now it comes back to me... I wuz doin' swell... ready to solo... when... who-eee!... everything went black!

I BEEN FRAMED! SOMEBODY GIVE ME KNOCKOUT DROPS BEFORE I WENT UP! BETCHA IT WAS THAT SAILOR!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—And What Else?

IT'S A GUSHER!

THIS'LL RUIN HAPPY VALLEY!

THE HECK IT WILL! MAYOR BALLINGER'LL DRIVE 'EM OUT O' TOWN!

WOW! LOOK'N SPOUT!

STAND BACK! NO CIGARETTES, CIGARS OR PIPES! NO MATCHES!

RUSTY, DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?

LOTSA JACK?

THE NEBBES—That's All

SAY, MR EMBERT, WHAT IS THIS POWER PILL RACKET YOU HAVE MY HUSBAND SO FUSSED UP ABOUT?

IT'S NO RACKET, MRS NEBBES—IT'S A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY I'M LAYING IN YOUR HUSBAND'S LAP

I'VE SOLVED A PROBLEM I'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR YEARS—IT'S GOING TO MAKE HIM WEALTHY BEYOND ALL YOUR DREAMS

YOU WOULDN'T CARE TO GO ON RECORD AS TO ABOUT THE AMOUNT?

NO, BUT I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM FABULOUSLY WEALTHY—YOU CAN HAVE FURS, YACHTING OUTFIT, I GOT ONE WHEN THE VAN MIDASES IN- VITED ME ON A YACHT CRUISE IN-STEAD OF LOCKING HER UP IN THIS HAMLET.

I WON'T HAVE TO SPEND A CENT ON A YACHTING OUTFIT. I GOT ONE WHEN THE VAN MIDASES IN- VITED ME ON A YACHT CRUISE IN-STEAD OF LOCKING HER UP IN THIS HAMLET.

THE NEBBES—That's All

JAPS TO NEGOTIATE WITH RUSSIANS FOR TRADING AGREEMENT

Tokyo, Dec. 14.—(AP)—Yakichiro Suma, Japanese foreign office spokesman, confirmed to-day Japan would open negotiations with Soviet Russia January 10, looking toward a trade treaty, but said hopes still were held for a new treaty with the United States. The present pact has been de-

nounced by the United States, effective January 26. Suma admitted the Russian market "presently" was insufficient to replace that of America, but said "if she cannot buy from one country, Japan should turn to another." He contended non-existence of a treaty with the United States would be "harmful both to Japan and the United States materially and physiologically." For example, he said, "seventy-eight per cent of California's whole trade is concerned with Japan." "Likewise, it would result in the first non-treaty relationship between the two nations since Perry."

HUMANITY'S BENEFACTOR Discovering that circulatory diseases caused many deaths in the United States—by 1934 it was 23.85 per cent—Frederick A. Kormann, Glendale, Cal., chemical engineer, decided to do something about it. After much study he developed a method of treatment based on an electro-therapeutic principle which, after hundreds of treatments, he claims not only relieves but conquers this drastic scourge. "This treatment," says Kormann, "the only one available offering relief from high blood pressure, is now undergoing research and has all the earmarks of being beneficial in the treatment of many other diseases." Rev. Dr. Stephen Hales first measured blood pressure in 1733 and physicians since then have considered it a valuable aid in diagnosing disease. TOMORROW: Lost and Found.

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