

ON TIGER CREEK

When Pink-Eye Simpson Took Water.

"It was away back in the '80s when they were still working placer dirt on Tiger creek an' weighing out gold dust for plug terbacker in Grosenbeck's store that I saw Pink-Eye Simpson take water," said the old prospector. "He wasn't addicted to them potations an' I don't know that anybody ever give him a subsequent invite to the same without qualifyin' fer the central figger in a coroner's inquest. Still Pink-Eye took water oncet.

"A feller blew in with a sloppy chink along one December. The boys was congregated in Grosenbeck's—in the front part. He kep' his bar in front an' his store in the rear, so's ter ketch 'em goin' an' comin'. When the feller fust come in we all took him fer a kid. He was all bundled up in a little buffola coat an' had a fur cap pulled down over his ears. I don't reckon he was much more'n four foot high an' when he got that coat shucked an' his cap pulled off there wasn't a great deal left of him. But he was a man—a mighty weazened, sour-faced, red nosed, red-eyed, hump-backed runt, but he had got his growth. He looked around him as fierce as an enraged chipmunk an' then walked up to the bar an' called fer a drink.

"Grosenbeck grinned as he set the bottle out. I reckon we all smiled some, he looked so sorter redickerlous. 'What's amusin' you?' squeaks the little man. 'Maybe you find my pers'nal appearance a subjec' o' mirth?'

"I wuz smilin' because I was happy," says Grosenbeck, quite meek.

"You've probly skinned somebody good an' plenty, then," says the little man, pourin' out a bath an' lowerin' it scientific. "That's the rottenest imitation o' licker ever I run acrost. Any-

belt fer bawlin'," says he a few minutes later, gnawin' the ends of his mustash.

"Next day Mr. Wallis jumped Danny Cassidy's claim an' began development work. Danny went up with a Winchester ter run him off an' comes back thankful that Mr. Wallis had let him keep the gun. Then he diverted the water the thaw had started from Gillicuddy's flumes.

"The time he made Pink-Eye Simpson take water was when Pink-Eye started out on his spring saturation. Mr. Wallis was in Grosenbeck's selectin' his weekly grub supply when Pink-Eye, not seein' him on account of him bein' hid behind a length a' stovepipe, called everybody to the bar. 'Any son-of-a-gun who hangs back 'll be made too leaky to hold licker,' he yells.

"Mr. Wallis heard him an' emerged from behind the stovepipe an' strutted up ter Pink-Eye. 'Do I understand that this invite is compuls'ry?' he asks. 'Have I got ter drink because a human hyena with a skinful of alcoholic swill an' a cryin' need of a hair cut makes a bluff at homicidal mania?'

"Not if you'd prefer not to," says Pink-Eye. 'I'd esteem it an honor, but I don't insist on it. My remarks were in a sperrit o' jocularity.'

"You've a poor sense o' humor," says Mr. Wallis. 'You're enough of a joke yourself without spoilin' it by talkin'! A man who'd drink with you would git down into a trough an' eat with hogs.'

"That's what he said to Pink-Eye Simpson—an' lived. An' he acted in that outragis way fer nigh on ter three months.

"It went on until finally Grosenbeck, who'd been picked on more'n usual



"An' Called Fer a Drink."

body that'd accuse you o' sellin' whisky would be a liar. Don't look cross-eyed at me, you fat-faced hippopotamus. Charge that ter Mr. Wallis. That's my name, an' I'm goin' ter take up my residence in this yer camp.'

"Now, Grosenbeck wasn't no slouch when it came ter resentin' an insult an' he generally took a preliminary request fer credit as an insult—for bar goods. I've seen him make a mighty rapid showing with a gun an' conduc' himself creditably in a free-fer-all rough-an'-tumble. But he didn't make no hostile plays that time, whatsoever. He jest looked at the little sawed-off wisp fer a moment an' then he says: 'Your credit's good, Mr. Wallis. Glad ter be favored with yer custom. Have another with me.'

"I'll wait till I'm better acquainted with you afore I drink with you," says Mr. Wallis.

He went out. We watched him lead his mule back along the hill to Billy Thorsen's cabin, which Billy was off on a prospectin' trip in the Crazy Loon range. Darned if he didn't kick in the door an' carry in his plunder.

"Grosenbeck had been swallerin' hard, which was his way when agerated. 'What is a man goin' ter do with a venerous peanut-built rack o' skin an' bones like that?' he says. 'I could squeeze the breath o' life out of him with my figger an' thumb.

"Like hittin' a six-months kid a

one evenin', said he'd be everlastingly hornswoggled if he'd stand it any longer. 'See here, Mr. Wallis,' he says, 'I'm through with you. I make no unkind elusions ter your misfortuait contour and proportions; were they otherwise you wouldn't have lasted five minutes after you struck this camp. I'm not a-goin' ter jump on you an' grind yer inter the floor an' I'm not a-goin' ter break yer in two, me bein' a full-size man, but I'm goin' ter take you acrost my knee an' spank you, like a mean young one. In this I have the full approval of the camp.'

"With that he reached out fer Mr. Wallis. But Mr. Wallis wasn't there. He was extractin' a pick handle from a barrel an' the nex' minit that pick handle come inter contac' with Grosenbeck's cranium, an' laid him out. 'You all approve, do you?' yells Mr. Wallis, an' here he come at us with the pick handle. He got four of us. The rest of us all left abrupt.

"We come to our senses in about five minutes—all but Grosenbeck—an' with the realization that the pore remnant of humanity was able ter take his own part in a game o' physical violence he made a rush fer Billy Thorsen's cabin ter git him. He wusn't in. When Tom Gillicuddy went ter feed his horse next mornin'—the only good horse in camp—the horse wusn't in, either. That was the last we ever saw o' Mr. Wallis."—Chicago News.

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