

FLASH

The Lead Dog

By
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CHAPTER XI—Continued

Often, in the past weeks, they had gone over it together—this long chance they were taking. Time after time Gaspard urged Brock to wait with Flash while he went south with the other dogs on his quest—wait through April, and, if he did not then return, take the Peterboro and ride the snow water behind the break-up of the ice in the Yellow-Leg to the bay and home. But, characteristically, Brock had beatifiedly refused to "play safe" while his partner flirted with death in the No-Man's land to the north. So, while the surface of lake and muskeg hardened, and the forest floor, which the sun could reach, seer into crust, the boys waited. Then, one day, when the weather had changed and the spruce snapped with frost, Yellow-Eye led the dogs into the north. On they went through the day, dogs and sled needing no trail breaker as in the months past when the snow was young and soft. Now, as the dogs raced down slippery slopes, the boys were compelled to slip off their shoes and dig their heels into the crust while they leaned back on the tall lines left dragging for this purpose. Otherwise the heavy sled, gathering momentum, would overrun the team and capsize.

The morning of the second day, Gaspard and Brock stood on the ridge overlooking the big lake of the Carcajou headwaters. Carefully Brock examined through his glasses the open country to the north and the glittering surface of the lake.

"The old sled-trail, down the lake, looks snowed over and abandoned, to me," he said, handing the binoculars to his friend.

For a long space the halfbreed studied the lake below them.

"Ah-hah!" he announced, finally, "dey keep off dis lake after dey see de message on de spruce, eh?"

"Looks as if our bluff worked," agreed Brock.

"Wal, we don't walk de lak' just de same."

"Lord, no! With the dogs here and the sled we've got to keep out of sight until we spot one of them and get some information."

So the boys followed the timber down to the lake and behind the screen of shore spruce proceeded north. Ahead of the dogs walked Brock, his knife loose in his sheath, for speed in cutting the traces and putting the dogs into the fight. If ambushed; his uncased gun in his left hand. As a flank patrol, traveled the halfbreed, a hundred yards away, eyes roving, ears tense, nerves taut. For they were in the land of a ruthless enemy, who had suffered at their hands, and whose revenge would be sudden, swift as the plummet-like plunge of a hawk. If the boys were caught off their guard.

They found the old trail where Gaspard had burned the betitious message on the blazed spruce, filled with old drift and abandoned. On down the lake they continued, traveling slowly through the thick timber of the shore, and late in the afternoon finally made camp.

In a thick stand of spruce the boys dug out a sleeping place and fire-hole. The bitterness of the midwinter nights had passed with the coming of March, but at twenty or thirty below zero, they still needed a warm fire, and had to risk the chance of the discovery of its yellow glow on the spruce. After feeding the dogs, Silt-Ear and Kona were tied well out in opposite directions, while Yellow-Eye lay close in, and Flash, as usual, slept beside the camp.

Soon the stars broke through the violet heavens in a myriad of glittering points and the cold moon swung above the silent ridges. With uncased rifles on the brush beside them, Gaspard and Brock slept before the crackling fire.

For a space the voice of no rover of the night lifted to break the hush of the frozen forest. Then, from a ridge rose a wail like the cry of a stricken child—to die away, while the frosty stars snap ed above the sleeping will demness. Shortly the wail rose anew to climax in a scream.

From where he lay in the shelter of some snedling spruce, the deep throat of the awakened Yellow-Eye rumbled. Silt-Ear and Kona stirred beside their trees, lifting their noses from the thick brush of their tails to test the air. Flash rose, shaking his iron body, his thick nostrils quivering. But the two shapes in the blankets slept on, oblivious.

Again the freezing air was split by the maniacal voice on the ridge. With a roar of rage Flash sprang to his feet, joining the three dogs in their challenge to the thing out there in the mysterious gloom.

"What's up, Gaspard?" mumbled the waking Brock, throwing back his rabbit-skin robe.

The halfbreed sat in his blankets with head tilted to the side, listening. "In that a signal? The dogs've gone crazy!"

Rising, Gaspard pulled forward his hood, his ears tense, strained. Brock noticed the rifle in his friend's hand.

The boy kicked out of his blankets. Because of their danger, in case of attack, they slept in their moccasins that they might without delay leap away from the firelight and into the protecting gloom.

"No, dat ees mating lynx howling—no signal. But dere ees somet'ing out dere beside lynx," said Gaspard. "We get away from dis fire!"

Thoroughly awake, now, Brock scrambled to his feet, and seizing his gun, joined his friend out in the dusk beyond the fire glow, where a hidden enemy could not find a target. From the timber rose the angry yelps of Yellow-Eye and Flash, beating back and forth. At their trees, Silt-Ear and Kona added to the din.

"You think they're trying to stalk the camp—some of these people!" demanded Brock.

"I don' know. Queer t'ing! Dose dog not howl at lynx unless dey smell heem. Dey can't smell heem on dat ridge—de wind ees wrong."

"From the noise, the dogs haven't struck a trail—they're still beating around."

"No, dey get de wind or somet'ing, but de wind ees ver' light."

Then the two friends, holding to the indigo gloom of the thickest scrub, worked their way toward the excited dogs who were seeking a trail out near the lake shore. Shortly Gaspard and Brock stood in the shadow of a spruce thicket bordering the white lake lit by the ash-gray moon and swarming stars. In the timber somewhere below them rose the familiar yelps of Yellow-Eye and Flash, still beating about for a trail of the thing whose faint scent harassed their keen noses. Across the lake rose a long spruce ridge, purple with shadow under the glittering stars.

"There go Silt-Ear and Kona!" whispered Brock. "That rawhide's too strong. They had to chew it to get away!"

"Ah-hah! We use weaker piece next—Look!" Gaspard suddenly pointed down the lake shore. From the coal-black shadows a grey blur streaked out over the starlit surface toward the opposite shore. Then, after a space, another shape bounded out over the ice, followed closely by a third.

"By gar! Wolf!" muttered Gaspard. "Flash and Yellow-Eye and dees trail!"

Like a gray wraith, out over the moon-bathed lake surface fled the timber wolf, followed by the heavier-bull and slower huskies.

"So that was the trouble!" laughed Brock. "Golly, how he can travel! He's gaining every jump!"

With no strength for a battle with the great beasts that so outnumbered him, the crafty timber wolf was running as only a wolf can run, as he headed for the forest across the ice. Then Silt-Ear and Kona reached the shore and joined the hunt.

"We'd better turn in and get some sleep—the dogs'll be back soon. They know they can't run that gressed-lighting down."

"Ah-hah! We get some sleep, and leave here before daylight. Suppose dose people got camp near here? Dey look for us, for sure."

The stars were still bright when the boys turned out of their blankets to cook breakfast. Curled near the camp, with noses in tails, four tired dogs slept after their futile pursuit of the flying ghost who had approached the previous night, lured by the smell of food.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Wedding Cake Made

Symbolic by Romans

Some one has credited the invention of cakes to a certain Thearon, a baker, who lived in Sicily in the Fifth century B. C. Certain it is that the Romans were extremely fond of pastry. Cakes or "galettes" appeared on the altars, at the tables of the wealthy, and in the scanty repasts of the poor. When the Romans invaded England they took with them the custom of breaking a cake or biscuit over the bride's head.

The fragments were picked up and given her to distribute among her friends. The custom betokened fruitfulness, hospitality and prosperity and was in vogue many centuries after the Romans left England. Wedding cakes came to be composed of many rich and aromatic ingredients and were crowned with an icing of sugar and bitter almonds—emblematical it was said, of the mingled pleasure and pain that attends married life.

The Teutonic pagans also had their customs of offering Yule cakes of fine flour sweetened with honey to the god Thor, which in time became our Christmas plum cake.

To Clean Necklaces

When amber beads or ornaments require cleaning they should be washed in milk. To clean artificial pearls, fold them in a sheet of white cotton wool sprinkled with powdered magnesia, roll gently between the hands, then remove pearls and brush with a soft camel-hair brush.

"Tabby Houses"

A tabby was used as a concrete, a substitute for bricks or stone in building. It was a mixture of lime with shells, gravel or stone in equal proportions with an equal amount of water, forming a mass which when dry became hard as rock.

An efficient country is a prosperous one.—American Magazine.

On the Funny Side



ought to get along!

Sambo had found a job for the week on a railroad section gang, and was taking leave of his family when his wife came to the door and shouted: "Come back heah, Sam You hasn't cut a stick of wood fo' de stove—and you'll be gone a week!"

The negro turned and looked very much aggrieved. "Honey," he said in a tone of injured innocence, "what's de matter? You-all talks as though Ah was takin' de ax with me."

Mending Done at Doctor's

White—Where were you coming from when I met you yesterday?

Brown—From the doctor's. I had some mending done.

White—What did the doctor mend for you?

Brown—A couple of socks my wife gave me.

ALWAYS DOWN



Customer—Well, how's business in feathers now? Picking up, I guess.

Dealer—No, my friend, it is always down.

Habituation

The World has sung the same old song. On "Culture" still intent. We say that something must be wrong Because it's different.

Excusable

He was on trial for having shot a saxophone player and in defence stated that he thought it was a cat.

"But you mustn't shoot anything," said the magistrate firmly. "Not even a cat."

"Please, your worship, I thought this one was very, very ill."

Fitting

Mrs. P.—All the closets are full. There's no room for my clothes anywhere.

Mr. P.—There's plenty available space on you, darling!

MASHED EVEN POTATOES



Hubby—The cook's rather pretty, but flirtations, I think.

Wife (sairned)—Why do you think so?

Hubby—She mashes even the turnips and potatoes, you see.

Grand Operatics

On Opera were still intent, While Statesmen stir the Nation. A large amount of Sentiment Is just Vaccination.

Pull Together, Hereafter

"So the two dentists out your way have combined."

"Yes, they finally decided to pull together."

He Had Heard of It

"Hello, whiskers, where are you going with that lantern?"

"What place is this?"

"New York."

"Well," said Diogenes sorrowfully, "I guess it won't do any good to look here."

Motor Cars We Don't See

"What a lot of motor cars one sees nowadays!" remarked the tall man.

"Yes, thank heaven!" returned his friend. "It's the ones we don't see that send us to the hospital."

She Guffawed Then

Sam—I never see you with Miss Giddings any more.

Lou—No; I couldn't stand her vulgar laughing.

Sam—So! I haven't noticed it.

Lou—No, you weren't around when I proposed to her.

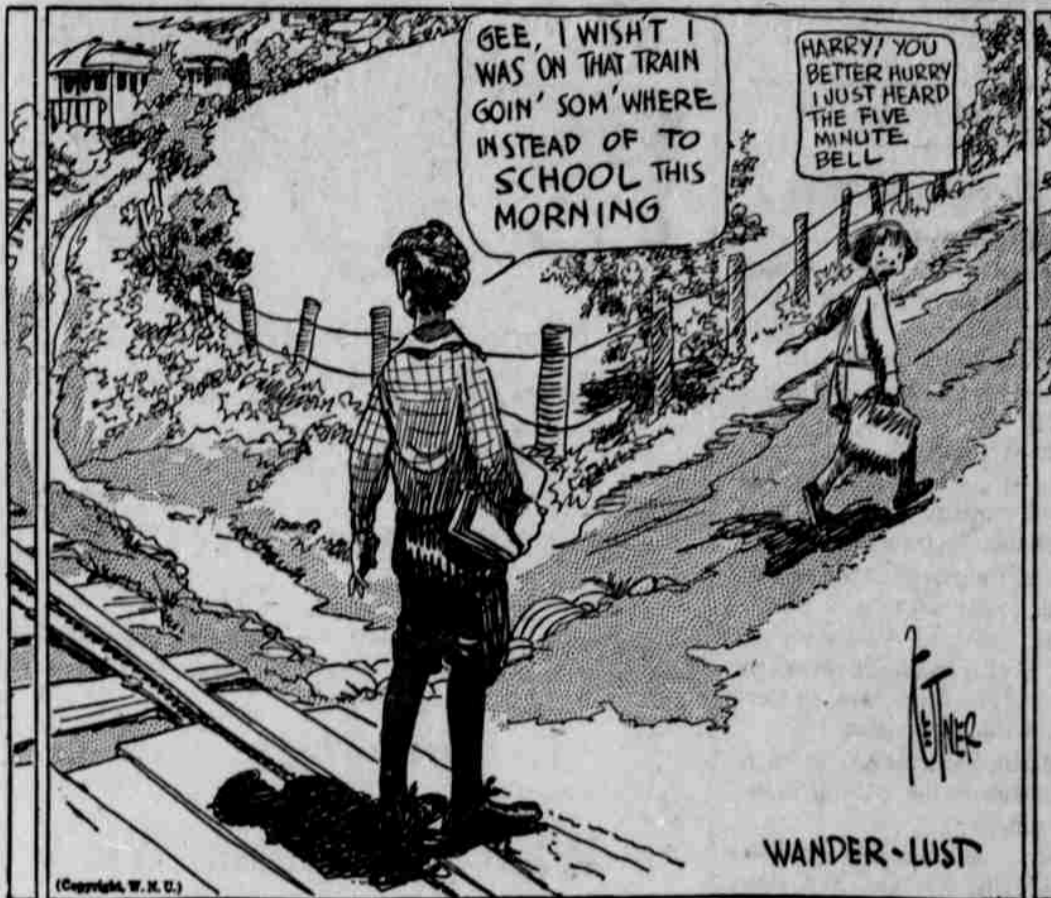
Looks—Not Comfort

Shoe Clerk—How do the shoes fit you, Mrs. Stiles?

Mrs. Stiles—They fit me beautifully but hurt me dreadfully when I try to walk in them.

OUR COMIC SECTION

Events in the Lives of Little Men



WANDER-LUST

FINNEY OF THE FORCE

Too Great a Reward



THE FEATHERHEADS

Just One of Those Things

