

### CEDAR SWAMP

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Quick recovery showed he was not unprepared for a visitor. The fork on which the bacon was impaled clattered into the pan and the man dodged into the livingroom through the door behind him. It was his intention to close it, but he was not quick enough. Eddie's body crashed against it; his foot thrust itself into the narrowing crack.

Seeing that he had failed, the motor-tramp withdrew his weight suddenly, so that Eddie was overbalanced and fell into the living room on his hands and knees. The stranger retreating to a bunk in the farthest corner, had snatched up a rifle. Now he covered Eddie, the weapon against his hip.

Eddie came slowly to his feet. He was careful to take no forward step. For the man's eyes were deadly. Here was a killer, who would shoot without conscience, and without mercy if it seemed expedient to shoot.

"What are you doing in my house?" growled Eddie.

"Your house? Say, you got a nerve!" was the insolent response. "This old shack is empty, goin' to be sold for taxes, and you talk about your house! It ain't yours as much as it is mine."

"You lie!" snapped Eddie. "It's mine. Get out of here, quick."

The deadly eyes narrowed. "Better not call me a liar, sport. Go on, yourself before I have to drop you."

Eddie moderated his tone and his language. The stranger had the upper hand. "See here, my friend, you're in wrong," he said. "I own this place. My name is Forbes. They'll tell you in Long Portage it's my property. I've been away; that's all."

Since Eddie kept his distance and seemed disposed to argue, the trespasser accommodated himself to the situation. He shifted the rifle from his hip across his body, holding it slightly higher than before. It was still reasonably ready for service.

"I'd say you been away," was his jeering comment. "No one's lived here for years. I was here last four or five weeks. I brought that stove. This place is as much mine as it is yours."

"You know I'd been here," replied Eddie. "You saw my stuff, and threw it out."

"No one was here when I come," replied the man, doggedly. "I like it here. I'm goin' to stay. You better move."

His eyes had wavered about the room as he spoke, and Eddie took the slender chance offered. He flung himself across the room and hard against the man's stomach. The latter, an instant too late, saw his danger and tried to swing the gun. But Eddie was inside, his arms around the other's body. He forced the tramp against the wall.

His adversary shifted tactics. His arms, holding the gun, were free. Eddie was under them. A hand near either end, he raised the weapon to crash it down crosswise on his assailant's head. Eddie sensed the move though he could not see it. He clinched still more tightly, his head burrowing downward and inward.

The weapon struck him a glancing blow on the back of the head, the main force expending itself harmlessly on his back. The trigger-guard tore his scalp, however, and he could feel the warm blood trickle down. Now his right hand went up to the other's throat, jamming his head back against the logs. The tramp was, of necessity, compelled to drop the rifle to avoid strangulation.

He tripped Eddie and they fell. But Eddie, more active, was only briefly underneath. He turned the tramp over with a thump, and struggled to mount astride. A heave of the other's body broke his hold and sent him flying.

Eddie had no clear picture of what happened, was happening. He was in a white rage that prevented clear thought. He was lurching against this hard-faced man everything that had happened in recent days, and fighting for revenge for those happenings.

Their scuffling feet pushed the rifle partially under a bunk. Neither dared stoop for it. They fought with their fists. A wave of savage blows on his face and body, but he did not feel their hurt. He was knocked down, and rose to grip the other man and hurl him against the walls.

Another blow sent Eddie on his head and shoulders. The stranger, with a grimace of triumph, tried to leap upon him. A frantic footthrust stopped the motor-tramp. The boot-heel caught him fairly, so that blood flew from his smashed nose.

It was soon after that the stranger stooped to the fireplace for a bludgeon. It was a sizable stick that had burned in two, leaving one piece more than a foot in length and pyramidal in form. He caught it by the smaller end, as if by a handle. His face was contorted into the snarl of a mad-dened huskie-dog as he threw it with all his might at Eddie's head.

Eddie dodged just in time. The missile grazed his temple, struck the logs and rebounded in front of him so that it was almost under his feet. The throw left the stranger off bal-

ance. A heavy table stood against the wall at Eddie's left hand. He jerked it in front of him. With both hands on its nearest edge and the full power of his 160 pounds behind it, he drove the table ahead of him along the floor.

It caught the stranger across the thighs, jamming him against the wall. With a growl of triumph, Eddie seized him by the hair and dragged him face downward across the table. He held the table like a vise with one hand and his knee. He belabored the tramp with the other fist. But he could not get enough power behind the blows and the man's struggles threatened to free him.

The bludgeon of pine was near. He swept it from the floor at the second attempt and swung it like a war club in a wide arc. It struck the man as he straightened below the ear. He fell forward across the table again, out completely.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

### FOOD TRAVELS CHEAPLY OVER NATION'S RAILS

Portland, Sept. 1.—Freight rates on American railroads are the lowest in the world, according to J. H. Mulchay, assistant freight traffic manager of Southern Pacific, who says that the present average rate on carrying a ton of freight one mile is approximately one and one-tenth cents.

"Rates charged by English railroads for equivalent service are more than three times greater and French and German roads receive about four times as much," Mulchay said.

"For transporting the food consumed by Americans railroads receive about \$8.80 per person annually, or about three-quarters of a cent per meal," and for carrying a \$75 suit of clothes 2260 miles from Chicago to the Pacific Coast receive approximately 45 cents.

"If freight rates during the past twenty years had advanced in proportion to the growing cost of materials and supplies, and in ratio with the increased wages paid to railroad workers freight rates would be in comparably higher than they are. As it is, railroads, to earn enough to pay a track laborer for one day, must haul a ton of freight 256 miles."

### WILD ANIMALS FEATURE HONEST BILL SHOWS

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#### Truth At Least

Ambitious Mother — "So young Smithkins called on you last night. I hope you didn't treat him too distantly."

Blushing Daughter — "Indeed I didn't; in fact I was very much drawn to him."

### EVEN RICE HURT GIRL'S STOMACH

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## In Confidence...

By FLO

### HIS MOTHER'S SON WANTS TO KNOW

Dear Miss Flo:—

Why is it that the mother of a son can be so much more difficult than the mother of a daughter? My mother and sister are making life in general miserable for my wife with their continual criticism of everything that she does. We have been married nine years and have two lovely little boys. My family love the youngsters, but they don't like my wife at all. They criticize her to me—and even to the children. They find fault with her housekeeping, and say she likes to go out too much, that she spends too much money, and that she isn't a good mother. Now, I love my wife and she pleases me just as she is, and I am wondering what I should do. Shall I move away as my wife wants me to, or just tell them where to get off?

N. B.

Undoubtedly in-laws cause more tears and discord and misery than anything else in the world—if we are to judge from the numerous stories that are written about and around the problem, and it is a fact, that innumerable young women have had the happiness of their youth and marriage wrecked by the injustice of their in-laws, and that innumerable men are made miserable by being torn between the two women they love. In all fairness, it is also true that innumerable old women have their last days made bitter to them by the hardness of their son's wife.

The question is not always one-sided, for women have an inherent jealousy of other women. They cannot bear the thought that the man they love, and who loves them, can have any place in his heart for another woman—even though that other

woman is his wife or mother.

Finding fault with their in-laws is often the chief indoor sport of many a man's family—and they usually do it without any thought of the damage they do and the chances they are taking on wrecking the home of the man they love and whom they really do not intend to injure.

They never think of how unhappy he will be if they make his dissatisfaction with his wife by pointing out to him all of her faults and weaknesses. One wonders that they never think of what a cruel position they put him in when he must take sides, either with them or with his wife, when he is literally torn between the two, both of whom he loves and to both of whom he would like to be loyal.

We will all admit that it is hard for the mother who has watched her boy grow and develop under her care to the perfect flower of manhood take another woman on his arm and walk down the rosy path of the future—and if the mother has been accustomed to a great deal of her son's companionship, it becomes even more difficult. Mothers who lose daughters by marriage may have heartbreak too, but it is a different kind of heartbreak. She never loses a daughter as completely as she loses her son, for their common interests of sex and family and economic dependence keep them together, and they never entirely outgrow their intimacy, as is the case of a mother and son.

But if you ever expect to have any peace or happiness you must face this issue and tell your family what's what. If it is possible, I'd move as far away from my meddling family as I could, for while you will be able to silence the criticism for awhile they won't

remain silenced. Sooner or later they will slip the gag and go at it again, hammer and tongs.

But if you cannot move away, tell your family most emphatically that you will never again listen to a word of criticism of your wife—and if they criticize her to her sons you will have to stop them from visiting.

A mother-in-law can be either a benediction or firebrand—and they do not often change their natures.

#### Service Please

Mark Twain was a good sailor, and he often spent happy weeks cruising with his friend H. H. Rogers in his steam yacht. Once they were caught south of Cuba in a heavy sea, the effect of a long-drawn and violent gale. The Caribbean was heaving at its

worst, and for once Mark Twain was upset by the rolling and pitching of the ship. He leaned over the lee rail and clung desperately.

"Mr. Clemens, can't I get you something?" asked a steward, solicitously. "Yes," Mark drawled, earnestly, "Yes, I'd like a little island."

#### Until It Hurt

"You seem pretty proud since you gave twenty-five cents to the Red Cross fund."

"Yassah," said Erastus, "talk about doin' yoh bit—Ah done mah two bits!"

#### Sounds Reasonable

Patient—"What is the best method to prevent the disease caused by biting insects?"

Medico—"Stop biting them."

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