



Copyright, 1914, by the Wheeler Syndicate. CHAPTER XI. The Race For No. 3.

"HULL! Get on to the glad rags!" Shorty surveyed his partner with simulated disapproval and Smoke, vainly attempting to rub the wrinkles out of the pair of trousers he had just put on, was irritated.

"They sure fit you close for a second-hand buy," Shorty went on. "What was the tax?" "One hundred and fifty for the suit," Smoke answered. "The man was nearly my own size. I thought it was remarkably reasonable. What are you kicking about?"

"Who? Me? Oh, nothing," Say? "What do you want now?" Smoke demanded testily. "What's her name?" "There isn't any her, my friend. I'm to have dinner at Colonel Bowie's, if you want to know. The trouble with you, Shorty, is you're envious because I'm going into high society and you're not invited."

By this time Smoke was straining at a pair of shoes. The thick wooden socks were too thick to go into them. He looked appealingly at Shorty, who shook his head.

"Nope. If I had thin ones I wouldn't lend 'em to you. Back to the moose-skin, pardner. You'd sure freeze your toes in skimpy faulged gear like that."

"But there are to be women, Shorty. I'm going to sit down and eat with real live women—Mrs. Bowie and several others, so the colonel told me."

"Well, moose-skin won't spoil their appetite none," was Shorty's comment. "Wonder what the colonel wants with you?"

As became a high salaried expert and the representative of the great house of Guggenheim, Colonel Bowie lived in one of the most magnificent cabins in Dawson. And here Smoke met the social eldect of Dawson—men like Captain Considine of the mounted police, Haskell, gold commissioner of the Northwest Territory, and Baron von Schroeder, an emperor's favorite with an international dueling reputation. And here, dazzling in evening gown, he met Joy Gastell, whom hitherto he had encountered only on trail, befurred and moose-skin. At dinner he found himself beside her.

"I feel like a fish out of water," he confessed. "I've been living on trail too long. This sort of thing comes to me with a shock. I'd quite forgotten that women have arms and shoulders. Tomorrow morning, like my friend Shorty, I'll wake up and know it's all a dream. Now, the last time I saw you on Squaw creek?"

frequently as you can." "Oh, I see; you want me to go in for it!" Smoke drawled. "But aren't you afraid this is gambling?" "It's a sporting proposition, if that's what you mean—a race for a million and with some of the stiffest dog moushers and travelers in the country entered against you. Big Olaf is in town. He is one of the most terrible dog moushers in the country, and if he enters he will be your most dangerous man."

"Arizona Bill is another. He has been a professional freighter and mail carrier for years. If he goes in, interest will be centered on him and Big Olaf." "And you intend me to come along as a sort of dark horse?" "She nodded and continued earnestly: "Remember, I shall never forgive myself for the trick I played on the Squaw creek stampede unless you win this Mono claim. And if any man can win this race against the old timers it's you."

It was the way she said it. He felt warm all over and in his heart and head. He gave her a quick, searching look, involuntary and serious, and for the moment that her eyes met his steadily ere they fell it seemed to him that he read something of vaster import than the claim Cyrus Johnson had failed to record.

"I'll do it," he said. "I'll win it." Smoke had traveled in a leisurely fashion up to Mono creek. Also he had familiarized himself with every mile of the trail and located relay camps.

So many men had entered the big race that the 110 miles of its course were almost a continuous village. Relay camps were everywhere along the trail.

von Schroeder, who had gone in purely for the sport, had no less than eleven dog teams—a fresh one for every ten miles. Arizona Bill had been forced to content himself with eight teams. Big Olaf had seven, which was the complement of Smoke. In addition, over two-score of other men were in the running.

No. 3 below Discovery was ten miles up Mono creek from its mouth. The remaining 100 miles were to be run on the frozen breast of the Yukon. On No. 3 itself were fifty tents and over 300 dogs. The old stakes, blazed and scrawled sixty days before by Cyrus Johnson, still stood, and every man had gone over the boundaries of the claim again and again, for the race with the dogs was to be preceded by a foot and obstacle race.

Each man in the contest had to relocate the claim for himself, and this meant that he must place two center stakes and four corner stakes and cross the creek twice before he could start for Dawson with his dogs.

Not until the stroke of midnight of Friday night was the claim open for relocation, and not until the stroke of midnight could a man plant a stake. This was the ruling of the gold commissioner at Dawson, and Captain Considine had sent up a squad of mounted police to enforce it.

The Mono trail ran along the level creek bed and, less than two feet in width, was like a groove, walled on either side by the snowfall of months. The problem of how forty odd sleds and 300 dogs were to start in so narrow a course was in everybody's mind.

"Hull!" said Shorty. "It's goin' to be the gosh dangdest mixup that ever was. I can't see no way out, Smoke, except main strength an' sweat an' to plow through. I got a hunch right now they're goin' to be a heap of scarpin' before they get strung out. An' if any of it comes our way you got to let me do the punchin'. You can't handle dogs a hundred miles with a busted knuckle, an' that's what'll happen if you land on somebody's jaw."

"An' just remember," Shorty went on, "that I got to do all the shovin' for them first ten miles, an' you got to take it easy as you can. I'll sure jerk you through to the Yukon. Say, what G'ye think Schroeder's scheme is? He's got his first team a quarter of a mile down the creek, an' he'll know it by a green lantern. But we got him skinned. Me for the red flare every time."

Forty-five pairs of hands were unmitigated, and forty-five pairs of moose-skins pressed tensely into the packed snow. Also forty-five stakes were thrust into the snow, and the same number of mallets lifted in the air.

The shot rang out, and the mallets fell. Cyrus Johnson's right to the million had expired. Smoke drove in his stake and was away with the leading dozen. Fires had been lighted at the corners, and by each fire stood a policeman, list in hand, checking off the names of the runners.

A contestant was supposed to call out his name and show his face. There was to be no staking by proxy while the real racer was off and away down the creek.

At the first corner beside Smoke's stake Von Schroeder placed his. As they hammered more arrived from behind and with such impetuosity as to get in one another's way and cause jostling and shoving. Squirming through the press and calling his name to the policeman, Smoke saw the baron, struck in collision by one of the runners, hurried clean off his feet into the snow. But Smoke did not wait. Others were still ahead of him. By the light of the vanishing fire he was certain that he saw the back, hugely looming, of Big Olaf, and at the south-western corner Big Olaf and he drove their stakes side by side.

It was no light work, this preliminary obstacle race. The boundaries of the claim totaled nearly a mile, and most of it was over the uneven surface of a snow covered, nigger bead flat. All about Smoke men tripped and fell, and several times he pitched forward himself jarringly on hands and knees.

The upper center stake was driven by the edge of the bank, and down the bank the racers plunged, across the frozen creek bed and up the other side. Here, as Smoke chattered, a hand gripped his ankle and jerked him back. Arizona Bill, who had been treated similarly, rose to his feet and drove his fist with a crunch into the offender's face.

Smoke saw and heard as he was scrambling to his feet, but before he could make another lunge for the bank a fist dropped him half stunned into the snow. He staggered up, located the man, half swung a look for his jaw, then remembered Shorty's warning and refrained.

It was a forecast of what would happen when the men reached their sleds. Men were pouring over the ath-



A Fist Dropped Him Half Stunned Into the Snow.

er bank and piling into the jam. They swarmed up the bank in bunches and in bunches were dragged back by their impatient fellows. More blows were struck, curses rose from the panting chests of those who still had wind to spare, and Smoke hoped that the mallets would not be brought into play. Overthrown, trod upon, groping in the snow for his lost stakes, he at last crawled out of the crush and attached the bank further along.

Down to the fourth corner he tripped midway and in the long, sprawling fall lost his remaining stake. For five minutes he groped in the darkness before he found it, and all the time the panting runners were passing him. From the last corner to the creek he began overtaking men for whom the mile run had been too much. In the creek itself bedlam had broken loose. A dozen sleds were piled up and overturned, and nearly a hundred dogs were locked in combat. Among them men struggled, tearing the tangled animals apart or beating them apart with clubs.

Leaping down the bank beyond the gutted passage, he gained the hard footing of the sled trail and made better time. Here, in packed harbors, beside the narrow trail, sleds and men waited for runners that were still behind. From the rear came the whine and rush of dogs, and Smoke had barely time to leap aside into the deep snow. A sled tore past, and he made out the man kneeling and shouting madly. Scarcely was it by when it stopped with a crash of battle. The excited dogs of a harbored sled, resenting the passing animals, had got out of hand and sprung upon them.

Smoke could see the green lantern of von Schroeder and, just below it, the

red flare that marked his own team. Two men were guarding von Schroeder's dogs, with short clubs interposed between them and the trail.

"Come on, you Smoke! Come on, you Smoke!" he could hear Shorty calling anxiously. By the red flare he could see the snow torn up and trampled, and from the way his partner breathed he knew a battle had been fought. He staggered to the sled, and in the moment he was falling on it Shorty's whip snapped as he yelled:

"Mush, you devils! Mush!" The dogs sprang into the breast-bands, and the sled jerked abruptly ahead. They were big animals—Hanson's prize team of Hudson bays—and Smoke had selected them for the first stage, which included the ten miles of Mono, the heavy going of the cutoff across the flat at the mouth and the first ten miles of the Yukon stretch.

"How many are ahead?" he asked. "You shut up an' save your wind," Shorty answered. "Hi, you brutes! Hit her up! Hit her up!" He was running behind the sled towing on a short rope. The fires had been left in the rear, and they were tearing through a wall of blackness as fast as the dogs could spring into it.

(To Be Continued.)

For Sale. White Wyandotte Cockerels, \$1.00 each. Julius Pitz, Plattsmouth, Neb. 2-8-3twkly

Hay for Sale. Good timothy hay for sale. E. R. Queen. 2-8-3twkly

NOTICE. J. W. Hamilton will take notice that on the 11th day of January, 1915, M. Archer, a justice of the peace of Cass County, Nebraska, issued an order of attachment for the sum of \$95.75 in an action pending before him, wherein John Cory is plaintiff, and J. W. Hamilton is defendant, and that property of the defendant, consisting of money in the possession of the C. B. & Q. R. R. Co., has been attached under said order. Said cause was continued to February 27th, 1915. JOHN CORY, Plaintiff.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION. All persons interested in the estate of Agatha Stull, deceased, will take notice that a petition has been filed in the County Court of Cass County, Nebraska, for administration of her estate and that a hearing will be had upon said petition on the 9th day of February, 1915, at 10 o'clock a. m., before the Judge of the said Court, and letters of administration of said estate granted at said time. Witness my hand and seal of said Court at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 18th day of January, 1915. (Seal) ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge. D. O. DWYER, Attorney.

FREE GOLD FISH Saturday, February 14th 10:30 A. M. We have arranged to give away 500 Beautiful Gold Fish and Globes with a 25c purchase of one of the following Rexall Remedies: Rexall Tooth Paste 25c Rexall Tooth Powder 25c Rexall Cold Tablets 25c This free distribution will be conducted on the following plan: Any person purchasing one or more of the above mentioned articles will receive absolutely FREE TWO BEAUTIFUL GOLD FISH and one Globe. --COME EARLY-- This sale starts at 10:30 A. M. Sharp, February 13, 1915. SEE OUR WINDOWS FRIDAY We will also have an assortment of larger fish, ornaments and globes, which we will dispose of at a low price. F. G. FRICKE -&- CO., The Rexall Store

\$100 Reward, \$100 The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer the Hundred Dollar Reward for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials. Address P. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. Sold by all Druggists, Etc. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

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