

BELOW ZERO

A Romance of the North Woods



By
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SERVICE

"You're good!" he said. "You're good, you toad! Why don't you try to fight like a man? You've guts enough to try murder. Why don't you try it in the open? Why won't you let—" "Look here! I'm d—d if I'll let any added kid talk to me like this! I'm d—d if . . . Murder! Fight! Somebody trying to harm you and you're trying to hand the blame on me? That it? Now why in the name of heaven should I want to harm you?"

A quick warning flickered through John's anger. Roused as he was, Gorbels' craft had not deserted him. Frying, he was now, using the fertile field of high rage, when bars of caution are down, to discover what and how much John Belknap knew, and the boy drove back his temper and his contempt, striving to match cunning with cunning.

"I haven't the slightest idea," he said. "Not an idea to my back! But you don't want me here; you're trying to drive me out."

He thought a shadow of relief appeared in that face before him.

Gorbels let out a short breath of disgust.

"Drive you out!" he muttered, as though such an idea were the depth of absurdity. "Why, I haven't even remembered you were around the job a dozen times since you came in! But if you're not drunk, you're insane and there's room here for neither booze fighters nor madmen!"

"I'm fired, then?"

"Right now!"

John shrugged. "Your privilege," he said.

"And you'll get out of the company boarding house today?"

"Also your right."

"And out of Kampfest, too?"

"Steady, neighbor!" John's rage was passing; he was noting the anxiety in the other's tone now, as of one who presses rashly into a welcome opening.

"Little too far, that. I'm staying in town, Gorbels. Things have been quiet in Shoestring since I came here. That was my principal reason in coming. . . . I'll be in Kampfest, watching my step. If you try me again . . . in person, please!"

He went out without another word, closing the door firmly, and Paul Gorbels, standing there, eyes on the door, let a hand lift slowly to his chin, fingers fumbling with the flesh there.

He stood so for a long interval. Then swiftly, a bit unsteadily, he crossed the room and locked the door. Fists rammed into pockets, he paced the room while moisture pricked out in tiny pearls on his face.

Fear was riding the man now, fear and desperation. Not fear of the possibility that John Belknap might be able to prove a case against him through either Baxter or DeForest.

Another fear gnawed at him, had been grinding him for days, and something about John Belknap's attitude made him feel that the lad was not thinking wholly of his own safety. He had had the manner of one who knows more than he tells, of one who is waiting, with all confidence, for a tremendous moment. . . .

And Nat Bradshaw had been a bit too casual the last time he came. His eyes had betrayed a flicker of guile when he talked of the fire in the Richards barn; and another time he had come he had gone from this office to the hot-pond where John Belknap worked!

For years Paul Gorbels' conscience had not troubled him; he had taken what he could take, by fair means or foul, escaping detection but piling up in his own heart a cumulative burden of fear. He had not admitted that fear even to himself until lately, and then, like a festering wound, it had commenced to swell and throb. It would not let him keep his mind on his affairs during daylight; it would not let him sleep.

Other nights he had thought that pounding in his ears was the heavy beating of his heart; last night it had been like the fall of collective feet . . . thudding in awkward measure as men marched in lock-step! . . . Last

night . . . and young Belknap knew more than he had said. . . .

He halted in mid-room and looked about like one trapped. Then he went to his desk, opened a locked drawer, and slipped the pistol that lay there into his pocket. After a time he unlocked the door and went through the motions of functioning as a managing partner.

And over in Shoestring Ellen Richards was going through the motions of performing her daily tasks.

Evidence of strain was heavy upon her, a different sort of strain than that which had racked her when the man she now knew to be John Belknap came to her employ. Matters had eased in the woods; the Belknap & Gorbels operation on her railroad had slowed down on log production; her transportation facilities had been able to take care of both jobs handily; a reserve of logs was growing in her yard; the dark clouds which had hovered over her business affairs were seeming to lift.

But things had happened to her which robbed this turn of events of any joy; things which awakened her from sound sleep with heart racing, with a feeling of having called out in her dreams appealingly to the man who had come into her life and gone out of it again, leaving the job in order but life in chaos.

During waking hours she knew that she thought of John Belknap only with contempt, but at night, as she slept, he came to her in dreams, laughter mingling with the determination in his eyes, and she lived again those moments in the office at camp when she yielded impulsively to his arms, when she raised her face hungrily for his lips. . . .

Sweet, the dreams were! But she shuddered on waking. To surrender her heart to a man who had deceived her, who had sworn allegiance only to undermine her worldly possessions, was unthinkable. And yet that heart remained untractable. Her mind persuaded, argued, badgered, even stormed, in certain moments, but when the mind dropped into deep rest that heart went its forbidden way.

Yesterday the woman who kept her house had declared her ill. This morning the old bookkeeper had eyed her over the rims of his spectacles and said one word: "Peaked!"

He left his high stool and drew his spectacles down low on his nose again.

"Ellen, you're comin' down with something!" he declared. "Sakes, but you do look peaked! You better go home an' rest."

Home? To lie there in the room where she dreamed tenderly at night of a man who was her worst enemy? Home? To live again and again those moments which once had been sweet but which now, even in memory, whipped the heat of humiliation to her cheeks?

Not home! A girl can't stay in the theater of heart-break when her nerves are rubbed raw and drawn singing tight, can she?

"Tell the barn to hitch up the drivers," she said. "I'll have them take me out towards the Mad Woman. A day or two at Wolf's is what I need, I guess."

And so she went, a light pack-sack and snowshoes stowed behind her, eager to be afoot and trudging the dozen miles that lay between the end of this road and the trapper's camp.

CHAPTER XI

A mad day for Paul Gorbels was drawing to its close, with light snow falling outside.

He had changed to woods clothing at noon, intending to drive to one of the camps. But fear held him in town, that fear which grew with the hours.

Dusk now, and the approach of closing time. He sat brooding, planning how he could flee the country if

flight became necessary, torn between the fear of having to face a state's law if he remained and the fear of adding to suspicion if he left. . . . That suspicion might still be a fragment of his own imagination, a product of conscience. . . . He could not know. . . .

A cruiser came in, dropping his pack in the hallway. He had been to the northward for a fortnight, and Gorbels appeared to listen while the man made a brief report of his activity and his findings.

"Didn't expect you back so soon," Paul said.

"Nor would I've made it but for findin' old man Richards' cabin empty. Run on to him headed east with his outfit after wolves that are raiding the Caribou deer yard. I knew he'd camp over there until he'd got the wolves or used up all his tricks, so I moved my stuff down into his camp. It was closer to those descriptions, you see. I didn't have to spend most of my time goin' from camp to timber."

The mill whistle blew then; in the back office chairs scraped and feet sounded.

"Another day," Gorbels said. "Come in tomorrow and we'll go over this matter again."

The woodsman left.

Soon afterward a team pulled to a halt before the office, and the big man on the seat of the light sleigh kicked robes from about his feet and rose. Inside Gorbels strained forward, tense, waiting.

Knuckles fell on the panel. Gorbels wet his lips.

"Come in!" he said, unsteadily.

The knob turned and Nat Bradshaw's big bulk showed in the gloom.

"Oh!" he said. "You, Gorbels?"

"Hullo!" Gorbels said, fighting for his self-control. "Hullo, Nat! Just leaving. . . ."

The sheriff did not advance but stood there, saying nothing, sliding his hands into his pants pockets, feet spread, back against that door . . . an ominously blockading figure.

"Then I'm just in time," he said dryly. "I've come for you, Gorbels!"

"Me?"

"Yeah. You . . . finally!"—the word fell heavily.

No fancied corner now! No trap made up of the fabrics of gully imaginings was closing on Paul Gorbels. This was real.

"Why . . . why, what the devil are you driving at?" he demanded, rallying a show of bluster.

"Turn on your light and I'll read why."

Light! Light, with the sheriff standing there against the door, suspicious, ready for any emergency?

"They're burned out," he lied. "Fuse blew just before you drove up. . . . What do you mean—you'll read why?"

"I've got a warrant for you, Gorbels," the sheriff said slowly. "It's for arson."

He paused.

"Arson!" Gorbels' voice cracked.

"Yeah, Ain't a pleasant word, is it? Ain't a pleasant crime, neither. Had as murder, Gorbels. You overstepped yourself in your story. The university says the lad you put in the way of bein' killed hadn't been drinkin' for long. . . . Put on your hat and coat; we've got a drive to make."

"Look here, Nat! . . . Why, there's some mistake! There's some devilish mistake behind this! Arson? . . . Good G—d, Nat, you don't—"

"I don't aim to visit with you, Gorbels. Put on your coat!"

Bitterness was rising in the sheriff's heart, a contempt that must be voiced.

"I don't aim to visit with you. I've got you cold, Gorbels! For a long time you've fooled us all, but that's over now. I'm glad I'm sheriff of this county tonight to take back to my jail a firebug, a skunk!"

Lights danced before Paul Gorbels' eyes, though there were no lights. A roaring sounded in his ears. The mountain of doom was moving towards him, to overwhelm him, to blot him out; to smash his cupidity, his loves, his ambitions.

He turned, as if to tear open a window and jump, and a great hand caught his arm.

"No you don't! If I have to, I'll—"

The man shrank in the sheriff's clutch, tried to tear away. He made strange sounds in his throat as his trembling hand tugged at a hip pocket.

"Let me go, you fool!"

"No . . . you've gone: to the end of your rope, and if—"

The pistol came out. The stream of fire was short, barely the span of a man's hand, so closely was it held to the sheriff's breast. The report filled the room, and then, as Gorbels felt those stout fingers loosen on his arm, the sheriff drew a long, retching breath.

(Continued Next Week)

A tax by any other name is still a tax.



The Cook's Nook

Own Your Own Soda Fountain and Keep Your Family Cool and Happy

You can keep your family cooler than the proverbial cucumber ever dreamed of being, you can spring surprise refreshments at a moment's notice, you can let the children drink their energy foods right in their favorite beverages, and have some fun yourself turning out sodas, sodas and drinks just like the drug stores serve—if you own your own soda fountain! The equipment is simple, just what you already have on hand. A few nutmeats, a package of coconut, some cookies, some home-made foundation syrups and some attractive glasses—and there you are, ready for your patrons, who are sure to be steady customers! (And don't forget the straws to lend the professional touch.)

Store-Away Chocolate Sauce

If you want a chocolate sauce that will keep nicely, stored away in a jar in the refrigerator, try this: 1 1/2 sqs. chocolate 1/2 cup cold water 1 cup sugar 1 tbs. cornstarch Salt (pinch) 1/2 cup white corn syrup 1 1/2 cups hot water 1/2 tsp. vanilla Cut chocolate in pieces, add cold water, and cook until smooth. Mix sugar, cornstarch and salt together. Add to chocolate. Add the syrup, then pour in hot water and cook until smooth. Add vanilla last. This will be a smooth sauce on account of the syrup content; if you want mint flavor, add a teaspoon of mint essence to sauce. Use for ice cream topping.

Foundation Orangeade Syrup

Combine 1 1/2 cups orange juice, 2 cups white corn syrup and 1/3 cup lemon juice. Put in jar and store in ice box. Use as needed, allowing 1/4 cup syrup with ice and plain or charged water or gingerale for each serving.

Fruit Punch

1 cup orange juice 1/2 cup white corn syrup 2 additional cups orange juice 1/4 cup water 2 cups pineapple juice 1/3 cup lemon juice Gingerale Cook 1 cup orange juice, water and corn syrup together to make a heavy syrup. Cool. Keep syrup until ready to use. When ready to make punch mix other juices with the foundation syrup; add ice and gingerale (about 6 small bottles for this amount) just before serving.

Home-Made Ices Cool You Off

"Floats"—ice or ice cream floated on top a beverage—are popular in the home soda fountain. Making your own ices is simple if you know that the secret of quick-freezing and smooth mixture lies in not using too much sugar, which slows up freezing, and is responsible for grains. Learn the secret in this:

Grapefruit Ice

1 1/2 cups sugar 1/2 cup white corn syrup 1 1/2 cups water 6 tbsps. lemon juice 2 No. 2 can grapefruit (pulp and juice) Cook the sugar, corn syrup, and 1 cup of water to a soft ball (240° F.). Add lemon juice and water. Cool. Cut grapefruit segments into small pieces with scissors. Add to cooled syrup. Freeze. Yields 2 quarts.

Iced Chocolate

There are two ways to make iced chocolate. Use a foundation chocolate syrup, add to milk and ice and shake. Or (for 6 servings) mix 8 teaspoons cocoa, few grains salt, 1 tablespoon corn syrup, and 2 tablespoons sugar. Add 2 cups hot water, place over heat and boil 3 minutes, then add milk. Let heat to boiling, remove, cool and beat until frothy. Chill, add a teaspoonful whipped cream and serve. For Frosted Chocolate, add a ball of vanilla ice cream and beat until mixed. For Iced Mocha combine

equal parts of chilled coffee and chilled chocolate.

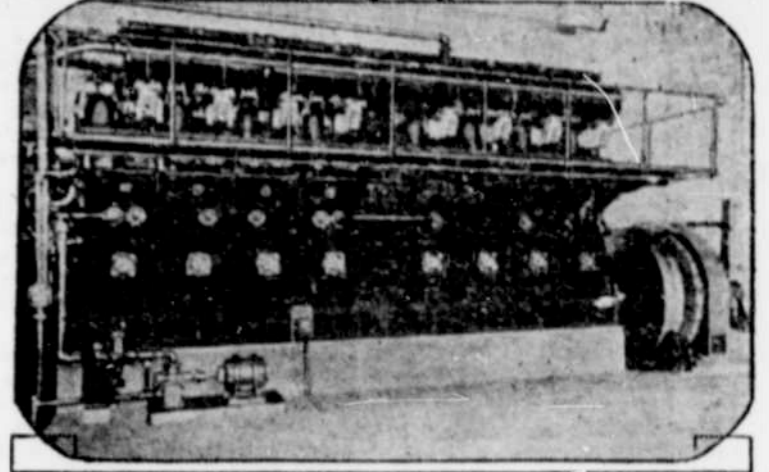
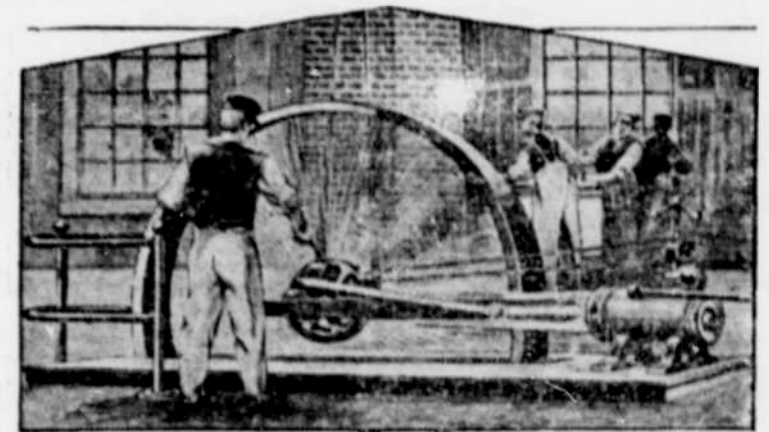
Ice-Box Cookies

If you have a "batch" of cookie dough in the ice box, ready to be baked at a moment's notice, your summer 'ades and punches will never be at a loss for a partner in refreshment! Extra good ones are made this way: Mix and sift together a cup of flour, a teaspoon baking powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Then add a cup of ground rolled oats, a half-package chopped dates and 1/4 cup chopped nuts. Cream a half-cup butter, add a cup of brown sugar to it gradually

then one beaten egg, and vanilla. Stir in dry ingredients, alternately with 1/2 cup milk. Pack the dough into butter cartons or deep pan lined with wax paper. Chill for at least 3 hours. When ready to bake, cut dough in thin slices and bake on an oiled baking sheet in moderate oven (375° F.) about 15 minutes.

Mosier—W. L. Howland and Elmer Root, Mosier orchardists, have established codling moth traps again this year to determine flight of the moths so as to indicate the best time for applying sprays. This is the second year these two men have carried on such work with the county agent. Some orchards in the district are trying banding trees with medicated paper in an effort to assist in worm control while cutting down excessive spray applications which bring residue problems.

Celebrate Century of Machine Building



An old slide valve steam engine that laboriously developed a few horsepower, and its successor, a giant 1800 horsepower diesel electric plant establish the extremes of motive units built by The Cooper-Bessemer Corporation now celebrating its hundredth anniversary. A full century ago, Charles and Elias Cooper first started casting plows, carding machines and sawmill machinery from a small cupola built at Mt. Vernon, Ohio. From that distinguished and inauspicious foundation has arisen the present corporation with extensive properties at Mt. Vernon and Grove City, Pa., where facilities are available for the construction of the biggest oil and gas engines in the world. More than three-quarters of a century ago, the two brothers built the first steam locomotive constructed west of the Alleghenies and they later designed and built the first Corliss steam engine manufactured in the west. Steam was replaced by the present type motors widely used in the gas and oil fields, in locomotives, on private yachts, commercial boats and for stationary power plants. Old employees of the present company remember days when the brothers withstood the shortage of money during the panics by issuing Cooper Company scrip, a type of fiat money honored by local businesses throughout central Ohio. This was in marked contrast to the Corporation's present strong cash position which has been maintained in spite of the adverse conditions during the past three years.

Business Places To Patronize IN BEAVERTON!

W. E. PEGG
UNDERTAKER and EMBALMER
Grange Building — Beaverton

GREYHOUND COFFEE SHOP
Meals 25c. Home Made Pies.
Express Office—Stage Depot
Western Union Phone 10605
Rossi Building Beaverton, Oregon

STUDIO BARBER SHOP
FIRST CLASS WORK
AT REASONABLE PRICES
E. D. VanMeter, Prop.

ANDY'S MARKET
MEATS OF QUALITY
Service With A Smile

Beaverton Barber Shop
C. J. STEVENS, PROPRIETOR
SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

MAPES & SON
RESTAURANT
MEALS SHORT ORDER
Cigars, Tobaccos
Confections, Soft Drinks
Cady Building — Front Street

MICKIE, THE PRINTER'S DEVIL



Looks Like It