

The Creeping Man

by Frances Shelley Wees

Chapter 50

Happy Endings

TUCK put her hand out and patted his. "Never mind Michael," she said softly. "It was a new experience. I'll sell it to a movie company some day, and make all our fortunes." But her lips were dry again at that terrible memory.

Michael's face was grim. He didn't answer.

Duncan broke the silence. "What about the hat?" he inquired.

Michael stirred and drew a deep breath. "That hat?" he repeated.

"Oh, yes, I was forgetting. Well, that was a dead give-away. I don't know how Miss Lissey knew it was there. I suspect that knowing Mc-Bain was the man with the barrow, she went snooping as usual, bless her poor old heart. And she saw that hat at Mc-Bain's. I rather think he had carried it home with him that night from Murchison's, thinking it was his own, which he probably hadn't worn at all. I think he saw Duncan go out that night, leaving only Marie and Dr. Murchison in the house; then, later, he saw her slip out to meet Devoe. Of course, he knew about that affair, although probably not all the truth. But Gordon informs me that they were in the habit of meeting late at night after the Professor was in bed. Mc-Bain would have seen them, and would have known they were out of the way that night. So he went into the study quietly and struck the fatal blow—a harder blow than he intended. Your brother put his hand up to his head dazedly . . . reached out and grasped the paper lying on the desk and tore it. A piece of it fell into the drawer . . . the piece we found with the pipe." He caught Tuck's astonished glance. "I found it, rather," he amended. "I didn't show it to you. It had blood stains on it."

"Michael," Bunny said crisply, "what about the time element? Miss Lissey said it was two o'clock in the morning when she saw that barrow on the path!"

"I know. I don't suppose the blow was struck so late. Possibly Mc-Bain left Murchison drugged, and lying in the shadow of the hedge until he dared take him to the boat. In the meantime he removed all traces of the struggle from the study. Mrs. Murchison discovered nothing to warn her of the truth." He frowned. "I said that business about the hat was a dead give-away. What I meant was this. Nobody had been at the Mc-Bain house that night, Mrs. Mc-Bain said, except Miss Lissey. Now, we know that Miss Lissey had been away from the campus all evening at a party down town. So that was an untruth. I am convinced that Mrs. Mc-Bain feared the hat to him earlier, and he destroyed it. When I asked for it, and it was missing, she was sure. She has been in a state of collapse ever since, you know."

"I'm awfully sorry for her," Bunny murmured unhappily.

Duncan stirred. "I'm sorry for her too," he said. "She's a very fine woman. My brother . . . that was one of the reasons he was going away . . . You see, he couldn't stand it . . . his own unhappiness and his quarrel with her husband and . . . you can see . . ." he flushed.

Michael made patterns on the tablecloth. "I see," he said quietly.

"Michael," Bunny said for the third time, "I want to know . . ."

Questions And Answers

"OF COURSE you do," he said soothingly. "I realize that. But just a minute . . . Duncan, you were threatening to kill Jared Devoe, weren't you, if the woman you supposed to be your sister-in-law didn't give him up?"

"Yes."

"Exactly. Well, please don't judge our police force or dad by the conduct of that inquest the other day. I suppose you realize that the thing was more or less railroaded?"

"I got it," Duncan said ruefully.

"That's what was making me so angry."

"Sorry," Michael replied. "It couldn't be helped. We had to do it that way. By the way—there's one thing more; what exactly did Miss Lissey say to you that Sunday afternoon? She told us just a moment before she died that this thing would spell your life for you; was she laboring under some mistaken idea . . ."

Duncan flushed again, as he always did when any mention was made of his brother. "She said," he replied slowly, "that Devoe and Marie were carrying on scandalously. She knew they'd been slipping out on Edgar for months, and she was determined that something must be done. She thought I was in love with Marie too. She'd heard me threatening to kill Devoe, you see, and she didn't think that was just the way to go about it. She wanted Marie to be driven off the campus and if I didn't do it she was going to, and she was convinced that such action would bring me into a most unpleasant publicity and cause me to be dis-

charged here. That's what she meant. It would have been rotten if she'd been right . . . but I have always hated Marie," he finished tensely.

"Thanks," said Michael. "That's the way I doped it out."

"And now it's my turn," said Tuck firmly. "Michael, do you remember what you said to Bunny about Duncan, days and days ago? When you told her that she mustn't even be decent to him? Not speak to him? What did you mean? Because obviously you have nothing against him now. Bunny understood you the other night when you took her to see him, but I didn't."

"Do you remember exactly what I said, Bunny?"

Bunny smiled. "Yes. You said if I knew as much about this case as you were, I'd be in very grave danger. He was already in danger. That's why we had him arrested when we saw how desperate Mc-Bain was getting. He wasn't safe for a moment from our clever friend."

"But why didn't you tell us we could have pretended—we didn't need to make him feel like a worm of the dust?"

"You couldn't have pretended," Michael leaned over and kissed the tip of her nose; "you have a very nice face but it's as open as a clock. Don't look so bitter. That's a compliment. And Bunny's no actress. Anyway—you trusted Mc-Bain and he could see it. That was a safeguard. I'd have had to tell you to beware of him, and he'd have got it. Too big a risk. If I could keep you all hating each other it was much safer."

Duncan looked across at Michael. "I haven't said 'Thank you' properly," he said quietly. "I don't seem to be able to. Perhaps Edgar will when . . . he gets better. He's my only brother. You know how I feel."

Romance

SOMETHING in his voice made Tuck bite her lip and swallow hard. Since that dreadful night the tears seemed very near the brimming point. Duncan . . .

"You know," he said more lightly, "I never could figure how you got untied and got that . . . at Mc-Bain, just as you did. It sounded impossible to me. So last night I dropped a knife into my pocket, got one of the boys to lie me to a ring in the gym and twisted about trying to get loose. It took a long time, but I did it. I was tied only with heavy cord. Those broad bands of bandage certainly must have been the very devil to cut."

Michael's jaw tightened. "They were," he said grimly. "It took a million years and then my wrists were numb. I had to wait for the blood to get to them, standing there watching him, afraid he'd notice what I'd done. The binding about the ankles wasn't so bad, crunched there as I was; but the awful part was getting the knife out of my pocket without rattling coins, and getting the thing open with cramped fingers."

"It sounds like part of a nightmare," Bunny said with a shudder.

Duncan drew a deep breath and straightened in his chair. He looked across at Bunny, and the blue eyes held the gray ones for a long moment.

"Oh, dear," Tuck sighed. "To think it has come to this. All the mystery dissipated as . . . what was it you said, Michael? As the dew fleeth before the coming of the sun, and I said after, which is right. There's nothing left but the love part, and that's so overdue nowadays." She propped her round elbows on the table and brushed her honey-colored curls out of her big brown eyes. She fell silent, musing.

Agamemnon came into the room majestically. He put his paws up on Michael's chair and his chin was duly tickled and his whiskers pulled. He got down and stalked over to Tuck.

Charlotte Jean came in for the empty plates. As she put her hand down in front of Tuck the sun gleamed for an instant on a great pink pearl whose near-authentic luster almost put to shame the sparkle in her eyes as Tuck looked up.

Tuck gasped. "Why, Charlotte Jean Soames! Isn't that an engagement ring?"

"Yes'm, Mrs. Forrester," Charlotte Jean said with a fiery blush. "Ain't it beautiful?"

"My sainted shoe buttons," Michael looked at the ring. "Higgins has wonderful taste. Congratulations, Charlotte Jean. Best wishes and all that, but I hope you decide not to get married for twenty-five years."

"Oh, Mr. Forrester, don't say that, sir. And it ain't Higgins after all, sir."

"Not Higgins?" Tuck said in bewilderment. "Then who . . . who on earth is it?"

Charlotte Jean blushed again and straightened the silver. "I owe it all to you," she said. "It's Donovan, Mrs. Forrester, ma'am. Mr. Hall was married."

THE END

On the RADIO CHAINS

Where to Find Them on the Dial:
 KEX, Portland, 1180; KFI, 640, Los Angeles; KGA, 1470, Spokane; KGO, 790, San Francisco; KGW, 620, Portland; KJR, 570, Seattle; KNX, 1050, Los Angeles; KOA, 830, Denver; KOIN, 940, Portland; KOMO, 930, Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1180, Salt Lake.

Wednesday

5:00—Frank and Archie, KJR; Sunset Show, KGO; Waring's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI.

5:30—Kelsey's Orch., KPO; We Present, KGO, KJR.

6:00—Star Theater, KSL, KOIN, KNX; Radio Guild, KOMO; Musical Soiree, KFI, KGW; Safety First, KPO.

6:30—Horse and Buggy Days, Hollywood Playhouse, KPO, KFI, KGW.

7:00—Miller's Orch., KNX, KSL, KOIN; Kyser's Program, KGO, KGW; KFI; Sheld's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX.

7:30—Burns and Allied, KNX, KOIN, KSL.

8:00—Waring's Orch., KPO; Johns Presents, KGO, KJR, KEX; Amos and Andy, KNX, KOIN, KSL.

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

8:30—Sketch, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Quiz Program, KGO, KJR, KEX; Avalon Time, KPO, KFI, KGW.

9:00—Al Pearce, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Fred Allen, KPO, KGW, KFI; Beyond Reasonable Doubt, KGO, KEX, KJR.

9:30—Noble's Orch., KGO, KEX; News, KJR.

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

10:30—Heidt's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Ravazza's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW.

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

Thursday

5:00—Rhythm Factory, KPO, KGW; Frank and Archie, KJR; Aurand's Orch., KOIN.

5:30—Strings at Sundown, KGO, KEX, KJR; Army Band, KPO, K.W.

6:00—Major Bowes, KEX, KOIN, KSL; Good News of 1940, KPO, KFI, KGW.

6:30—Town Meeting, KGO, KEX, KJR.

7:00—Workshop, KOIN; Music Hall, KPO, KFI.

7:30—Sports Huddle, KNX, KOIN; Wynman, KGO; News, KSL.

8:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KFI; Morgan's Orch., KEX; Aloha Land, KGO; Amos and Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

8:15—Duchin's Orch., KNX; Morgan's Orch., KGO; I Love a Mystery, KPO, KGW, KFI.

8:30—Symphony Hour, KPO, KGW, KJR.

KFI; Ask-It-Basket, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Radio Guild, KGO.

9:00—Strange As It Seems, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Sketch, KGO, KEX, KJR.

9:30—Those We Love, KPO, KFI, KGW; Owen's Orch., KSL; Auld's Orch., KGW; Heidt's Orch., KGO; Operetta Series, KNX, KOIN; News, KJR.

10:00—News Reporter, KPO, KGW, KFI; Foster's Orch., KGO, KJR; News, KSL, KOIN, KNX, News, KOIN.

10:15—Noble's Orch., KGW; Concert Hall, KPO; Deutch's Orch., KOIN.

10:30—Ravazza's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; Nottingham's Orch., KGO, KEX; Ted Flo-Rito, KSL, KOIN, KNX.

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

Radio Highlights

By Associated Press (Pacific Standard Time)
 New York, Jan. 3.—The Dies committee investigation of un-American activities and whether it should be continued will be discussed at this week's America's Town Meeting on WJZ-NBC at 8:30 p.m. tomorrow.

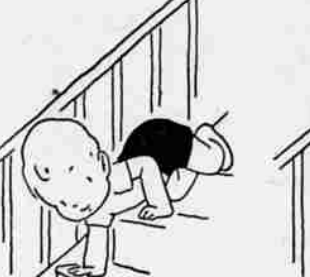
In a half-hour broadcast, just

THE STAIRS TO BED

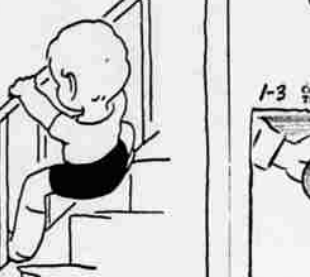
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



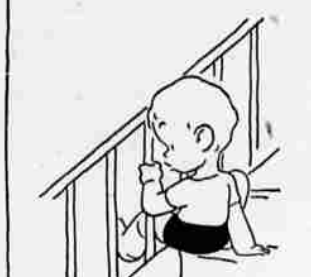
STARTS UP BED, STOPPING ON STAIRS AS USUAL TO PLEAD FOR SITTING UP A LITTLE LONGER



TELLS HIMSELF THAT ANYWAY HE DIDN'T SAY HOW HE WAS TO GO UP, AND TRIES CRAWLING UP ON HANDS AND KNEES, BACKWARDS



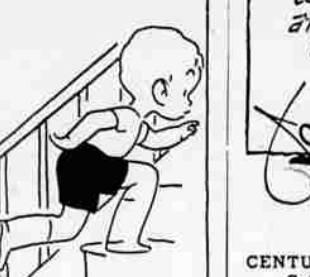
GOES BACK TO FOOT OF STAIRS AND WORKS HIS WAY UP ALONG RAILING WITHOUT TOUCHING FOOT TO STAIRS



ASSURES MOTHER, WHO HAS ASKED ABOUT HIS PROGRESS, THAT HE IS ON HIS WAY, AND TRIES TO EXTRICATE LEG THAT HAS SLIPPED THROUGH RAILING



GETS LEG OUT AND TRIES TO PULL HIMSELF REST OF WAY ALONG BANISTER, BUT FINDS HIMSELF GOING DOWN INSTEAD OF UP, AND LANDS IN A HEAP AT FOOT OF STAIRS



HEARS FATHER RUMBLING IN TO ACTION, AND WASTES NO MORE TIME

(Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Knows the Answer!



SO THAT'S TH' BABY ME AN' TOM'S GOT TO FLY OVER TH' OCEAN TO ELVANIA, HEY? SAY! WHERE'S ELVANIA, ANYWAY?



HERE.. IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC IS AN ISLAND, TEN TIMES THE SIZE OF HAWAII! DIVIDED BY TWO NATIONS.... BORGARIA ON THE EAST... ELVANIA ON THE WEST!



FRICION EXISTS BETWEEN THESE NATIONS THAT MAY LEAD TO SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS! BORGARIA HAS BEEN IMPORTING PLANES FROM ABROAD!



THAT'S WHY WE MUST WORK FAST TO SUPPLY ELVANIA WITH MILITARY SHIPS BEFORE... BEFORE WAR BREAKS OUT, EH, CHIEF?

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—"M'Gosh, How the Money Rolls In!"



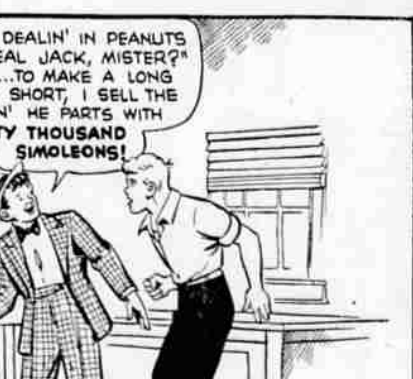
COUNT IT, BEN! THIRTY THOUSAND SNACKOVERS! WHAT?



Y'KNOW THAT LOT WE OWN NEXT TO THE GUSHER? A HUNDRED BY TWO HUNDRED? WELL, I SASHAY UP TO A BIG SUGAR PAPA TODAY AN'!



WHO? JIM DONAN OF THE LAND & SEA OIL COMPANY—JIM CRANE PUTS ME WISE TO HIM AN' I SAYS....



"YOU DEALIN' IN PEANUTS OR REAL JACK, MISTER?" WELL... TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, I SELL THE LOT AN' HE PARTS WITH THIRTY THOUSAND SIMOLEONS!

THE NEBBS—\$300,000 Worth of Blues



WELL, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE? FANNY, I JUST HAVEN'T GOT ANY



IN MY PRESENT STATE OF MIND I DON'T THINK I'D BETTER INDULGE IN NEW YEAR'S EVE WHOOPIE IT MIGHT ARTIFICIALLY STIMULATE MY FEELINGS FOR THE WHILE BUT I DREAD FACING THE NEW YEAR WITH NOT ONLY A TROUBLED MIND BUT A SUFFERING BODY



IF YOU THINK BECAUSE OF YOUR FOOLISHNESS THAT YOU'RE GOING TO PUT ME IN DRY DOCK NEW YEAR'S EVE YOU'VE GOT ONE MORE GUESS COMING!



IF YOU KNEW MY WHOLE STORY PERHAPS YOU WOULDN'T BLAME ME, SO MUCH—I WAS OFFERED \$300,000 FOR THE POWER PILL FORMULA AND I LOST MY HALF

Prison Camp Cook Grilled In Murder

Fort Towson, Okla., Jan. 3.—(P)—A prison camp cook was arrested today for questioning concerning the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Rogers and their 4 year old son, Dean, whose charred bodies were found in the ashes of their farm home Sunday night.

County Attorney Norman Norton said the arrest followed discovery of footprints of two men near the burned home.

Yule Tree Fire

Spokane, Jan. 3.—(P)—Fire which started from a candle near a Christmas tree caused \$1,000 damage today in the chapel of the House of the Good Shepherd here.

Rescue 22 From Swedish Vessel

Stockholm, Jan. 3.—(P)—It was learned today that the Swedish steamer Lars Magnus Rozelli, 1,955 tons, sank off the east coast of England several days ago.

Most of the 22 crewmen were saved by a Norwegian steamer. The fate of the rest was undetermined.

German Crew Rescued

Trondheim, Norway, Jan. 3.—(P)—The Norwegian passenger liner Queen Maud rescued the entire crew of 36 from the 8,000-ton German steamer Johann Schulte last night. The Johann Schulte lost her propeller Monday and sent an SOS.

announced for WEAF-NBC at 8:30 p.m. tomorrow "A Century of American Journalism," a drama, will be presented in the 100th anniversary celebration of the Memphis (Tenn.) Commercial Appeal.

Tonight: Europe—WABC-CBS 5:55, 8; MBS 6, 6:15; WEAF-NBC-East 8; WABC-CBS—7:15 Leo Press-

man on "Legislative Program of C.I.O."

Thursday: Europe—NBC 5 A.M.; WABC-CBS 5 p.m., 3:30 p.m.

Tom Cat Is Hero

Portland, Jan. 3.—(P)—A huge tom cat, "Trapper," holds a position of honor at Mrs. Lela R. Simpkins' home. A neighbor

investigated the cat's frantic pawing at a window and discovered a forgotten electric iron had started a fire.

Jersey City, N. J., Jan. 3.—(P)—Two sailors were asphyxiated and 24 others overcome today by fumes aboard the freighter American Robin at the Lehigh Valley railroad docks.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



1-3 Four Centuries of Mourning!

WOMEN OF MALTA HAVE WORN BLACK SINCE THE 16TH CENTURY-- AS A TOKEN OF THEIR SHAME FOR BEING TAKEN AS WIVES BY THE CRUSADING KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN!

FOUR-YOLK EGG-- found by Morris Zimulnick, New Brunswick, N.J.

WASHINGTON IN ROCK-- carved by nature at South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania...

CENTURIES OF MOURNING

Sole relic of the old native costume of Malta is the strange black headdress, known as the "Faldetta," still worn today by Maltese women as a token of their shame for being taken as wives by the Knights of St. John during the Crusades.

DETOUR TOWN

Because citizens of Dallas, N. C., were afraid that railroad whistles might keep them awake at night, they sacrificed the chance of becoming a leading industrial town. When railroad surveys were being made, Dallas was a large city. But the town fathers voted against the "nuisance" of a railroad, so the line was detoured three miles south to a hamlet known as Gastonia.

Today Gastonia is the largest combed yarn center in the world—and Dallas is a hamlet! Tomorrow: Soldier of Fortune.

RAILROAD WHISTLES-- KEPT DALLAS, N.C., FROM BECOMING AN IMPORTANT MILL TOWN!

CITIZENS COMPLAINED OF THE NOISE, SO THE RAILROAD WAS ROUTED 3 MILES SOUTH-- WHERE A TOWN OF 28,000 SPRANG UP! (Gastonia)

By HAL FORREST

By EDWIN ALGER

By SOL HESP