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The Channel-Crasher

By LESLIE BERESFORD

Author of "Chateau Sinister," "A Man from the Air Port," etc. etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

- JOHN CRAVEN:** A mysterious young man, from German-occupied France.
 - SIR BANTOCK DREW:** A wealthy industrialist with an important key-position in certain Government war work.
 - ROWENA DREW:** His niece, a young girl of attractive and virile personality.
 - WANDA FANSHAW:** A sophisticated young woman, who in other days, belonged to a Mayfair set.
 - BERNARD FANSHAW:** Her brother, a sinister individual.
- The character in this story are entirely imaginary. No reference is intended to any living person or to any public or private company. (Copyright: Publishing Arrangement with N.F.L.)

CHAPTER I STRANGER FROM THE SEA

Fog, dense as ever south-coast dwellers could remember. A heavy and stifling pall reported from the narrows at Dover right away to beyond historic Plymouth Hoe.

All along the coast, beneath that blanket of greyish white, thousands of resolute men were on their toes behind concrete defences, alert with ears and scientific instruments attuned for what warning might reach their hearing that way, eyes being blind.

The eyes of the man who came out of the sea at a lone spot of Sussex were blind indeed. Blinded with sea-brine and sheer physical exhaustion, quite apart from the fog. For a while, on the smooth wet sands left by the outgoing tide, he lay like a log, scarcely breathing, inert and spent.

It was some time before he moved and staggered on blindly landwards till the sand became shingle, and the shingle became barbed wire entanglements, and of strange devices to which he, half-dazed, gave no conscious attention. And by now what little of daylight had been filtering through the mist was suddenly gone.

The man's progress was made painfully and always more feebly because of exhaustion, and through a total blackness. One could hear, but not see, his frantic thrustings through and over obstacles, with an occasional muttered curse, and even at times—almost startlingly—a harsh, muted laugh of triumph.

Presently, though he could see nothing at all, he sensed that he had reached a wide open space, and that his sea-sodden shoes stood on fairly good metalled road. He grunted with a sense of relief and satisfaction. He could afford a breather here, and it was wise also to pause here, since a metalled road spear danger, and it also meant that here he must somehow try to get his bearings.

Before he could adjust his mind to the task, out of the blackness to his right came the muffled sound of a motor-engine. Exhausted though he was, he realized that the car was near, though it was being driven with caution. Before he could move off the raised centre of the road, the car seemed to be swinging round a corner, for the shaft of a headlight made a scythe-like sweep through the fog.

It was a marked light, but the glare of it was enough to blind him for an instant, so that he stood rather helplessly, a hand over his eyes, swaying with the fatigue and emotional strain through which he had been passing. There was a sudden grinding of brakes, and the car stopped. He heard a girl's voice, not frightened, but alarmed.

"Anyone there?"

In response, he made sounds, but neither to the girl nor to himself were they coherent.

THE GIRL IN THE CAR

The girl left the dark interior of the car and stepped towards him. The man could not see her, but he sensed her nearness by the sound of her footsteps.

The next instant his face was fully exposed in the glow of a cautiously-used electric torch. He heard the girl gasp.

"Why, what a state you're in! What is the matter?"

The torch revealed a sight calculated to shock anyone.

The man had a gash on one side of his head, and the blood must have dried on it. Otherwise, he guessed he must present the appearance of a half-drowned rat.

"The result of doing a little channel swimming," he explained laconically, causing her to gasp again in a singularly attractive way.

"Don't talk nonsense!" she remonstrated. "Channel-swimming isn't a pastime these days—"

"I didn't suggest it might be," he interrupted, a trifle brusquely. "All the same, one does it if needs must. And the bit of a boat in which I escaped from France yesterday let me down badly quite a longish way out from shore this side, so—if I wanted to dodge a watery grave—I just had to swim."

"You've come from France? Where did you land?"

He pointed back seawards in which he thought was the direction from which he had been toiling so painfully during the last half hour.

"Away down there."

"It's a wonder you're alive to tell the tale. Don't you know every inch of that shore is covered with—well, dangerous things against invasion?"

"How should I know?" he laughed weakly, and passed wet fingers over tired eyes which were burning in the tiny circle of torch-light as he added: "I haven't been in this country for years. And anyhow—"

"But I mustn't keep you talking. Get in the car and I'll drive you home."

"Why should you be bothered?" He sounded suddenly impatient, almost angry then controlling himself, went on: "If you would be so kind as to put me wise as to my whereabouts, if there's a town or village hereabouts, I think I shall be all right."

"How absurd you are!" She sounded almost angry, too. "Please get into the car and let me do as I say. My place—my uncle's place—isn't far away. You can't be allowed to wander about in that state. Besides—"

"Besides what?" he muttered questioningly.

"This is what's called a defence-zone, you know," she explained with a grim little smile, visible as an upward movement of her torch momentarily lit her small and very attractive face.

"That means," she went on, "people found wandering here in suspicious circumstances get short shrift. People distrust them and tell the soldiers of the police. You might be a spy—"

The discussion ended here with a dramatic and startling unexpectedness. Came, as she was speaking, the roar of a car being driven fast and approaching at speed. It sounded like a big car, and its speed—through a fog like this—suggested that some maniac must be at its wheel.

What happened next was like some nightmare flash caught by a movie-camera. Round the same corner that the girl's car had earlier negotiated with caution, a big limousine came at a speed that was mad considering the conditions.

Whoever drove, was only just in time to notice the girl's car and the two figures beside it on the inside of the road. The limousine swerved recklessly, its klaxon raving raucously. Fortunately the man on the road acted swiftly and with calm. He grasped the girl in his arms and leapt backward.

CHAPTER II A GOOD SAMARITAN

The limousine had vanished in the blackness, so that even the sound of it had dwindled to silence, before the man spoke.

"There goes a perfect little gentleman!" he said drily, and as he released the girl from his grasp she spoke a trifle sharply:

"Sorry to contradict you! That was the perfect little lady, I hate to say. As you see, she travels fast—and in more ways than one."

"I'd like to have a few words with her," the man answered fiercely.

"You may have the chance. I'll see what can be done. Meanwhile, you'll get into my car—"

She laid a small unglved hand on his arm as he still hesitated. Her voice was very warm now, warm and pleading and soft.

"You owe it to me," she said. "You owe it to me to come home, and let me see what can be done to make you more comfortable." Without indulging in heroics, I can say that you saved my life as well as your own, you know in that split second when you jumped. I can't forget that, if you do."

"I wouldn't let it worry you," he laughed, and suddenly relaxed, turning towards the open door of her car.

"I'm afraid I've no alternative but to accept your very kind offer," he added, weakly. "I'm feeling all in at the moment, I admit, and you are playing the Good Samaritan."

"She was already at the wheel, and she slumped into the seat on her left he shifted a little from the closer contact of his wet clothes with his body. She said nothing at the car moved forward slowly. They had reached what a sudden slight break in the wreaths of fog showed him to be some open gates and had swung in along a winding drive, fringed by undergrowth and trees before she spoke again.

"By the way," he heard her say. "I suppose I'd better introduce myself. I'm Rowena Drew. This place is known as Quarry Hill. It belongs to my uncle. Perhaps you've heard of Sir Bantock Drew?"

"I have. A pretty big man, isn't he? Industrialist, and so on, if I remember right."

"You certainly haven't left your memory in the Channel," she laughed. "Uncle is, I suppose a big man in his way, especially in his own days."

"I knew his name well some years ago, before I went to France—"

he stopped rather abruptly, as if biting off his words in case he should be tempted to say too much. His voice changed to a matter-of-fact tone as he next broke the silence.

"I'd best complete the introduction Miss Drew. My name's Craven—John Craven."

"Craven!" she repeated reflectively. "It doesn't quite fit you—if, indeed, it fits you at all."

"Why, what do you mean?" he asked sharply, almost suspiciously, staring towards her in the darkness.

She laughed gently.

"Well, considering the way you've got here from France, and by the look of you it must have been a tough job, you should be called anything but Craven."

"Oh, that!" he laughed, too. "It's surprising what one can do in an emergency," he observed casually. "It's not a question of pluck or being Craven. I think, at rock bottom, every man has the complete jitters when he's threatened with the worst. I don't believe for a moment if he finds a real test of his courage if he finds a way to safety. No it's just the sheer drive of grim necessity. We can all do more than we imagine when we must."

The winding drive here came abruptly to an end, the car headlights showing a massive portal set in the facade of what Craven recognized to be a fine country house of some age and much dignity.

A few minutes later he stood in a spacious entrance-hall furnished sparsely as a lounge, and artistically lit with orange-shaded lamps. An immense open gate had a log fire burning attractively, increasing the sense of warmth.

IN THE LAPS OF THE GODS
Rowena Drew wasted no time. She spoke rapidly to a portly man-servant and things began to happen. Craven found himself installed in a chair near the log fire. The manservant brought hot whiskey and, as he sipped it, Rowena examined the wound on his head, an elderly housekeeper bringing hot water to cleanse it and a supply of first-aid bandages.

"This is something I ought to be able to do," Rowena told him as her deft fingers got to work. "I've had training in nursing. In fact at one time I had visions of being a nurse, only—well certain things happened and I had to come here to look after my uncle. I often tell him that I'd far sooner look after a whole ward full of troublesome hospital patients than run a house like this for such an obstinate man as he is."

It was not really till now that John Craven was able to take real stock of his unexpected hostess. Out in the fog and darkness of the night she had been little more than a very charming voice and that intriguingly faint aroma of perfume. Now he was candidly admitting to himself that she was more than good to the eyes.

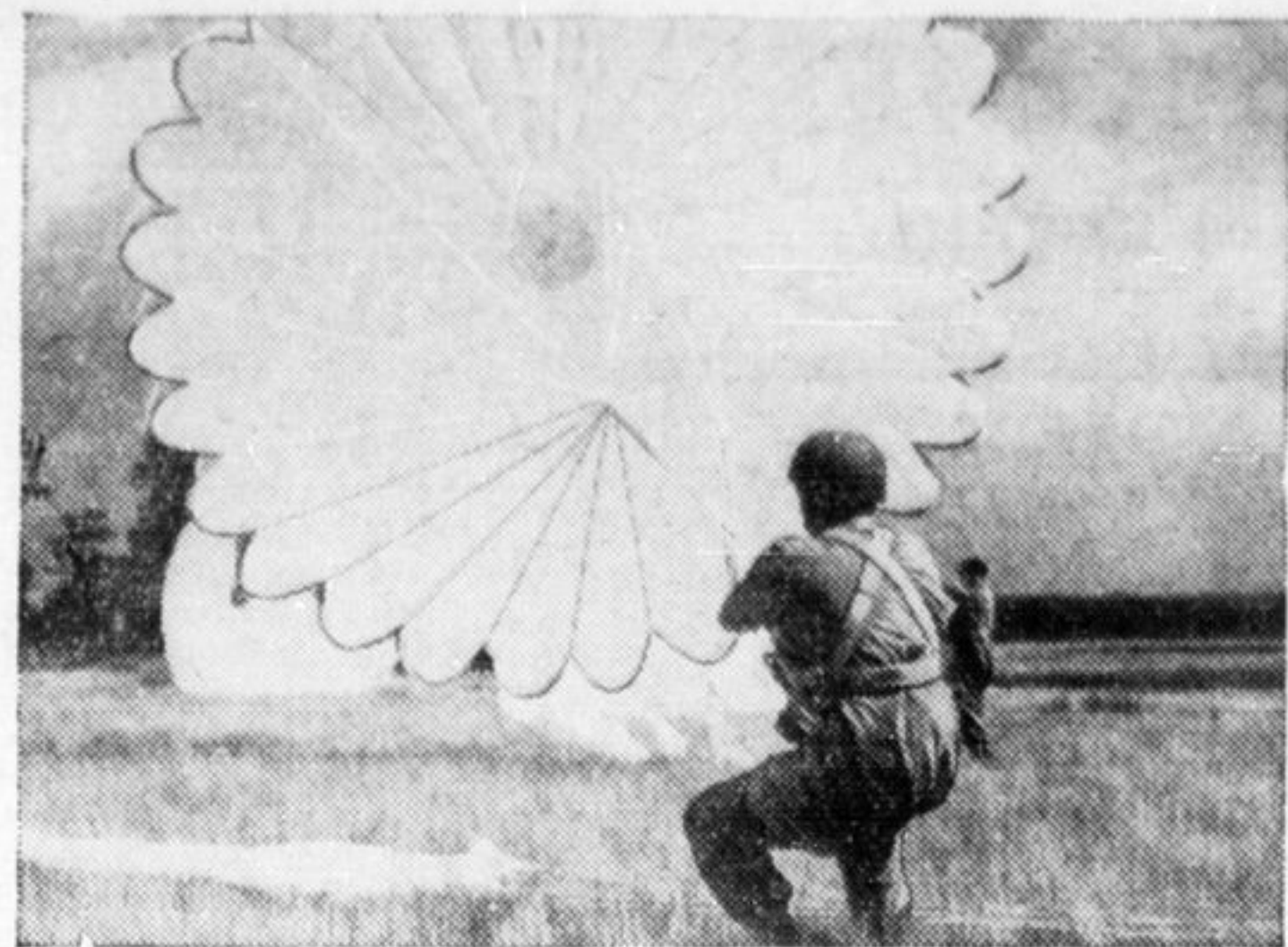
She had red-gold hair and the exquisite skin which goes with it. Her eyes might have been blue or just merely dark, he wasn't sure which. They were frank, friendly, and unaf-

"I'm warnin' ye, pardner, it's just too bad for anybody who sticks his nose into my business."

"Why so?"

"I make humburger cheese and pepper." — New Humorist.

Training Paratroops: Volunteer Shock Troops



Parachute troops constitute a powerful surprise factor and are usually employed in conjunction with airborne or mechanized troops in the main ground effort or in the rear of the enemy lines. They are armed for their specific task with weapons and equipment dropped on their landing area. Paratroop training, by R. A. F. instructors of Army Co-operation Command, a highly specialized undertaking is done first by synthetic ground apparatus and later from static balloons and planes. Special P.T. courses ensure all round physical fitness, co-ordination and mental alertness. Picture shows—Paratroops controlling their chute after a landing drop.

TEN YEARS AGO IN TIMMINS

From data in the Porcupine Advance Files

Despite the occasional downpours of rain and the generally unfavourable weather the annual tag day of the Timmings Salvation Army proved a success ten years ago. A little more was netted from this event than secured the year before and this was considered as specially pleasing. Adjutant Jones desired to thank the citizens for their generous response. The annual tag day, notwithstanding the wet day, brought results a little higher than the previous year, he said. The ladies of the Army spent the day and the greater part of the evening in the work of tagging and their patience and courage were responsible for part of the success. The other part of the success was due to the fact that the public appreciated the good work being carried on by the Salvation Army. The proceeds of the annual tag day went to the funds for the carrying on of the welfare work of the Army.

One of the busiest spots in town ten years ago was the tax collectors' office. Each day that week there had been a long line-up at the wicket, and some times the line stretched out into the street. Tuesday, May 30th, 1933, being pay-day, the crowd paying taxes was a large one, and next day the crush was even greater. June 1st, 1933, being the last day for paying taxes without the five per cent penalty added, there was a general rush that week to save an honest dollar by avoiding the penalty on the first half of the year's taxes. Taxes that year appeared to have been coming in very well in view of the general conditions. As it had been customary to allow a day or so grace before adding the penalty it would appear to be good policy to pay the first instalment of taxes that week if the matter had been overlooked. The penalty was usually large enough to be worth saving.

ected in their gaze. She had a small mouth, which had strength and character. There was breeding in every inch of her, Craven told himself. Altogether he was extremely fortunate in having crossed her path. Under the influence of her sympathetic attention he was beginning to recover a sense of comfort and well-being, although his wet clothes had begun to give off steam.

"I won't say it improves your appearance," he heard her warm voice saying with a laugh. "But at least, it makes you look interesting, and the wound—which luckily isn't as bad as at first I thought it was—should heal nicely."

"Meantime," she went on, "I'm going to hand you over to Maddocks—he's our butler. They're getting a bath ready for upstairs and—of course you'll need some dry clothing. You're nowhere near uncle's build, so nothing of his is likely to fit. But uncle has a secretary—"

Peter Sayers—who stays here, though he's away just now. Maddocks is going to raid Peter's wardrobe. I will take responsibility for that."

"Look here, you know, I simply can't put everyone here to so much trouble," the other protested, suddenly rising to his feet. "I mean—for instance—this Peter Sayers of your might take the strongest exception to his clothes being worn by some fellow he's never even seen. I know I should if I were in his place."

"Peter would never object to anything I do, Mr. Craven."

He eyed her dourly, then with some warmth of admiration in those hard weary eyes of his. He had to laugh again.

"I can quite believe it, Miss Drew. I should feel just that way about you myself—"

"Then leave it all to Maddocks, but don't dally. You've been too long in those wet clothes, and—as you positively refuse to be invalided in bed—"

"I most certainly do refuse—"

"Then—when you're changed you'll find me down here, waiting to hear all about your channel-crashing effort, and what you've been doing over there in France, and anything else thrilling about your mysterious self!"

"Your mysterious self!" The words echoed in Craven's ears as he moved slowly down the fire stairs across the hall to the staircase. If she only knew... (To be Continued)

Al. Shaw Explains He is Actually Al. Proctor

A letter in The Kirkland Lake Northern News last week explains that the gentleman who has been more or less widely known in Timmings and Kirkland Lake as "Al Shaw," is in reality "Al Proctor." Had he let this fact be known sooner it would have saved A. L. Shaw, clerk-treasurer of Timmings, from some explanations when letters came to the Timmings town council, signed on behalf of the Young Communist Total War League, and bore the signature "Al Shaw," and councillors could not resist the humorous enquiry as to whether or not "Al Shaw" and "A. L. Shaw" were the same people. The reason given by Al Shaw or Al Proctor, or both, for explaining at this late date that Al Shaw is really Al Proctor is that Al Shaw was nominated as the Young-Communist Total War candidate for Temiskaming, while Al Proctor really wants to be the candidate, Al Shaw, or Al Proctor, or both, says that the name was adopted when he had no idea of running for political office. In the meantime Al Shaw, or Al Proctor, or both, suggests that he, or they, became so widely known as Al Shaw, that he forgot to use his real name at the time when he was nominated as candidate for the Federal Riding of Temiskaming. He further explains that now that the error has been called to his attention, he fears that unscrupulous politicians might well make use of the confusion of names to smear and discredit the programme for which he stands. He asks all and sundry now to use his right name, Al Proctor, and to make the matter plain as to who Al Proctor may be, he further asks that his pen name, Shaw be included in brackets for the time being, giving the name "Al (Shaw) Proctor."

It may interest Mr. Al (Shaw) Proctor to know that it is not alone the Young Communists who have had double names in this country though he is the first whose other name was so easy to pronounce. There was a gentleman here some years ago who gave the name of "Robinson," but the police at that time held that it was a name of seven syllables, the last two being "tisky."

was won by the Kiwanis-McIntyre team, 6 and 5.

Among the local and personal items in The Advance ten years ago are the following: "Mrs. P. B. Carson was called to North Bay this week owing to the illness there of her father, Mr. Berry, formerly of Haileybury." "Mrs. J. B. Pare left this (Thursday) morning for a visit to England." "Mrs. J. W. Fogg was called to her old home at Portland, Maine, this week owing to the death of her sister." "Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Hamilton, of Toronto, visited friends in Timmings last week." "H. Charlebois returned home last week after spending several months at the Beattie Mine, Quebec, where he was engaged in the construction work at that new mine." "S. P. Baker, travelling passenger agent of the Canadian National Railways, with headquarters at North Bay, was a visitor to Timmings last week on business."

Another one used the easily pronounced one of Brown, but his other name was as hard to write or speak as "It-skin-koffsky."

Plague of Worms Reported from Temiskaming Area

Reports from New Liskeard say that there is a plague of cutworms in the Temiskaming area, though prompt measures are being taken to deal with the pest. From different sections of the Temiskaming area there come reports of the pest of worms, and specialists at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph have identified them as a species of cutworms. One of the mysterious points about the invasion of the cutworms is the early time of the season at which they have made their appearance. It is thought that perhaps scarcity of their food in other parts of the province has driven them North so early in the year. Prompt measures have been taken to deal with the pests and one of the natural conditions against them will be the cold nights in the North, as they are seriously affected by the cold. Among other places where the cutworms have been reported is the golf course at New Liskeard. The Ontario Dept. of Agriculture representative at New Liskeard has recommended a method of destroying the larvae of the cutworms. The use is recommended of a mixture of twenty-five pounds of bran and one pound of paris green in two and a half gallons of water. The bran and paris green are mixed dry, and the water added while the mixture is being stirred. This "bait," it is said, has little value on cold nights, as the pests do not like cold weather and apparently keep on the move on occasions when the weather is cold and do not stop to feed. Indeed, some farmers with experience in the matter, suggest that cold weather alone will help considerably in killing off the cutworms.

WOULDN'T DARE

Wife: "Do you think the mountain air would disagree with me?"
Hubby: "I doubt if it would dare, my dear." — Blairmore Enterprise.

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