

# The Creeping Man

—by Frances Shelley Wees

LAST FRIDAY, Mr. Deane tells Michael that Mrs. Murchison was out with a man the evening Murchison disappeared. Later that evening, Mrs. Devoe is found dead on the cliff.

Letters didn't sound as if he were, did they?" "Letters?" "In the box, honey. The warm, friendly ones."

"Michael Bruce Forrester! How long have you known that?" "Oh, quite a while."

Bunny laughed suddenly. "I thought perhaps they were one of the unspeakable things Duncan was responsible for," she said.

"No," he blew a smoke ring. "So you see," he went on, "Mrs. Devoe would have committed suicide if she had committed suicide. Which she didn't."

"What makes you so sure she didn't, Michael?" "The same thing that explains why she might have. Her temperament and her religion. She was a very moody, serious minded, earnest Christian woman. She has been wringing her hands and praying for a long time now, worrying herself sick over the sins of her only child. Have told in her eyes must have been a greater sin than all; she wouldn't pile one sin on another. No. But it must have been rather awful for her . . . for you see," Michael said quietly, "she didn't know into what black depths Devoe and his wife had been led in order to conceal their relationship."

"Then, if it isn't suicide, Michael—why was she murdered? Because she knew too much? Like Miss Lissey? Old Mrs. Devoe? Is what you have told us the thing . . . Bunny's eyes widened.

"That's a question I should like to be able to answer," he said dependently.

The inquest, followed so closely by old Mrs. Devoe's death, marked the end of the period of seeming inaction for Michael. He was away from home most of the time on mysterious errands which he did not explain. One of these errands was in answer to a telephone call from the Veterans' Hospital—a call which asked him to come to the hospital immediately, as one of the patients wanted to see him.

As Michael knew it must be, it was Smith. He was pitifully thin and pale. As they came in he jumped up and gazed at them frantically. His eyes were burning with an insane light.

"It's you!" he choked out.

"Yes," Michael said cheerfully. "What can I do for you, old man?"

"With My Own Eyes" SMITH relaxed a little. He sank back into the pillows, but his hands still clawed nervously at the edge of the blankets. He looked at the doctor. "I got to talk to him alone," he said.

The doctor went out and shut the door quietly. Smith dropped his voice to an accusing whisper.

"You said as how I didn't need to be afraid of him no longer," he said hoarsely. "You said as how he was gone away, and wouldn't never come back. You said as I was safe. Didn't you? Didn't you?"

"Yes," Michael said cheerfully.

"Well, you got that paper, ain't you? Can't you do something for me? Can't you get him locked up?"

"Locked up?" Michael repeated in amazement.

"He'll be hangin' around here in a day or two, like as not. Sendin' for me, that's what he'll be doin'. I won't go. I tell you, I won't go. Nothing on earth can make me go."

"Listen," said Michael tersely. "Act like a man, will you? You're acting like a damned rabbit."

Smith wiped the sweat from his face. "You ain't never been shell shocked," he murmured.

"No. I don't know what it's like. But talk sense, anyway. I told you the other day you were safe. Safe as anything on God's earth could make you—from Murchison. He's dead, man."

Smith stared at him. His eyes were starting from his head. "Dead?" he whispered. "Dead! Didn't I see him with my own eyes no later than yesterday?"

"What?"

"It's true! I might have known that devil had you fooled. He's too smart. Dead! I was in a store, way on the other side of town. University folks don't go over there. He's hidin'. I say God knows what for. He come in the store, and I saw him coming. I got down behind a counter quick. He never saw me at all. But I saw him, the devil! Dead! Not on your life, he isn't dead."

"Just a minute," said Michael quietly. "You're not doing yourself any good. You say you saw him yesterday. Are you sure you're not mistaken?"

"I am not. It's Murchison. I saw him plain."

"Describe him."

"Well—he looked just the same as ever except he had on a coat. One of them dusty looking raincoats it was, and a fawn hat. He's tall . . . clean shaven, dark. What else is there?"

"You'd swear on the Bible that it was Edgar Murchison?"

"I would."

"What kind of a store?" Michael asked after a moment.

"A hardware store. I was buyin' a bit of tape to mend my crutch."

"What was he buying?"

"That's what I asked the clerk when he went out. I thought it might be . . ." Smith shuddered, caught Michael's eye, and controlled himself. "He was buying an oar-lock," he said.

Continued tomorrow

## On the RADIO CHAINS

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

Friday, 5:00—Frank and Archie, KJR; Sunset Shadows, KGO; Melody Time, KPO; Don't Forget, KFI.

5:30—Echings in Brass, KGO, KJR; Musical Vignettes, KFI.

6:00—Plantation Party, KGO, KEX; KJR; Waltz Time, KPO, KFI, KGW; Prof. Quiz, KXN, KSL, KOIN.

6:30—First Nighter, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Jesse's Program, KPO, KFI, KGW; Who's in Town Tonight, KGO.

7:00—Drama, KXN, KOIN, KSL; Lombardo's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Boxing Bout, KGO, KJR, KEX; Big Town, KPO.

8:00—Pressure Time, KPO, KFI, KGW; Amos and Andy, KXN, KOIN, KSL; Robinson's Buckaroos, KGO, KEX, KJR.

8:15—I Love a Mystery, KPO, KFI, KGW; Lum and Abner, KXN, KOIN, KSL.

8:30—Himber's Orch., KEX; Death

Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KFI; Johnny Presenta, KXN, KOIN, KSL; Aloha Land, KGO.

9:00—Tucker's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Smith's Variety Hour, KXN, KOIN; London Letter, KPO; I Want a Job, KGW.

9:30—Quizzical Musicals, KGO, KEX; University Explorer, KPO, KFI; Music by Woodbury, KGW; News, KJR.

10:00—Martin's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; News Reporter, KPO, KFI, KGW; Paul Sullivan, KXN, KSL; News, KOIN.

10:30—Held's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; McDonald's Highlanders, KGO; Deutscher's Orcha., KSL.

11:00—Nottingham's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; Gray's Orch., KSL, KOIN; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; News, KGO.

Saturday, 5:00—Oehler's Plaza, KPO, KGW; Ravazza's Orch., KGO, KJR; News, KFI.

5:30—King's Orch., KXN, KOIN, KSL; Quiz Program, KGO, KJR, KEX.

6:00—Gluskin's Orch., KOIN, KXN; Clinton's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Beyond Reasonable Doubt, KGO, KJR, KEX.

6:30—Maurice's Music, KGO; Rose and Dittmar, KOIN; News, KJR.

7:00—Goodman's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Symphony Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX.

7:30—Drama, KPO, KFI, KGW; Sports Huddle, KOIN, KXN.

8:00—Noble's Orch., KOIN, KXN;

Barn Dance, KPO, KFI, KGW; Symphony Orch., KEX, KJR.

8:30—Gang Busters, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Waltz Reflections, KGO.

9:00—Held's Orch., KPO, KFI; Hit Parade, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Drama, KGO, KEX, KJR, KGW.

9:30—Ravazza's Orch., KEX; Saunders's Orch., KFI, KGW; News, KGO, KJR.

10:00—Held's Orch., KGW; Foster's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Concert Hall, KPO; News, KFI, KOIN, KXN.

10:30—Noble's Orch., KGO, KJR, KFI; Lopez Orch., KXN; Martin's Orch., KPO, KGW.

11:00—Nottingham's Orch., KPO, KFI; Owen's Orch., KOIN, KSL; Organist, KEX, KJR; News, KGO, KGW, KXN.

Italian Steamer Hits Mine, Sinks

Amsterdam, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The Italian steamer Comitas, 3,685 tons, sank today off Flushing on the southwestern coast of The Netherlands after striking a mine. The Netherlands navy sent vessels to pick up the crew, who took to life boats.

Canada To Send Aerial Squadron

Ottawa, Dec. 22.—(AP)—Canada intends to send overseas a complete air squadron and between 6,000 and 7,000 troops

of the technical services to support the first division in the field. Defense Minister Norman Rogers announced last night that artillery, engineers, signalers, ordnance and hospital units, along with certain base troops, would join the first division in France. The landing of the division in Great Britain for a period of training was announced Monday.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

## San Francisco Mail Largest In History

San Francisco, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The biggest Christmas business the San Francisco post office ever had rushed clerks at top speed Thursday. Mail volume was running about 12.5 percent ahead of last year. Tuesday's receipts of \$78,989.91 set a new one-day record. Postmaster William H. McCarthy said Wednesday's 3,150,000 cancellations also hit a new high.

## Portland Guard Best Marksmen

Salem, Dec. 22.—(AP)—Rifleman of company B, 186th Infantry, Portland, won the Oregon national guard marksmanship trophy for the ninth consecutive year. Major General George A. White, commanding general, said today. More than half the company of three officers and 80 enlisted men qualified as experts, and nearly all the rest were rated as sharpshooters.

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



ONE-NAME TOWN! EVERYBODY IS NAMED "ROGERS" IN ST. WILLIAMS, S.C., POPULATION 130...

MAJOR EDWARD MANNOCK—British World War ace, WAS CAPTURED BY GERMANS AND RELEASED AS A "HARMLESS CRIPPLE"—THEN JOINED THE R.F.C. AND SHOT DOWN 50 GERMAN PLANES IN COMBAT!

AMERICAN SLOT MACHINES LINE THE GRAND STAIRCASE OF THE PALACE OF THE KING OF NEPAL, India! (For the amusement of His Majesty)

ALASKA'S COAST LINE (26,000 miles) IS LONGER THAN THAT OF CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

THE FLYING CRIPPLE A man who was captured and later released by Germany because he was blind in one eye and "harmless," afterwards shot down at least 50 German World War airplanes. This man was Major Edward Mannock, Irish-born British soldier who had enlisted with the infantry. After his capture and subsequent release, he returned to the front as an air pilot. There Mannock officially shot down 50 enemy planes. His unofficial record stands at 73. Ironically, he was killed following a plane down after it had been disabled. TOMORROW: Gridiron Glamour!

## SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY FOUND IT HARD ON TO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT WHEN HE GOT UP AT 6 O'CLOCK FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD CAROL SINGING THAT THE WOMEN HAD ORGANIZED AND FOUND THAT HE WAS THE ONLY ONE TO SHOW UP

12-25 (Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.) GUYAS WILLIAMS

## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Is Optimistic!



IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE LEM SOLO, TOMMY THREW HIS JOYCE-STICK OVERBOARD. AND LEM PROMPTLY FOLLOWED HIS EXAMPLE!



AT LEAST HE HAD SENSE ENOUGH TO OPEN HIS CHUTE!



O-OOF!



COUNT SLOW..TO TEN, AND PULL THE RIP-CORD!

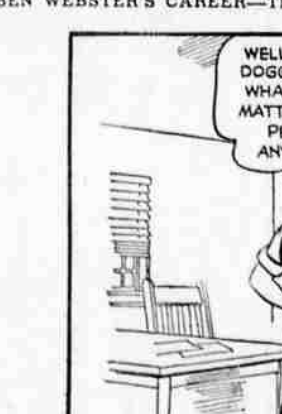


I..I..M PLUMB SORRY, MR. TOMKINS, BUT YEW ALLUS TOL ME TO DO JEST WHUT YEW DID, AN' WHEN YEW THREW AWAY THET FLYIN' STICK, WHY..



GUESS I..I NEVER WUZ CUT OUT T'BE AN AVIATOR.. FORGET IT, LEM!... THE BLAME'S MOSTLY MINE!... I'LL MAKE A FLYER OUT OF YOU YET... IF IT KILLS ME!

## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Mayor's Lament!



WELL, I'LL BE DOGGONED! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH PEOPLE ANYWAY?



BEN, I'M UP TO MY NECK IN TROUBLE! YOU KNOW BESS LOU ALFORD?



SURE, SHE'S THE LADY THAT CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO OUR CAMPAIGN-



YEP AN' TO REWARD HER I OFFERED HER THE JOB OF CHIEF OF POLICE THIS MORNING! I TOLD HER THE TWO OF US WOULD DRIVE THE OIL FOLKS OUT O' HAPPY VALLEY!



SWELL! DID SHE ACCEPT?



ACCEPT NOTHING! SHE'S IN THE OIL BUSINESS NOW HERSELF!

## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Surrender?



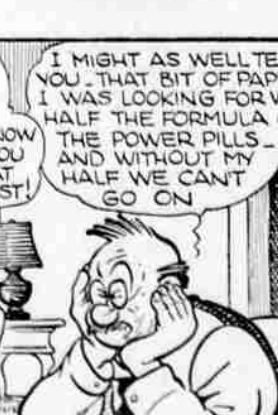
COME ON, RUDY—YOUR BREAKFAST IS READY



I DON'T FEEL LIKE EATING ANYTHING—I'M NOT A BIT HUNGRY



JUST WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU? YOU KEPT ME AWAKE ALL NIGHT WITH YOUR RESTLESSNESS AND NOW YOU SAY YOU CAN'T EAT BREAKFAST!



I MIGHT AS WELL TELL YOU THAT BIT OF PAPER I WAS LOOKING FOR WAS HALF THE FORMULA OF THE POWER PILLS—AND WITHOUT MY HALF WE CAN'T GO ON



THAT'S JUST EXACTLY WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE NOW! I DIDN'T PUT ANY IMPORTANCE TO IT WHEN WE GAVE IT TO ME—I THOUGHT HE WAS A NUT—SO DID YOU! MY CONFIDENCE IN YOUR JUDGMENT FIRMLY IMPRESSED THAT IDEA ON MY MIND!

## PROSPECT SCHOOL PROGRAM TONIGHT

Prospect, Dec. 22.—(Sp)—The annual Christmas program of Prospect grade school will be given in the gymnasium to-night at 8 o'clock. All pupils will participate. The program follows: "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town," primary rhythm band,

"Jingle Bells," marimba band first and second grades. "With the Help of Bunny," Christmas play by first, second, third and fourth grades. Christmas songs by chorus, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades. "The Wonderful Invention," fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth grades, showing Christmas in Norway, Sweden, Poland, Holland, and the nativity scene. Visit of Santa Claus and distribution of candy to children. Teachers presenting the program are Mrs. Ethel Thompson, Carol Furry, Georgiana Husson and Mr. Ed Starr.