

# FORBIDDEN VALLEY

by William Byron Mowery

**SYNOPSIS.** Curt, Tompa and Paul St. Claire are strolling the transitional creek, Igor Karakhan, into the Canadian Northwest. At Russian Lake, Curt and Paul have rescued Sonya Nichols from a half-breed; Sonya has told Curt of the Klondike Indians, remnants of a fine tribe that now hides in the Lilluar mountains. Curt is puzzled by Sonya's faint accent, and a little offended when she latches out at him for rejoicing in the downfall of the Romanoffs.

**Chapter 13**  
**THE THREAT**  
A LITTLE after dark, when Curt and Paul were sitting on a chopping block talking over their plans for that night, old John Paxton came walking into the glow of their campfire.  
"Have a seat, John," Curt invited, standing up and offering his own place on the block.  
He wanted a talk with Paxton, for the guileless old fellow was a mine of information. He was familiar with everybody; at Russian Lake, knew every river and range between there and the Yukon. The Klondike kept all other whites out of the Lilluars, but kindly old John ran his fur path unmolested.  
His tent was pitched close to the canoe pier, and his eight sleek huskies were chained along the landwash there, each staked sep-

arately, each with its cool burrow dug into the turf. Instead of letting his dogs starve through the summer as others did, he kept a gill net anchored near the islets and caught fish for his team every day.  
"Don't git up for me," he bade Curt. "I jist stepped over to say they's goin' to be a leetle potlatch at my camp in about twenty minits. Ralph an' Sonya an' Father Lesperance an' others'll be there, an' I figured you b'ys might like to 'fin us, bein' sorta strangers here."  
Curt accepted eagerly. That campfire, where he would meet people and learn things, was an opportunity made to order. And he would get to see Sonya Nichols again, a last time probably, since she was leaving the next day.  
Old John went back to his camp. While Paul bustle' himself making a spruce-tip mattress for their sleeping pokes, Curt leaned against the cache sapling and looked out upon the dark lake, not thinking about his hunt for Igor Karakhan but about Sonya Nichols' flashing eyes and the imperious toss of her head as she read him the riot act.  
"Our marooned friend over on the island stands to get a soaking to-night," Paul broke into his thoughts, as a distant mutter of thunder rolled out of the western mountains. "He deserves worse, that ape. You should have let me shoot him."  
Curt straightened up. He had forgotten all about the man. "I suppose you're right, Paul. But still, he was so drunk he wasn't altogether responsible. I didn't think about this storm coming on. I ought to go and bring him back."  
SLIPPING his flash and automatic into his pocket, he stepped down to the landwash, launched the canoe and headed across for the islands.  
He found the right channel without difficulty and nosed down through it to the island of dead pines. At his hail the 'breed came out to the beach. Curt explained, told him to get in, and shoved off.  
On the way back he suggested, "What'd you say, friend?—let's bury what happened this evening."  
The 'breed seemed to have been waiting for him to say something, for he blazed out: "Wat beensness



Curt played a Volga folksong.

looking cross-eyed at that girl again you'll be the one to get caked under a pile of rocks, and I don't mean maybe."  
They skinned on ashore. With a low sinister oath by way of good-bye the 'breed stalked off into the dark.  
Curt went up to the tent, where Paul was tuning his guitar. Taking a can of cigarettes and a box of chocolate squares as their contribution, they stepped out the path to old John's "git-together."  
The company had already gathered.  
Curt pulled a log close to the packing box for himself and Paul, and sat down, trying to be as inconspicuous as possible so that he could watch and listen. Somebody in that company might be Igor Karakhan's contact man. A word, a glance, a stray little slip might give him a clue.  
He glanced now and then at Sonya, who sat near him, with the freight shining in her clear eyes and the glow of it tangled in her hair. She had looked up and nodded when he and Paul came, but she did not speak, and he believed that she had cast him into the outer darkness because of his good word for the Leninists.  
With no factual reason for thinking so, Curt told himself that Sonya Nichols had known stormy experiences in her life, experiences which had left their mark on her. They had given her maturity and strength of character, but they had robbed her of any lightness of heart.  
The question of her nationality still troubled him, and he determined to settle it once and for all. Reaching for Paul's guitar, he plucked a chord or two, and then started a Volga folksong, the only Russian piece he knew. Heads began swaying, moccasins tapping. Watching Sonya, Curt saw that the old melody had caught her too. He met her eye, smiled at her, nodded, and she began singing softly. As he listened to the strange words which came so naturally from her lips Curt's last doubt went glimmering Russian, she was!

Tomorrow, Curt gets an unexpected apology.

## FOOD BY TONS TO FILL NAVY MESS

LONG BEACH, Cal.—(UP)—Tons of food are used daily in feeding the

personnel of the United States fleet quartered in Pacific waters. Recently in a single day 270,000 pounds of perishable foods were moved across the decks of the navy landing here and were transported to ships offshore. This 133 tons was exclusive of canned provisions. Chief Storekeeper W. F. Burnett estimated that the average monthly

shipments of fresh provisions alone total 1000 tons. The majority of these stores are purchased from merchants in the Long Beach-San Pedro business area. Broken windows glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works. Phone 542. We will haul away your refuse. City Sanitary Service.

## LOS ANGELES TO HAVE CHINATOWN

LOS ANGELES.—(UP)—An authentic bit of Asia will be transplanted

to the streets of Los Angeles should plans approved by the Los Angeles planning commission materialize. George L. Eastman, former president of the Los Angeles chamber of commerce, obtained the approval of the commission of plans to build a new Chinatown here, modeled exactly after the original Oriental architecture. The Chinese chamber of com-

merce is behind the movement, believing the village would become an outstanding attraction for tourists. An architect has been sent to China to study plans. Christmas cards, all kinds and prices, printed or blank. Order now, time is short. Mail Tribune Job Department.

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