

REX BEACH ADVENTURE STORIES

Where Northern Lights Come Down o' Nights

By REX BEACH

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THE mission house at Togiak stands forlornly on a wind swept Alaskan spit...

Many natives crawled out of these and stared across the bay as down a gully came an arctic caravan...

His companion, clinging to the sled, stumbled now and then, while his face, splitting from the snap of the frost...

"I'm all right," answered the afflicted man wearily. "Don't mind me. George, too, had suffered from the sheen of the unbroken whiteness...

Down the steep bank they slid, across the bumped up sea ice at the river mouth and into the village.

At the greeting of their guide to his tribesmen George started. Twelve years of coast life had taught him the dialect from Point Barrow south...

He shook his hairy claws at the hostile circle, then cried to the chief in the native tongue:

"Ob, Shaman! We come bleeding and hungry. Hunger grips us, and our bones are stiff with frost. The light is gone from my brother's eyes...

The Indians clustered before the portal, with its rude cross above, and stared malignantly while the chief spoke.

"Here, Cap! Bust her in quick!" He dragged Captain before the entrance, thrusting the weapon upon him...

"We're safe as long as we stay in the church," said he. "Right of sanctuary, eh? Does it occur to you how we're going to get out?"

"It happened when we rooked the bars of Forty Mile before ever a Chechako had crossed the Chilkoot. I went over to the headwaters of the Tanana...

"What? says I. 'We can't sell you provisions nor allow you to stay in the village.' 'Orloff gives. You must go on,' he says, 'or give her up.'"

"I heard the wall of the old women before I came to the cabin, and when Metla had sobbed the story out in her weakness I went back into the dark and down to the mission.

"Then a squaw tugged at my parka. 'She is dying, Anguk,' she said, and I ran back up the hill with the cold biting at my heart.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell ye this, Cap, before we started, for now we're into the south country, where he owns the natives. He knows we've come, as the blood token of the guide showed.

"Jump!" she said. "Big one, jump!" "She had loosed a canoe at the landing and now held it in the boiling current underneath, paddling desperately.

"As they ran out of the tents with their rifles I leaped. "A long drop and cold water, but I hit feet first. When I rose the little girl was alongside.

"The next winter at Holy Cross she ran to me shaking one day. "He is here! He is here! Oh, Big man, I am afraid!"

"I went out of the cabin down to the mission and into the house of Father Barnum. He was there. "Orloff! What do ye want? I says. "Father Barnum speaks up. He's known for a good man the length of the river. 'George,' says he, 'Father Orloff tells me you stole the girl Metla from her tribe. 'Tis a shameful thing for a white to take a red girl for his wife, but it's a crime to live as you do.'"

"Your eyes are coming along mighty slow," worried George. "I'm hoping his reverence is up to his gills in drifts back yonder. We must leave him a sled trail for a souvenir."

"Hit the dogs and run for it by night. He'll burn us out when he comes. Fine targets we'd make on the snow by the light of a burning shack! If ye can see to shoot we'll go tonight. Hello! What's that?"

"It was a terrible trip—the river wet with overflows and the catoffs drifted deep, so I drove back into Holy Cross a week late, with bleeding dogs and frozen Indians straining at the sled ropes.

"He needs killing. I am hungry for his life." glisten of the crust. Its team, maddened by the village scent, poured down the incline toward the river bank...

Orloff leaped from the sinking sled, but, hindered by his fur swaddling, crashed through and lunged heavily in his struggles to mount the edge of the film.

The guide broke his way toward a hummock of old ice forming an islet near by, and the priest half swam, half scrambled behind, till they crawled out upon this solid footing.

He shouted affrightedly in his blindness, but the mocking voice of Big George answered him, and he cowered at the malevolence in the words.

"Here I am, Orloff. It's help ye want, is it? I'll shoot the man that tries to reach ye. Ha, ha! Ye're freezing, eh? George will talk to keep ye awake. A dirty trick of the devil to cheat me! I've fattened for years on the hope of stamping your life out, and now it's robbed me. But I'll stick till ye're safe in h-!"

"A three day blizzard," he rejoiced, "and the strongest team on the coast can't wallow through it under a week. These are shore gales is beauts."

On the third day, with arctic vagary, the wind gasped reluctantly and scurried over the range. In its wake the surging ocean churned loudly, and the backwater behind the town, held by the dam of freezing slush ice at the river mouth, was skimmed by a thin ice paper, pierced here and there by the up ended piles from beneath.

and safe to the eye, but falling beneath the feet of a child. "Your eyes are coming along mighty slow," worried George. "I'm hoping his reverence is up to his gills in drifts back yonder. We must leave him a sled trail for a souvenir."

Outside came the howl of marmots and the cry of men. Leaping to the window, George rubbed it free and stared into the sunshine. "Too late, too late!" he said. "Here he comes! It's time I killed him." He spoke grudgingly, with the dull anger of years.

On the bright surface of the opposite hillside a sled bearing a muffled figure appeared silhouetted against the



"He needs killing. I am hungry for his life."

Orloff leaped from the sinking sled, but, hindered by his fur swaddling, crashed through and lunged heavily in his struggles to mount the edge of the film. As he slithered on to the caving surface it let him back, and the waters covered him time and again.

The man cried piteously, turning his bleared eyes toward the sound. "Shoot, why don't you, and end it! Can't you see we're freezing?" He stood up in his carapace of stiffened clothes, shivering palsiedly.

"The truest thing ye ever said," cried George, and he swung his Colt's into view. "I'll favor you, and I'll keep my vow." He raised the gun. The splashing of the distant dogs broke the silence. A native knelt stiffly.

"George, George!" Captain had stumbled down among them and plucked at his arm, peering dimly into his distorted face. "Great God! Are you a murderer? They'll be dead before we can save them."

"Save 'em!" said George, while reason fought with his mania. "Who's going to save 'em? He needs killing. I'm hungry for his life."

"He's a man, George. They're both human, and they're dying in sight of us. Give him a chance. Fight like a man." As he spoke the fury fell away from the whaler, and he became the alert,

strong man of the frontier, knowing the quick danger and meeting it. Soaked to the armpits, he smashed a trail through which they reached the hummock, where the others lay, too listless for action.

At the shore they bore the priest to their shelter, while the guide was snatched into a nearby hut. They backed off his brittle clothes and supported him to the bed.

"He's badly frozen," whispered Captain. "Can we save him?" They rubbed and thawed for hours, but the sluggish blood refused to flow into the extremities, and Captain felt that this man would die for lack of amputation.

"We've operated. He will recover." "It's a sad, sad day," mourned George. "It just takes the taste out of everything. He's a cripple, eh?"

IN MEMORIAM. SOMEWHERE along the endless miles of blue green ice and dove white snow. The dull sun smiles o'er feathered isles. Where men lie dead below.

"ONE DAY MORE." THE cordage creaks and rattles in the wind. With freaks of sudden hush; the reeling sea. Now thumps like solid rock beneath the stern.

"THAT STRAIN AGAIN." SWEET is the voice that sings, and sweet the air. But only sweet to me because they bring. Back perfectly to my remembering. A tune I heard when life and love were fair.

REGRET. CAN I with the aid of countless year Can I erase from memory The thought of what you were to me, And yet Methinks my grief would lose its sting. If you'd return that diamond ring. (N. B.—It is not paid for yet.) —L. B. Coley.

OUR DANGEROUS STREETS. During the year 1911, says the Scientific American, 532 persons were killed by automobiles in the streets of Greater New York. Incomplete records of the injuries taken from daily newspapers show 13,042 persons hurt by automobiles, 104 by street cars and 317 by wagons. In London, which in 1911 had a population of over 7,000,000, 410 persons were killed by vehicles; while in Paris, with a population of over 2,000,000, there were 238 deaths and 18,179 injuries, by all classes of conveyances.

Practical Fashions



This simple blouse has two possibilities, either it may be made with body and long sleeves in one or with a drop shoulder and short sleeves. The neck is round and the waist closes in the back. Lawn, gingham, voile, batiste, etc., are suitable for this waist, which may also be made of plain lawn for an underslip.

Form for pattern order: NO. 6302, NAME, TOWN, STREET AND NO., STATE.

Practical Fashions

CHILD'S CAPS.



Three styles of caps are shown in this illustration. No. 1 can be developed in two different ways, as shown in the picture; Nos. 2 and 3 are seamless, and are cleverly drawn in to the shape of the head. Lawn, silk, batiste and the like are used for caps. The cap pattern (6290) is cut in sizes 1, 2 and 3 years. Two year also requires for No. 1, 1/4 yard of 27 inch material, with 2 1/4 yards of edging; No. 2 requires 1/4 yard of 27 inch material, 3/4 yards of edging and 1/4 yard of ribbon; No. 3 requires 1/4 yard of 27 inch material, 1/4 yard of insertion, 3 yards of edging.

Form for pattern order: NO. 6290, NAME, TOWN, STREET AND NO., STATE.

Death of Satire. Since literary forms and fashions of expression wax and wane as well as the element of taste, it is not beyond surmise that satire, free and fearless, may again become a potent agent for good, remarks the Fortnightly Review. But ere that be impossible, a responsiveness must be born in the people, or its voice will be smothered like a whisper in a storm, and its thunderbolts expend themselves on men of straw. Whether the spirit of aggressive satire shall perish entirely among the modern Kulturvolker is therefore matter for conjecture, but beyond certainty. Yet if it be so, the history of the extinction of spinal, virile English satire will be found by posterity to terminate in the work of Byron and Gifford, and, by a strange anomaly, in that of one or two writers of western America, the last worthy and redoubtable exponents of the school of Pope and Swift.

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