

ILLUSTRATED BY R.W. SATTERFIELD

EDISON MARSHALL

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BEGIN HERE TODAY

Ned Corret goes on a voyage to northern Canada and Alaska for his father, Godfrey Corret. He is to exchange his sailor suit and smoking goggles with the Indians for fine furs. The profits are to be split 75-25, the Indians getting the larger share. Several furs are on the ship with Ned. His finances, Lenore Hardenworth, and her mother, Mrs. Knutson, are on board. Ned and Knutson, assisted by McNab and Forest and one cook.

Lenore Hardenworth objects to eating at the same table with the Indians. Bess resolves to avoid the three aristocrats and to go to the deck occasionally. Then, much to Lenore and her mother's surprise, the girl.

At the voyage comes and the weather grows colder much discomfort is felt by Mrs. Hardenworth and Lenore who have come unsuitably clothed for a sea voyage.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

THE name of the craft was the Charon! The thought chilled him and dismayed him.

For all his boasted realism, Ned Corret had never got away from superstition. Man is still not far distant from the Cave and Squatting Place, and superstition is a specter from out of the dead centuries that haunts all his days. The coincidence that their craft, plying through these deathly waters, should bear such a name as the Charon suddenly suggested a dark possibility to Ned. All at once this man, heretofore to sure, so self-sufficient, so incredulous of anything except his own continued glory and happiness and life, was face to face with the first fear—the simple, primitive fear of death.

Was his fate at the journey's end? Not mere trial, mere hardship and stress and adventure, but uncompromising death? Was he experiencing a premonition? Was that training camp soon to be a reality, as terribly real as these cold seas and this sky of stars, instead of a mere figment of an old man's childish fancy?

But as he watched, the light grew. His own pulse quickened. And presently a brilliant streamer burst straight upward. In a instant, fluttered a moment and died away.

A strange thrill and stir moved through the intricacy of his nerves. He knew now what this light portended; it was known to every wayfarer in the North, yet the keenest excitement took hold of him.

"The Northern Lights," he told himself. A quiver of exultation passed over him.

A few feet distant on the deck Bess's eyes turned from the miracle in the skies to watch the slowly growing light in Ned Corret's face. It was well enough for him to find his inspiration in the majesty of nature. Bess was a woman, and that meant that man that is born of woman was her work and her being. She turned her eyes from God to behold this man.

VIII

Before ever that long night was done, clouds had overswept the sky and a cold rain was beating upon the sea.

The drizzle changed to snow, lay white on the deck and hissed softly in the water.

Once more the craft plied among islands; but now that they had passed into Bering Sea, the character of the land had changed. These were not the dull green, wooded isles met with on first entering Alaskan waters. Wild and inhospitable though the latter had seemed, they were fairy bower compared to these. Nor did the mossy mainland continue to show a marvelous beryl green through mist.

The truth was that these islands were far-scattered fragments of the Barrens, those great wastes of moss and tundra between the timber belt and the eternal ice cap of the pole.

Lately the ship had taken a northern turn, following the island chain, and the cloudy, windy, rainy days found them not far from the mainland, in a region that would be wholly icebound in a few weeks more. And when they were still a full day from that turning point, Knutson sought out Ned on the deck.

"Mr. Corret, do you not know where we're getting?" he asked quietly.

Unconsciously startled by his tone, Ned whirled toward him. "I don't know these waters," he replied. "I suppose we're approaching Muchinoff Island."

"Quite a sail between here and der, yet. Mr. Corret, we're getting into most unknown and untraveled waters in all dis part of the North. De boats to Nome go way outside here, and 'tisn't to 'em I'm way out of my old haunts. I'm traveling by chart only; neither man nor McNab, nor very many other people know very much the waterways between dese islands. You're up here to trade for furs, and you haven't got all winter. You know dat dese waters here, shut off from the currents, are going to be tighter dan a drum before very many weeks. Why don't you make your destination Tzar Island, and start back from there?"

"You think it's really dangerous?"

"Not really dangerous, maybe, but mighty awkward if anything should go wrong wif' old brig. You understand, dat not one out of four of dese little islands is inhabited. Some of de larger islands have only a scattered village or two; some of 'em haven't a living human-being. De'ren plenty and plenty of islands not even named in dis chart, and I'd hate to hit the reefs of one after dark! De'ren no one to send S.O.S. calls to, in case of trouble, even if we had wireless. De only boat I know dat works carefully through dis country is another trader, the Intrepid and dat won't be along till spring. Mr. Corret, it's best for you to know dat you're in one of the most uninhabited and barren countrysides."

"And the most dreary and generally damnable," Ned agreed with enthusiasm. "Why didn't you tell me this before? Muchinoff Island isn't anything in my young life. I picked it out as a starting point simply because it was the farthest north of the Skopins, but since there seems to be plenty of territory."

"It will make you hump somethin' to cover all the good territory now, includin' some of the best of de Aleuts, and get around Alaskan Peninsula before winter sets in, in earnest. Tzar Island is just to our northeast. Shall I head towards it?"

"How long will it take?"

"Depends on the wind. This is a ticklish stretch of water in here, shallow in spots, but safe enough, I guess. I think we can skim along and make it long before dawn."

"Then do it!" Ned's face suddenly brightened. "The sooner I can get

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Brought Relief When Other Medicines Failed

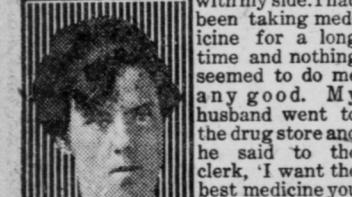
Winston-Salem, N. C.—"I was weak and run-down and had trouble with my side. I had been taking medicine for a long time and nothing seemed to do me any good. My husband went to the drug store and he said to the clerk, 'I want the best medicine you have for women's troubles.' He gave him a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and it has helped me in a short time I was able to do my homework, and now I am not only able to do every bit of that and washing and ironing, but I help my husband at the store."

Mrs. L. K. MYERS, 1409 E. 14th St., Winston-Salem, N. C.

Feels New Life and Strength

Keene, N. H.—"I was weak and run-down and had backache and all sorts of troubles which women have. I found great relief when taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and I also used Lydia E. Pinkham's Sanative Wash. I am able to do my work and feel new life and strength from the Vegetable Compound."—Mrs. A. F. HAMMOND, 72 Carpenter Street, Keene, N. H.

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Advertisement

OUR BOARDING HOUSE—By AHERN



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



THE OLD HOME TOWN—By STANLEY



shake my legs on shore, the better I'll like it."

The seaman left him, and for a moment Ned stood almost drunk with exultation on the deck. Even now they were nearing the journey's end.

Presently he turned, made his way into the hold and opened one of a pile of iron-bound wooden cases.

When he returned to the dining saloon he carried a dark bottle in each hand.

IX

Ned's news was received with the keenest delight by Lenore and Mrs. Hardenworth. The latter regained her lost amiability with promptness. Lenore's reaction was not dissimilar from Ned's; in her native city she could come into her own again.

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HOOSIER BRIEFS

Fred Conklin, Columbia City, has been elected head of the department of English at Manchester College.

Many relatives and friends gathered at Tipton Park to help Mr. and Mrs. John M. Thompson, Kokomo, celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. He has been a pastor for forty-nine years.

Prof. Emil Diederich, 57, noted cellist, a native of Berlin and who had played before the royal courts of Turkey, Germany, Greece, Russia, and England died in a sanitarium near Crown Point.

Several hundred South Bend patrons will have their telephones removed because of the rate increases asked by the Indiana Bell Telephone Company, according to a report.

While drilling for oil at Boonville a large vein of coal resembling anthracite was found 500 feet below the surface. The coal is very hard and is entirely different from ordinary bituminous.

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