

# EVEN UNTO DEATH

Story Concerning Love and Death in the Frozen Wilds of the North.

By JACK LONDON.

It might have been due to mere coincidence. It might have been because there are undreamed-of bonds between the quick and the dead, and it might have been that Bat Morganston felt a blind consciousness of the future, when he turned suddenly to Frona Payne and asked, "Even unto death?"

Frona Payne was startled for the moment. Her shallow nature would not permit her to understand the strength of a strong man's love; such things had no place in her fickle standard. Yet she knew men well enough to repress her inclination to smile; so she looked up to him with her serious child's eyes, placing a hand on each brawny shoulder, and answered, "Even unto death, Bat, dear."

And as he crushed her to him, half-doubting, he passionately cried, "If it should happen so, even in death I shall claim you, and no mortal man shall come between!"

"How absurd," she thought as she freed herself and watched him untangling his dogs. And a handsome fellow he was as he waded among the fierce brutes, pulling here and shoving there, cuffing right and left, and dragging them over and under the frozen traces till the team stood clear. Nipped by intense cold to a tender pink, his smooth-shaven face told a plain tale of strength and indomitability. His hair, falling about his shoulders in thick masses of silky brown, was probably more responsible for winning the woman's fleeting affections than all the rest of him put together. Yet when men ran their eyes up and down his six foot two of brawn, they declared him a man, from his bearded moccasins to the crown of his wolf-skin cap. But, then, they were men.

She kissed him once, twice, and yet a third time, in her shy, trusting way; then he broke out the sled with the gee-pole, "mushed-up" the dogs as only a dog driver can, and swung down the hill to the main river trail. The meridian sun, shrouding over the snowy summits to the south, turned the tiny frost particles to scintillating gems, and through this dazzling gassamer Bat Morganston disappeared on his journey down the Yukon to Forty Mile. Down there he was accounted a king, in virtue of the rich dirt which was his after the dreary years he had spent in the darkness of the Arctic Circle. Dawson had no claims upon him. He did not own a foot of gravel in the district, nor was he smitten with its inhabitants—the che-cha-quas that had rushed in like jackals and spoiled the good old times when men were men and every man a brother. In fact, the only reason for his presence, and a most unstable one at that, was Frona. He had harnessed his dogs and run up on the ice to renew the pledges of the previous summer, and to plead for an early date. Well, they were to be married in June, and he was returning to the management of his mines with a light heart. June!—the clean-up promised to be rich; he would sell out; and then, the States, Paris, the world! Of course, he doubted—most men do when they leave a pretty woman behind—; but ere he had reached Forty Mile he no longer mistrusted, and by the time he froze his lungs on a moose hunt and died a month later, he had attained a state of blissful optimism.

Frona waved him good-bye, and also with a light heart, turned back to her father's cabin; but, then, she had no doubts at all. They were to be married in June. That was all settled. And it was no unpleasant prospect. To tell the truth, she thought she would rather like it. Men thought a great deal of him, and it was a match not to be ashamed of. Besides, he was rich. People who should know, said he could at any time clean up half a million, and if his American Creek interests turned out anywhere near as reported, he would be a second Macdonald. Now this meant a great deal for Macdonald was the richest miner in the north, and the most conservative guessers varied by several millions in the appraisement of his wealth.

Now be it known that the sin Frona Payne committed was a sin of deed, not fact. There were no mal-treatments between Forty Mile and Dawson, and as Bat Morganston's mines were still a hundred miles into the frozen wilderness from Forty Mile, no news of his death came up the river. And since he had agreed to write only on the highly improbable contingency of a stray traveler passing his diggings, she thought nothing of his silence. To all intents, so far as she was concerned, he was alive. So the sin she committed was of a verity a sin of deed.

By no method may a woman's soul be analyzed, by no scales may a woman's motive be weighed; so no reason can be given for Frona Payne giving her heart and hand to Jack Crellin within three months of her farewell to Bat Morganston. True, Jack Crellin was a Circle City king, possessed of some of the choicest Birch Creek claims; but the men who had made the country did not rate him highly, and his only admirers were to be found among the sycophantic tenderfeet who generously helped him scatter his yellow dust. Perhaps it was the way he had about him, and perhaps it was the impulsive affinity of two shallow souls; but be it what it may, they agreed to marry

each other in June, and to journey on down to Circle City and set up housekeeping after the primitive manner of the northland.

The Yukon broke early, and soon after that important event, the river steamer, Cassiar, captained by her brother, was scheduled to sail. The Cassiar had the mingled honor and misfortune to be both the treasure ship and the hospital ship of the year. In her strong boxes she carried five millions of gold, in her staterooms ten score of crippled and diseased. And there were also lower country traders and kings, returning from their winter labors or pleasures at Dawson. Among these—a little anticipation of the event—were listed Mr. and Mrs. Jack Crellin. But when the sick and heart-weary lifted their voices to heaven at the cruel delay, and the goldshippers waxed clamorous, the Cassiar was forced to sail before her time, and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Crellin were yet man and maid.

"Never mind, Frona," her brother said; "come aboard and I'll take charge of you. Father Mahan takes passage at Forty Mile, and you'll be snugly one before we say good-bye at Circle City."

Pilmsol marks, boiler inspectors, and protesting boards of underwriters, not yet having penetrated the dismal dominions of the north, the Cassiar cast off her lines, with passengers, freight and chattels packed like badly assorted sardines. Wolf-dogs, whose work began and ceased with the snow, and who grew high-stomached with summer idleness, rioted over the steamer from stern to stern or killed each other on the slightest provocation. Stalwart Stick Indians of the upper river regions, lightened their heavy money pouches in brave endeavors to best the white man at his games of chance, or outraged their vitals with the whisky he sold at thirty dollars the bottle. There were squat Mongolias, denatured Malumute and Innuut wanderers from the great delta two thousand miles away; not among the whites was the jangle of nationalities less pronounced. The nations of the world had sent their sons to the north, and the tongues they spoke were many.

At Forty Mile more passengers and freight were crowded aboard. Among the pilgrims was Father Mahan, and in the baggage was an unpainted pine box, corresponding in size to the conventional last tenement of man. The rush of life has little heed for death, so this box was piled precariously upon a pyramid of freight on the Cassiar's deck. But Bat Morganston, having lain till the moment of shipment in a comfortable ice-cave, did not care. Nobody cared. There were no mourners, save a huge wolf-dog, to whom the taste of his master's lash was still sweet. He crept aboard unnoticed, and ere the lines were cast off had taken up his accustomed vigil on the heap of freight by his master's side. He was such a vicious brute, and had such a fearful way of baring his fangs, that the other canine passengers gave him a wide berth, choosing to leave him alone with his dead.

The cabins were crowded with the sick, so the marriage began on the stifling deck. It was near midnight, but the sun, red-disked and somber, slanted its oblique rays from just above the northern sky-line. Frona Payne and Jack Crellin stood side by side. Father Mahan began the service. From aft came the sound of scuffling among half a dozen drunken gamblers; but in the main, the human cargo had crowded about the center of interest. And also the dogs.

Still, all would have been well, had not a Labrador dog sought a cologne of advantage among the freight. He had traveled countless journeys, was a veteran of a dozen famines and a thousand fights, and knew not fear. The truculent front of the dog which guarded the pine box, interested him. He drew in, his naked fangs shining like jeweled ivory. They closed with snap and snarl, the carelessly piled freight tottering beneath them.

At this moment Father Mahan blessed the two which were now one and Jack Crellin solemnly added, "Even unto death."

"Even unto death," Frona Payne repeated, and her mind leaped back to the other man who had spoken those words. For the instant she felt genuine sorrow and remorse for what she had done. And at that instant the two dogs shut their jaws in the death-grip, and the long pine box poised on the edge of its pyramid. Her husband jerked her from beneath as it fell, and on. There was a crash and splintering; the cover fell away; and Bat Morganston, on his feet, erect, just as in life, with the sun glinting on his silky brown locks, swept forward.

It happened very quickly. Some say that his lips parted in a fearful smile, that he flung his arms about Frona Payne and held her till they fell together to the deck. This would seem impossible, seeing that the man was dead; but there are those who swear that these things were done. However, Frona Payne shrieked terribly as they drew her from beneath the body of her jilted lover, nor did her shrieking cease till land was made at Circle City. And Bat Morganston's words were true, for today, if one should care to journey over to the hills which lie beyond Circle City, he will see, side by side, a cabin and a grave. In the one dwells Frona Payne; in the other, Bat Morganston. They are waiting for each other till their fetters shall fall away and the trump of doom break the silence of the north.

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Even So!

Even a smart man has to get up early in the morning to get ahead of a fool woman.

# AROUND THE CAMP FIRE

## INCIDENTS OF WAR RECALLED

Rapid Rise of Judson Kilpatrick From Lieutenant to Major General—Wanted to Scout.

Thomas J. Taylor was a member of Colonel Duryea's Fifth New York regiment and is one of the few survivors of the battle of Big Bethel known to be now in Chicago. At the beginning of the war he had opportunity to see a young soldier just out of military school, who, as lieutenant and soon afterward as colonel, then began the career that in four years brought him the title of major general in both the volunteer and regular armies. This was Judson Kilpatrick.

"The colonel brought Captain Kilpatrick with him from New York," said Mr. Taylor. "He was a lively man with sharp features and reddish hair, and at Camp Hampton he was always wanting to go out on raids. He was continually bothering the colonel for permission to go scouting, as the colonel complained. Sometimes he would get permission and then he would go out with a few men and gather up some of the wild zazor backed hogs that ran in the woods about Camp Hampton. In the battle of Big Bethel he was wounded and left the regiment, and the next we saw of him was farther south, just before he became a brigadier general. The last time I saw him was at Chancellorsville. Our colonel halted us as we met Colonel Kilpatrick, and the regiment cheered him.

"Among the prisoners that we took at Chancellorsville there was one that I shall never forget. Most of them passed with bowed heads and eyes downcast, but this one held his head up. The crown was gone from his hat and his hair stuck up through the hole, and he was in great good humor. Anybody could see that he was an Irishman.

"Well, Paddy," said one of our men, "we've got you this time."

"Yes," said Paddy, "and at last I'm going where I can get something to eat."

"I remember one long march in the rain, when I almost went to sleep on my feet. It rained and rained and we were drenched and hungry and sleepy. I was orderly for Colonel Warren then and slept in the next tent when we did pitch camp. The colonel went to sleep in his tent, and the rain came down and ran down the slope on which the tents stood. Colonel Warren wouldn't stand the wet, and so he jumped up and went out of the tent with only a raincoat to protect himself from the storm. He was not ordinarily given to profanity, but then he did say what was in his mind. Outside the tent was a soldier patiently digging a trench to catch the water and divert it from the colonel's quarters, but he was digging it below instead of above the tent."

Acme of Laziness.

"What in Sam Hill is that dog yowling like that for?" asked a cavalryman of a "hill-billy" in the Ozark country.

"That there dawg?"

"Yes."

"Why, he's jes' natchally lazy."

"What's that got to do with his yowling?"

"Why, the train ran over his tail and cut it off last night. He's settin' on the sore place, and he's too dawg-gone lazy to get off'n it. That's why he is howlin'." And the squirt of tobacco juice he shot killed a fly in the road 20 feet away.

Only With His Tongue.

When Col. Daniel McCook's regiment was lying at Camp Dennison a brawny recruit from one of the eastern counties, who stuttered badly, was put on duty for the first time. A citizen attempted to pass the line.

The recruit yelled out: "Hu-hu-hu-hu!"

The citizen snickered and paid no attention. The sentinel carefully laid his bright Springfield upon the ground and knocked the intruder down with his fist.

"I may s-s-stutter with my tongue," said he, "but I d-d-don't s-s-stutter with my fist."

Helping a Poor Soldier.

When Parson Brownlow was lecturing in Tennessee a good many people grumbled about the high price he charged for admission. A very rich but stingy man, who had been all the time very profuse with expressions of his patriotism, exclaimed:

"Give Parson Brownlow half a dollar? No, sir-ree! I'd a good deal sooner give it to a poor soldier."

"Well, then," said a bystander, "give your half-dollar to Captain Henry (an officer dismissed from the army for cowardice). They say he's a mighty poor soldier."

"Nothing in it."

The colonel of a western regiment, consulting with some other officers, shook his head in doubt or denial of one of the major's arguments.

"Gentlemen," observed the major, after the colonel had retired, "common observers might imagine that the motion of the colonel's head implies a difference of opinion, but they would be mistaken; it is merely accidental. Believe me, gentlemen, when the colonel shakes his head there's nothing in it."

# MILK CRUSADE SAVES BABES

Stations for Distributing Infant Food Are Constantly Increasing in Various Cities.

A constantly increasing number of cities of all sizes are establishing milk stations and dispensing milk, whether pure whole milk, certified, modified, pasteurized or sterilized milk to mothers of babies that must be bottle fed. Some of the cities in which such institutions are maintained are: Albany, Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Dayton, Detroit, Hartford, Honolulu, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Mo., Lawrence, Mass., Louisville, Lowell, Milwaukee, Newark, New Bedford, New Haven, New York, Peoria, Pittsburgh, Providence, Rochester, St. Louis, Springfield, O., Waterbury, Wilkesbarre, Worcester, Yonkers, Utica.

The milk station is simply a room sufficiently large to accommodate the patrons and equipped with a large ice box, a desk, some chairs and a table. An ordinary store is suitable for a station and sometimes, as in the case of the station at Utica, N. Y., a school room may be used for the purpose. The station is usually under the charge of a nurse, and a physician is in attendance at stated hours.

# QUICKSILVER BAD ON TEETH

Fumes of Mercury Produce Salivation and Miners Seldom Live More Than Two Years.

Quicksilver miners follow the most unhealthy trade in the world. The fumes of the mercury produce constant salivation, and the system becomes permeated with the metal; the teeth of the unfortunate men drop out, they lose their appetite, become emaciated, and, as a rule, seldom live longer than two years.

Chloride of lime, employed by bleachers, frequently destroys the enamel and dentine of the teeth. But phosphorus, used so largely in the manufacture of lucifer matches, affects a very large number of persons, women, girls and children greatly preponderating.

People who work in soda factories are affected by the teeth becoming soft and translucent; they break off close to the gums.

Dr. Hesse of Leipzig states that bakers are likely to suffer from decayed teeth on account of the flour entering the mouth during work collecting on and around the teeth, where it decomposes and generates an acid destructive to dentine.

# Oddest of Jails.

One of the oddest of jails is that at Clifton, Graham county, Ariz., which lies in one of the copper mining centers of the new state. This jail comprises four large apartments hewn in the side of a hill of solid quartz rock. The entrance is situated in a boxlike vestibule built of heavy masonry and the gates have three sets of steel bars. At intervals in the rocky walls holes to serve as windows have been blasted and in these apertures a series of massive bars of steel has been fitted firmly in the rock. The floor of this rockbound jail is of cement. The prisoners are confined wholly in the larger apartments. In certain places the wall of quartz about the jail is no less than fifteen feet in thickness. So solid and heavy are the barriers to this institution that no prisoner has ever attempted escape. — Harper's Weekly.

# Found Ring in Bird's Nest.

Joe Cannon, deputy auditor of Hardin county, O., has found his ring. He lost it in the courthouse yard, but diligent search was futile. Janitor Yost was cleaning birds' nests out of the eaves of the building recently and found the ring woven in one of the nests.

# Libby's Luncheon Delicacies

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Chicago



# Red Tape in France.

A curious little monument to French red tape is to be seen at the Petit Palais. The clock in the building has marked the same hour for the last 13 years, although it is in perfect repair. The explanation borders on the ridiculous.

At the close of the Paris exhibition 13 years ago a busybody of an official stopped the clock for no other reason than that the exhibition was closing its gates. Since then it has remained stationary, for the simple reason that it does not appear on the list of clocks which the official clock winder to the municipal council has to attend to, and until some particularly energetic member of the council attends to the matter the present state of affairs is likely to continue.

# A Legal Opinion.

"A cat sits on my back fence every night, and he yowls and yowls and yowls. Now, I don't want to have any trouble with Neighbor Jones, but this thing has gone far enough, and I want you to tell me what to do."

The young lawyer looked as solemn as an old, sick owl, and said not a word.

"I have a right to shoot the cat, haven't I?"

"I would hardly say that," replied young Coke Blackstone. "The cat does not belong to you, as I understand it."

"No, but the fence does."

"Then," concluded the light of law, "I think it safe to say you have a perfect right to tear down the fence."

# The Tortures of Prickly Heat

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# Highest Tower in the World.

Should Buenos Ayres carry out a project now under contemplation the city will erect the highest tower in the world, overtopping that of Eiffel by 189 feet. It is planned to put the steel structure up a height of 1,173 feet, and a statue at the top will be surmounted with an electric light of 1,000,000 candlepower. The tower, as plans have been drawn, will have facilities for social gatherings, cafes, restaurants, library, billiard, rooms, gymnasium, as well as a wireless telegraphic station and a meteorological observatory.

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