

The Creeping Man

by Frances Shelley Wees

The Deserted House

RETURNED the light farther up the rock. There, a yard inland, was another bead.

They were difficult to follow. Sometimes they were two yards apart on the rocky shore and then it took a long time; but in not more than ten minutes he found himself past the rocks and standing at the foot of a narrow winding path leading straight up the cliffs.

And then he knew where he was going.

"Gordon again," Michael told himself thankfully as he ran up the path, dodging the bushes that struck at him and scrambling over rocks that tripped him. Thoughts raced through his brain. He remembered the talk he had had with Gordon when he had asked why he had needed a boat; and Gordon had told him of the old deserted stone house across the river, pointing out its position as a first class place for a warrior's stronghold and robber's castle, where the gang could meet on rainy days. And Michael had said, "But it isn't deserted, my lad; I saw smoke coming out of the chimney only the other day."

Smoke... a furnace persisted. Another thought came into his mind. James had wondered what happened to the bodies of the tortured animals from the University lab. Here, he shivered again and went on quickly, reaching the top with one last bound.

His reasoning had somehow brought him to expect to see the old house blazing with light, but as he stood there peering ahead of him into the darkness it was not visible at all. There seemed to be a thick grove of trees; then he remembered that from the opposite bank the place was, indeed, surrounded by trees. Perhaps they obscured the light which must be shining there behind the old walls. He went forward cautiously in the direction in which the house must lie, using his light only rarely and then for short moments.

His foot struck something hard, and bending quickly he discovered it to be a brick. So, he must be close to the house. He went on very slowly now, and very quietly. In a few seconds the hand outstretched before him touched a wall instead of branches, and he knew he had reached his goal.

But it was dark and quiet; not a sound or glimmer betrayed that this was anything but what it appeared to be, an old, tumble-down stone shell of what once had been a house. Michael stood there on the porch and listened intently for several seconds. There was nothing. He risked the flashlight; turned it down on the stone floor at his feet, and there, just in front of the porch, another of the coral beads.

He turned the light off instantly and flattened himself against the wall. In that manner he edged through the open door and stood in the musty darkness of the hall, again. He looked up, and there was no roof over his head. The stars shone through, winking at him faintly. He frowned to himself. This was no laboratory... what if... perhaps only the doomed were brought here—that curling smoke he had seen. He swallowed hard.

It seemed to be an impasse... and yet, surely Tuck had not dropped the beads for nothing. Thinking it over, there in the blackness and gloom, he groaned involuntarily. That clever, scheming devil... he might have put the beads there purposely. And Tuck? Michael flashed the light full on and walked boldly forward. He went through one door after another until he had been all through the house.

He turned back hopefully to the door by which he had entered, and as he did so he stopped short. No sound, no light, had brought him up short, but an odor, faint but distinctly perceptible in the still air. He sniffed again.

Chloroform. Iodine... drugs! A laboratory? Smoke! The fireplace... it rested on the old chimney at the side of the house, and went across to it, more cautiously now. The hearth was empty; no fire had been kindled there for long years. Yet it smelled of smoke. Strange. Certainly he had seen smoke coming from it.

And then he knew the answer. Like a flash he was through the door and feeling his way around the house, and there at the side he came upon one of those old-fashioned outer entrances to the basement. Without a moment's hesitation he went down the steps and stood with his ear pressed against the solid barred door he found there.

The odor of drugs was very strong now, oppressive. A hand from above caught him by the throat. A cloth pressed tight over his nose and mouth. He was held as in a vise.

"So, my friend," he heard a voice say through the haze that seemed to envelop him, "we meet on common ground at last!"

Bad Dreams
TUCK turned her head wearily and tried to put her hand up to it. She was so tired. Such terrible dreams. Pictures out of her dream floated disjointedly through her mind. The stump had come apart like a door. How queer. And Donovan hadn't been Donovan at all. Strange how clearly she could see the cave in the rock and the boat lying below her... she could feel the movement again, near the splash of the water at the oars, went down again and again. The same black panic came back to her, the panic of her dream. She had decided to jump into the river, she remembered now.

Wasn't that funny? Because she couldn't swim. Jump into the black rushing water... she was afraid of something. She had screamed and tried to jump. It didn't seem as if she jumped, though, because she couldn't remember the water. Why hadn't she jumped into the water? Somebody wouldn't let her... somebody had grasped her arms so tightly that they hurt very badly. Somebody... with a dreadful face and blazing eyes had looked at her and laughed. And Michael couldn't find her, she had thought. She had been afraid. He wouldn't know where to look. So she had broken the cord of her coral beads and dropped them.

She could hear that awful laugh yet... even if it had been only a dream. She shivered and put her hand over eyes. It was almost as if that face were still looking down at her. Someone took hold of her wrist... She must wake up. She tried to rub her eyes. Her hands wouldn't move.

That laugh... again. Her eyes opened themselves suddenly. That face! That dreadful, smearing, mocking smile again. She stared at it.

"You are awake," the voice was saying. "Come now, revive yourself. Take a deep breath of air. The air here is quite fresh and pure, I assure you."

She couldn't believe what she saw. It must be still the dream... if only it would stop! Her throat hurt and she couldn't swallow. She stared up at the face. It was the face of the man who should have been Donovan and wasn't. He was bending over her and holding her two wrists tightly together. She struggled. He smiled again.

"You are not quite strong yet, I am afraid," he said kindly enough. "I don't want you to use your hands, do you see, so I am just binding them down to the table, like this. You would spoil everything if you could use your hands. You might knock my hand the merest fraction of an inch, and spoil everything. That has happened before, of course. It is most unfortunate."

"What do you mean?" her voice was only a whisper.

"Ah, so you are yourself again? Do you know for a moment I was afraid I had given you too heavy an anesthetic."

'No One Suspects'
"WHERE am I?" she muttered. He stood up. Her hands were bound down to her sides now. He pursed his lips.

"Does it matter? You are safe. Quite safe. I am certain of that. You see, your husband was not at home when we left, nor your friend, Miss Temple. They will not discover that you have gone, and when they do, they will not know where you have gone."

He turned away and went leisurely across the room to a great cabinet standing against the wall, a great cabinet with glass doors behind them, rows and rows of shining things like silver knives and forks, perhaps. Beside the cabinet was a square iron stove upon which stood a copper cauldron. The man looked down at it reflectively.

"I'm afraid I hadn't better use it," he said with regret. "The sparks might possibly betray you, and that would never do. I have worried about the fire at times, you know," he said, turning back to her. "The smoke would be so clearly visible to an observant eye. But of course, — do you know, I have been using this place for over a year now, and no one has even suspected that it exists. The blindness of humanity is remarkable. There have been one or two unfortunate episodes in connection with it, too," he said unhappily. "My subjects have not been in the best of health, of course, and that explains it. I am sure of success tonight."

"What are you going to do with me?" Tuck's throat was so dry. He lifted something from the cabinet before he answered. It was a little alcohol stove, she saw, and he lit it, and put a rectangular basin of water over it to heat.

"Do with you?" he asked smiling. "You know, I don't believe I'll bother explaining it to you. I have explained it to one or two of them and I believe it really interferes with the success of the experiment. It is, of course, a very delicate matter, and perhaps the state of mind of the patient really has something to do with it. In fact I am sure it has."

He was working, now, as he talked, his hands moving quickly over a strange-looking thing he took from the cabinet, a thing of bright, shining metal and long rubber tubes with metal caps.

There was a door open at the end of the room opposite her, a door set into the dingy gray cement of the walls. She did not hear anything, but suddenly the man turned and stared at it. He walked swiftly across and through it, and she could see him looking down at something below him in there. Lifting her head as far as she could, and straining her eyes into the darkness, she could make out the outline of the foot of a bed and white sheets above. Then there was a sound of heavy breathing in there, a faint moan.

Someone came was here too! He was speaking. "Be silent!" He said "Not a sound. I must not be disturbed."

Disturbed? At what? Suddenly Tuck wondered what this thing was that she lay upon, so high and narrow. It seemed a little familiar, somehow, quite in accordance with some queer odor in the air. Drugs. A hospital. That was it.

And this? This thing she was lying on? She knew in that instant, strapped to an operating table.

Continued tomorrow

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
KNX, 1050; Los Angeles; KOA, 830
Denver; KOIN, 940; Portland
KOMO, 920; Seattle; KPO, 630; San
Francisco; KSL, 1180; Salt Lake

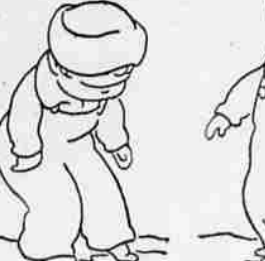
Monday
5:00—Party, KPO, KFI, KGW;
Frank and Archie, KJR.
5:30—True or False, KOMO; Kel-
sey's Orch., KGO, KJR; Voice, KPO,
KFI, KGW.
6:00—Rochester Civic Orchestra,
KGO, KEX; Radio Theater, KSL,
KNX, KLS; Quis Program, KPO, KGW,
KFI.
6:30—Templeton Time, KPO, KGW,
KFI, KMED; News, KJR.
7:00—Little Ol' Hollywood, KGO,
KJR, KEX; Hour, KPO, KGW, KFI;
Lombardo's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN;
7:30—Blondie, KNX, KSL, KOIN;
Sensations and Swing, KGO, KGW,
KFI; Radio Forum, KGO, KJR, KEX,
KSL, KOIN.
8:00—Amos and Andy, KNX, KOIN,
KSL; Doe's Music, KEX; Fred War-
ning, KPO, KGW, KFI; Aloha Land,
KGO.
8:15—I Love a Mystery, KPO, KFI,
KGW; Lum and Abner, KNX, KSL,
KOIN; Doe's Music, KGO; Courtney's
Orch., KEX.
8:30—Cutler's Orch., KPO, KFI,
KGW; Breese's Orch., KEX; Big
Band, KGO; Model Minstrels, KNX,
KSL, KOIN.
9:00—Sherlock Holmes, KPO, KFI,
KGW; Tune Up Time, KNX, KSL,
KOIN; True or False, KGO, KEX,
KJR.
9:30—Hawthorne House, KPO,
KGO, KFI; Hawk's Orch., KGO;
Weik's Orch., KNX; News, KJR.
9:50—Walter Winchell, KPO, KFI,
KGW; Ben Bernie, KNX, KOIN; Mr.
District Attorney, KGO, KJR, KEX.

ICE BREAKER

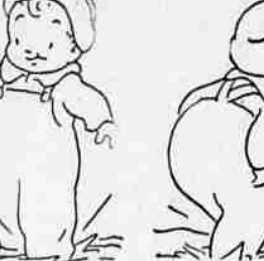
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



WISHES THERE WERE SOME SNOW TO PLAY IN BECAUSE IT'S FUN GETTING WET



FINDS A PUDDLE IN THE ROAD, FROZEN OVER. WONDERS WHETHER HE WILL HOLD HIM



IS DELIGHTED TO FIND THAT IT WON'T. LIKES THE SPLINTERY SOUND THE ICE MAKES WHEN IT BREAKS



SPENDS A HAPPY TIME CRUNCHING THROUGH THE ICE IN ALL THE PUDDLES HE CAN FIND



COMES ON ONE THAT RESISTS HIM IN SPITE OF HIS STAMPING ON IT



BACKS OFF AND TAKES A RUNNING JUMP



SUCCESS!



GOES HOME FOR THE INEVITABLE DRYING OFF AND SCOLDING, FEELING THAT THE DAY HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY ENJOYABLE

TAILSPIN TOMMY—What Happened To Chuck?



LEM AND CHUCK, MAKING THEIR FIRST SOLO AGAINST ORDERS, ARGUE OVER CONTROL OF THE SHIP, AS IT COMES ROARING DOWN THE FIELD.



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Attendance Almost Nil



THE NEBB—Merry Xmas?

NEW QUAKE HIT NORTH ANATOLIA

Ankara, Dec. 30.—(AP)—New violent earth tremors in the vicinity of Tokat in Northern Anatolia brought fears today of an additional disaster as officials reported direct from Erzin province that deaths there would total at least 40,000.

The new quakes were accompanied by deep underground rumblings, but the extent of damage was not determined immediately.

The first trainload of injured from the great earthquake of Wednesday was enroute to Ankara. The victims, all in need of surgical attention, included a number of high ranking Turkish officers and one general.

Military planes flew over Erzin, dropping bundles of food and clothing to survivors who huddled half-naked in snow-covered fields.

Rescue of many persons in the isolated districts appeared hopeless as snow continued to block highway and rail communications.

Officials said children and women particularly were falling victims to the continued bitter cold, 25 to 30 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit.

The entire Turkish nation was mobilized for relief, and help was sent from other countries.

GERMAN LEGIONNAIRES JOIN FRENCH FORCES

Paris, Dec. 30.—(AP)—Six hundred German legionnaires crying "nieder mit Hitler"—down with Hitler—departed today to join the French foreign legion at Sidi Bel Abbas, Algeria.

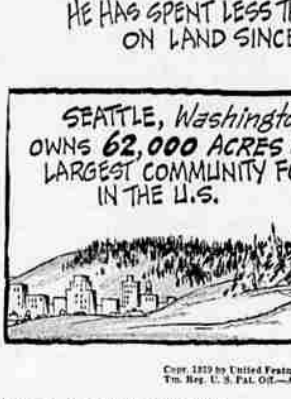
The men are Bavarians who fled Germany and were interned in France.

They were permitted to join the foreign legion after investigating their histories. Later they may join allied troops on the western front.

Butter Unchanged
San Francisco, Dec. 30.—(AP)—USDA—Butter unchanged.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



BIRDIE!
BOB SWEENEY—
1937 British Amateur Champion,
ONCE KILLED A SEA GULL
WITH A GOLF BALL, DROPPING
BOTH WITHIN ONE FOOT
OF THE HOLE!

HOME, HOME ON THE WAVES!
MAJOR WILLIAM E. LONG,
of London,
MAKES HIS HOME ON OCEAN LINERS,
FITTING HIS CABIN WITH HIS OWN PERSONAL FURNITURE!
HE HAS SPENT LESS THAN 3 MONTHS
ON LAND SINCE 1934...

SEATTLE, Washington,
OWNS 62,000 ACRES OF TREES—
LARGEST COMMUNITY FOREST
IN THE U.S.

SHADES OF YESTERDAY!
\$500,000 WORTH OF BUGGY WHIPS
WERE SOLD IN THE UNITED STATES
IN 1938!

HOME ON THE WAVES
Finding life in England cramped after 36 years of army service, Major W. E. Long, a widower, chose to make the oceans of the world his home.

Partial toward the England-Australia run, helived on the "Barabool" and the "Mongolia" of the P. & O. Line. Later he moved to the "Saint Rosario" on the Brazilian and Argentine run, but came ashore to the French Riviera when his niece and constant companion became ill.

Major Long recently wrote to me: "I plan to start living at sea again, this time on the run to New Caledonia, via Tahiti and the Pacific Islands. I have called four ships 'home'—seeing that the cabins are stripped for me, as I put in my own pictures and furniture."

MONDAY: Gridiron Girl.

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McNARY SEES HOPE FOR PORT ORFORD BREAKWATER

Washington, Dec. 30.—(AP)—Senator Charles McNary noted S. A. Lawrence, Port Orford recorder, today he "had reason to believe" the army engineers had reported favorably in the need for a breakwater at Port Orford.

The senator replied to Lawrence's letter which said a breakwater would revive business, afford a safe harbor during winter storms and bring new industry to the southwestern Oregon section.

Notice: I will not be responsible for any bill incurred by any one other than myself. E. E. Walter.