

stay here. You can take the pistol,

and you'll have a fair chance of get-

ting through. I'll grub wood for our

camp meanwhile, and you can bring

"And if the wolves come, or if help

didn't come in time," Lennox whis-

pered, passion-drawn for the first

time, "who would pay what we owe to

But her life counts-first of all."

"I know it does-but mine doesn't

count at all. Believe me, you two.

I'm speaking from my own desires

when I say I don't want to make the

through alone. There are the wolves,

and maybe Cranston too-the worst

wolf of all. A woman can't mush across those ridges four days without

food, without some one who loves her

and forces her on! Neither can she

stay here with me and try to make

green branches burn in a fire. She's

got three little pistol balls-and we'd

all die for a whim, Oh, please,

But Dan leaped for his hand with

glowing eyes. "Listen, man!" he cried,

"I know another way yet. I know

more than one way; but one, if we've

got the strength, is almost sure. There

is an ax in the kitchen, and the blade

"I'll cut a limb with my jackknife

for the handle. There will be nails

in the ashes, plenty of them. We'll

make a rude sledge, and we'll get you

Lennox seemed to be studying his

wasted hands. "It's a chance, but it isn't worth it," he said at last. "You'll

have fight enough without tugging at

a heavy sled. It will take all night

"The Thing Bert Cranston Burned

the House Down to Destroy."

to build it, and it would cut down

your chances of getting out by pretty

near half. Remember the ridges,

"But we'll climb every ridge-be-

Snowbird told him, overpowering

Lennox

sides, its a slow, down grade most of

the way. Snowbird-tell him he must

him with her enthusiasm. And Dan

shook his shoulders with rough hands,

warned. "I'm a bag of broken bones."

to the you in," Dan Falling replied.

"Before, I've bowed to your will; but

this time you have to bow to mine,

I'm not going to let you stay here and

die, no matter if you beg on your

knees! It's the test-and I'm going

He meant what he said. If mortal

strength and sinew could survive such

nothing in these words to suggest the

physical weakling that both of them

had known a few months before, The

eyes were enrnest, the dark face in-

tent, the determined voice did not

"Dan Failing speaks!" Lennox re-

plied with glowing eyes. He was re-calling another Dan Failing of the

dead years, a boyhood hero, and his

remembered voice had never been

more determined, more masterful than

"And Cranston didn't get his pur-

pose, after all." To prove his words,

Dan thrust his hand into his inner

cont pocket. He drew forth a little,

tlat package, half as thick as a pack

of cards. He held it up for them to

see. "The thing Bert Cranston burned

the house down to destroy," he ex-

plained. "I'm learning to know this

a test, he would succeed. There was

"I'll tote you down there if I have

"You're hurting, boy!"

to bring you through,"

waver at all.

this he had just heard,

do it.

isn't worth it," he said at last.

"Likely dulled with the fire-"

will still be good."

out too."

Snowbird would never make it

Cranston?

CHAPTER II-Continued. -19-

The thought sobered and halted her. She glanced once at the dark face of her companion. Dan couldn't understand the strange light that suddenly leaped to her eyes. Perhaps she herself couldn't have explained the wave of tenderness that swept over herwith no cause except the look in Dan's carnest gray eyes and the lines that cut so deep. Since the world was new, It has been the boast of the boldest of men that they looked their Fate in the face. And this is no mean looking. For fate is a sword from the darkness, a power that reaches out of the mystery, and cannot be classed with sights of human origin. It burns out the eyes of all but the strongest men. Yet Dan was looking at his fate now, and his eyes held straight.

They wasked together down to the ruined house, and the three of them sat silent while the fire burned red. Then Lennox turned to them with a half-smile.

"You're wasting time, you two," he said. "Remember, all our food is gone. If you start now, and walk hard, maybe you can make it out."

There are several things to first," Dan answered simply.

"I don't know what they are. It isn't going to be any picnic, Dan. A man can travel only so far without food to keep up his strength, particularly over such ridges as you have to cross. will be easy to give up and die. It's the test, man; It's the test.

"And what about you?" his daugh-

"Oh, I'll be all right. Besides-it's the only thing that can be done. I can't walk, and you can't carry me on your backs. What else remains? I'll stay here—and I'll scrape together enough wood to keep a fire. Then you can bring help."

He kept his eyes averted when he talked. He was afraid for Dan to see them, knowing that he could read the lie in them

"How do you expect to find woodin this snow?" Dan asked him. "It will take four days to get out; do you think you could lie here and battle with a fire for four days, and then four days more that it will take to come back? You'd have two choices: to burn green wood that I'd cut for you before I left, or the rain-soaked deadwood under the snow. You couldn't keep either one of them burning, and you'd die in a night. Besides-this is no time for an unarmed man to be alone in the hills."

Lennox's voice grew pleading, "Be sensible, Dan!" he cried. "That Cransion's got us, and got us right. I've only one thing more I care about -and that is that you pay the debt! I can't hope to get out myself. I say that I can't even hope to. But if you bring my daughter through-and when spring comes, pay what we owe to Cranston-Pil be content. Heavens, son-I've lived my life. The old pack leader dies when his time comes, and so does a man."

His daughter crept to him and sheltered his gray head against her breast. "I'll stay with you, then," she

"Don't be a little fool, Snowbird," he urged. "My clothes are wet already from the melted snow. It's too long a way-it will be too hard a fight, and children-I'm old and thred out. I don't want to make the try-hunger and cold; and even if you'd stay here and grub wood, Snowbird, they'd find us both dead when they came back in n week. We can't live without food, and work and keep warm-and there isn't a fiving creature in the hills." "Except the wolves," Dan reminded

"Except the wolves," Lennox echoed. "Remember, we're unarmedand they'd find it out. You're young, Snowbird, and so is Dan-and you two will be happy. I know how things are, you two-more than you know yourselves-and in the end you'll be happy. But me-I'm too tired to make the try. I don't care about it enough. I'm going to wave you goodby, and smile, and lie here and let the cold come down. You feel warm in a little while-"

But she stopped his lips with her And he bent and kissed it. "If anybody's going to stay with you," Dan told them in a clear, firm volce, "It's going to be me. But aren't

any of the cabins occupied?" You know they aren't," Lennox answered. "Not even the houses beyond the North Fork even if we could get across. The nearest help is over sev-

"And Snowbird, think! Haven't any supplies been left in the ranger sta-

"Not one thing," the girl told him. You know Cranston and his crowd robbed the place last winter. And the telephone lines were disconnected when the rangers left."

"Then the only way is for me

mountain breed, Lennox. I kept it in my pocket where I could fight for it,

Cranston had been mistaken, after all, in thinking that in fear of himself Dan would be afraid to keep the packet on his person, and would cravenly conceal it in the house. He would have been even more surprised to know that Dan had lived in constant hope of meeting Cranston on the ridges, showing him what it contained, and fighting him for it, hands to hands. And even yet, perhaps the day would come when Cranston would know at last that Snowbird's words, after the fight of long ago, were true,

The twillight was falling over the snow, so Snowbird and Dan turned to

the toll of building a sled. The snow was steel-gray in the moonlight when the little party made their start down the long trail. Their preparations, simple and crude as they were, had taken hours of ceaseless labor on the part of the three. The ax, its edge dulled by the flame and handle burned away, had been cooled in the snow, and with one sound arm, Lennox had driven the hot nails that Snowbird gathered from the ashes of one of the outbuildings. The embers of the house itself still glowed red in the darkness

Dan had cut the green limbs of the trees and planed them with his ax. sured a piece of comparatively dry The sled had been completed, handles attached for pushing it, and a piece of fence wire fastened with nails as a rope to pull it. The warm mackinaws of both of them as well as the one blanket that Lennox had saved from the fire were wrapped about the old frontlersman's wasted body-Dan and Snowbird hoping to keep warm by the exercise of propelling the sled. cept for the dull ax and the halfempty pistol, their only equipment was a single charred pot for melting snow that Dan had recovered from the ashes of the kitchen.

The three had worked almost in Words didn't help now. They wasted no sorely needed breath. But they did have one minute to talk when they got to the top of the little ridge that had overlooked the house.

"We'll travel mostly at night," Dan told them. "We can see in the snow, and by taking our rest in the daytime, when the sun is bright and warm, we can save our strength. We won't have to keep such big fires then-and at night our exertion will keep us as warm as we can hope for. Getting up all night to cut green wood with this dull ax in the snow would break us to pleces very soon, for remember that we haven't any food. I know how to build a fire even in the snowpecially if I can find the dead, dry heart of a rotten log-but it isn't any fun to keep it going with green wood, We don't want to have to spend any more of our strength stripping off wet bark and hacking at saplings than we can help; and that means we'd better do our resting in the heat of the day. After all, it's a fight against starvation more than anything else,"

"Just think," the girl told them, reproaching herself, "if I had shot straight at that wolf today, we could have gone back and got his body. It might have carried us through."

Neither of the others as much as looked surprised at these amazing regrets over the lost, unsavory flesh of some dreadful, unburdened journey in a wolf. They were up against reall-tles, and they didn't mince words. Dan smiled at her gently, and his true, great shoulder leaned against the

The ever-present manifestations of was entirely clear. That clear, cold wild life that had been such a delight mountain air was a perfect telephone to Dan in the summer and fall were system, conveying a message distinctquite lacking now. The snow was ly, no matter how faintly. There trackless. Once they thought they were no tall buildings or cities to dissaw a snowshoe rabbit, a strange turb the ether waves. And all three shadow on the snow, but he was too of them knew at the same instant it far away for Snowbird to risk a pis- was not exactly the cry they had tol shot. The pound or two of flesh heard before. would be sorely needed before the journey was over, but the pistol cartridges might be needed still more. It. In some dim way, it had lost the she didn't let her mind rest on certain strange quality of despair it had held possibilities wherein they might be before. It was as if the pack were needed. Such thoughts stole the courage from the spirit, and courage was wolf was calling to another with a essential beyond all things else to dreadful sort of exultation. It was an bring them through.

As the dawn came out, they all stood still and listened to the wolf sounded immediately behind them. pack, singing on the ridge somewhere

behind them. the more shrill cry of the females, the yapping of the cubs, or the low, clear three was hoping against hope in his G-below-middle-C note of the males.

"If they should cross our tracks-Lennox suggested. "No use worrying about that now-

bright in a clear sky. But still they again. trudged on. In spite of the fact that the sled was heavy and broke through they had made good time since their departure. But now every step was n pronounced effort. It was the dreadful beginning of fatigue that only food and warmth and rest could

rectify. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Oldtime Sleeping Couches. The ancients slept on skins, but later beds were made of rushes, beather and straw. The Romans were the first to use feathers to make their beds more comfortable. Heliogabalus, 218 B. C., is credited with having employed air cushlons, and air beds were used generally in the Sixteenth cen-

Some Very Old Trees Yew trees grow to a great age. Once Those at Torentain's abbey, Yorkshire, the sled. England, were old in 1132. California "I've h

The Voice of the Pack

By EDISON MARSHALL

CHAPTER II-Continued.

"We'll rest now," Dan told them at en o'clock, "The sun is warm enough to that we won't need much of a fire. And we'll try to get five hours' sleep." "Too long, if we're going to make it out," Lennox objected.

"That leaves a workday of nineteen tours," Dan persisted. "Not any too Ittle. Five hours it will be."

He found where the snow had drifted against a great, dead log, leaving he white covering only a foot in lepth on the lee side. He began to scrape the snow away, then hacked at he log with his ax until he had prowood from its center. They all stood preathless while he lighted the little alle of kindling and heaped it with green wood-the only wood procurible. But it didn't burn freely. It smoked fitfully, threatening to die out,

and emitting very little heat.

But they didn't particularly care. The sun was warm above, as always n the mountain winters of southern Dregon. Snowbird and Dan cleared spaces beside the fire and slept. Lenaox, who had rested on the journey, ay on his sled and with his uninjured arm tried to back enough wood from the saplings that Dan had cut to keep the fire burning.

At three they got up, still tired and sching in their bones from exposure. Iwenty-four hours had passed since they had tasted food, and their unreplenished systems complained. There is no better engine in the wide world than the human body. It will stand more neglect and abuse than the finest steel motors ever made by the hands of craftsmen. A man may fast many fays if he lies quietly in one place and keeps warm. But fasting is a feadly proposition while pulling sledges over the snow.

Dan was less hopeful now. His face what his words did not. The lines cleft deeper about his lips and eyes; and Snowbird's heart ached when he tried to encourage her with a smile. It was a wan, strange smile that couldn't quite hide the first sickness of despair.

The shadows quickly lengthenedsimply leaping over the snow from the fast-falling sun. The twilight deepened, the snow turned gray, and then, in a vague way, the journey began to partake of a quality of unreality. It was not that the cold and the snow and their hunger were not entirely real, or that the wilderness was no longer naked to their eyes. It was just that their whole effort seemed like

The first sign was the far-off cry of the wolf pack. It was very faint, They moved through a dead world. simply a stir in the eardrums, yet it

> They couldn't have told just why. even if they had wished to talk about running with renewed life, that each excited cry, too-not the long, sad song they had learned to listen for, It

They couldn't help but listen. No human ears could have shut out the It was a large pack. They couldn't sound. But none of them pretended make out individual voices-neither that they had heard. And this was the worst sign of all. Each one of the very heart; and at the same time, hoping that the others did not understand, For a long time, as the darkness deepened about them, the forests were not until we come to it," Dan told still. Perhaps, Dan thought, he had been mistaken after all. His shoulders The morning broke, the sun rose straightened. Then the chorus blared

The man looked back at the girl, smiling into her eyes. Lennox lay as the snow crust as they tugged at it, if asleep, the lines of his dark face curiously pronounced. And the girl, because she was of the mountains, body and soul, answered Dan's smile. Then they knew that all of them knew the truth. Not even an inexperienced ear could have any delusions about the pack song now. It was that oldest of wilderness songs, the huntingcry-that frenzied song of blood-lust that the wolf pack utters when it is running on the trail of game. It had found the track of living flesh at last,

"There's no use stopping, or trying to climb a tree," Dan told them simply. "In the first place, Lennox can't do it. In the second, we've got to take n chance-for cold and hunger can get up a tree where the wolf pack can't.' He spoke wholly without emotion more he tightened the traces of

"I've heard that sometimes the pack has trees thousands of years old in will chase a man for days without atthe Mariposa grove, and baobab trees tacking," Lennox told them, "It all in Africa are over four centuries old, depends on how long they've gone

without food. Keep on and try to for-Maybe we can keep 'em get 'em.

But as the hours passed, it became increasingly difficult to forget the wolf pack. It was only a matter of turning the head and peering for an instant into the shadows to catch a glimpse of one of the creatures. Their usual fear of men, always their first emotion, had given way wholly to a hunting cunning; an effort to procure their game without too great risk of their own lives. In the desperation of their hunger they could not remember such things as the fear of men. They spread out farther, and at last Dan looked up to find one of the gray beasts waiting, like a shadow himself, in the shadow of a tree not one hundred feet from the sled. Snowbird whipped out her pistol.

"Don't dare!" Dan's voice cracked out to her. He didn't speak loudly; yet the words came so sharp and commanding, so like pistol fire itself, that they penetrated into her consciousness and choked back the nervous reflexes that in an instant might have lost them one of their three precious shells. She caught herself with a sob. Dan shouted at the wolf, and it melted into the shadows.

"You won't do it again, Snowbird?" he asked her very humbly. But his meaning was clear. He was not as skilled with a pistol as she; but if her nerves were breaking, the gun must be taken from her hands. The three shells must be saved to the moment of utmost need.

"No," she told him, looking straight into his eyes. "I won't do it again." He believed her. He knew that she spoke the truth. He met her eyes with a half smile. Then, wholly without

warning, Fate played its last trump. Again the wilderness reminded them of its might, and their brave spirits were almost broken by the utter remorselessness of the blow. The girl went on her face with a crack of wood.



"Maybe We Can Keep Them Bluffed."

Her snow shoe had been cracked by her fall of the day before, when running to the fire, and whether she struck some other obstruction in the snow, or whether the cracked wood had simply given way under her weight, mattered not even enough for them to investigate. As in all great disasters, only the result remained. The result in this case was that her snowshoe, without which she could not walk at all in the snow, was irreparably broken.

"Fate has stacked the cards against us," Lennox told them, after the first moment's horror from the broken snowshoe.

But no one answered him. The girl. white-faced, kept her wide eyes on Dan. He seemed to be peering into the shadows beside the trail, as if he were watching for the gray forms that now and then glided from tree to tree. In reality, he was not looking for wolves. He was gazing down into his own soul, measuring his own spirit for the trial

that lay before him. The girl, unable to step with the broken snowshoe, rested her weight on one foot and hobbled like a bird with broken wings across to him. No sight of all this terrible fourney had been more dreadful in her father's eyes than this. It seemed to split open the strong heart of the man. touched her hand to his arm.

"I'm sorry, Dan," she told him. "You tried so hard--' Just one little sound broke from his

throat-a strange, deep gasp that could not be suppressed. caught her hand in his and kissed itagain and again. "Do you think I care about that?" he asked her. "I only wish I could have done more what I have done doesn't count. Just as in my fight with Cranston, nothing

Copyright, 1920, by Little, Brown & Co. counts because I didn't win. It's just fate. Snowbird. It's no one's fault, but maybe, in this world, nothing is ever anyone's fault." For in the twilight of those winter woods, in the shadow of death itself, perhaps he was catching glimmerings of eternal truths that are hidden from all but the most far-see-

ing eyes "And this is the end?" she asked him. She spoke very bravely.

"No!" His hand tightened on hers. "No, so long as an ounce of strength remains. To fight-never to give up may God give me spirit for it till I

And this was no idle prayer. His eyes raised to the starry sky as he spoke.

"But, son," Lennox asked him rather quietly, "what can you do? The wolves aren't going to wait a great deal longer, and we can't go on."

"There's one thing more-one more trial to make," Dan answered. thought about it at first, but it was too long a chance to try if there was any other way. And I suppose you thought of it too.

"Overtaking Cranston?"

"Of course. And it sounds like a crazy dream. But listen, both of you. If we have got to die, up here in the snow-and it looks like we had-what is the thing you want done worst before we go?"

Lennox's hands clasped, and he leaned forward on the sled. "Pay Cranston!" he said.

"Yes!" Dan's voice rang. "Cranston's never going to be paid unless we do it. There will be no signs of lacendlarism at the house, and no proofs. They'll find our bodies in the snow, and we'll just be a mystery, with no one made to pay. The evidence in my pocket will be taken by Cranston, some time this winter. If 1 don't make him pay, he never will pay, And that's one reason why I'm going to try to carry out this plan I've got.

"The second reason is that it's the one hope we have left. I take it that none of us are deceived on that point. And no man can die tamely-if he is a man-while there's a chance. I mean a young man, like me-not one who is old and tired. It sounds perfectly silly to talk about finding Cranston's winter quarters, and then, with my bare hands, conquering him, taking his food and his blankets and his snowshoes and his rifle, to fight away these wolves, and bringing 'em back here.'

"You wouldn't be barehanded," the girl reminded him. "You could have the pistol."

He didn't even seem to hear her. Tve been thinking about it. It's a long, long chance-much worse than the chance we had of getting out by straight walking. I think we could have made it, if the wolves had kept off and the snowshoe hadn't broken. It would have nearly killed us, but I believe we could have got out. That's why I didn't try this other way first. man with his bare hands hasn't much of a chance against another with a rifle, and I don't want you to be too hopeful. And of course, the hardest problem is finding his camp.

"But I do feel sure of one thing: that he is back to his old trapping line on the North Fork-somewhere south of here—and his camp is somewhere on the river. I think he would have gone there so that he could cut off any attempt I might make to get through with those letters. My plan is to start back at an angle that will carry me between the North Fork and our old house. Somewhere in there I'll find his tracks, the tracks he made when he first came over to burn up the house. I suppose he was careful to mix 'em up after once he arrived here, but the first part of the way he likely walked straight toward the house from his camp. Somewhere, if I go that way, I'll cross his trall-within 10 miles at least. Then I'll backtrack him to his camp."

"And never come back!" the girl

"Maybe not. But at least every thing that can be done will be done. Nothing will be left. No regrets. We will have made the last trial. I'm not going to waste any time, Snowbird. The sooner we get your fire built the better."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Make Love and Live Long. The act of love-making has a direct influence on the heart and blood, says a medical correspondent. It stimulates the working capacity of the former organ, and keeps it up to concert pltch. As a result, the blood circulates with greater strength, and every part of the body is accordingly strengthened. Love-making, moreover, has a very decided influence in stimulating the working of the liver. Patent medicines would have to go out of business to a considerable extent if the world were more generally given to the art of making love with genuine feeling. Perhaps the most striking proof of the immunity of lovers from one form of ill, viz., colds and chills, is afforded by the fact that a pair of Cupid's devotees will sit on a damp bench for hours and take no harm.

It is just as wise to watch your windings as it is to wind your watch.