

# The MICHIGAN KID

by Rex Beach

Fine Serial Fiction in a new form. . . . Three Prize Short Stories (of four instalments each) by a master story-teller. They're Rex Beach at his best.

**SECOND INSTALLMENT**

Jim rose and followed the man out of the building. Hiram Morris here! In Alaska! It was incredible. More incredible still was it to recognize in this bent figure of discouragement the once mighty man of Michigan, the colossus of Jim's youth.

to introduce himself the guest did not make himself known. It was not until the latter had eaten ravenously, to his complete satisfaction and had lighted an expensive cigar of Jim's selection, that the younger man said:

I've no sympathy for these wasters who squander their money over bars and gambling tables."

Mr. Morris shuffled along the street, shaking his head and muttering to himself. As he passed the entrance to a bakery window issued the savory odors of fresh bread, pies, and spicy cakes he paused, lifted his face, and breathed deeply. He halted again before a restaurant inside the show window of which were displayed raw steaks and chops and cold-storage chickens upon a bed of cracked ice.

"Perhaps you'd like to hear about that old friend I met. He was a big man in our town and I was a poor kid, but he gave me some advice that I've tried to live up to. It came about like this: one morning we were having a snowball fight in front of the school-house when he drove past in his cutter."

Rowan nodded gravely; he spoke the literal truth when he said: "Neither have I."

Jim recognized the expression in that thin, eager face and he experienced a shock. Good God! the man was hungry! Hungry in Alaska! Nobody had ever gone hungry on the Yukon. What kind of camp was this?

"I don't know what possessed me, but I threw a ball at him. It was ice. It hit him, hurt him like the devil. I'd have been fired from school only for him. He—"

"I'm out of date, perhaps, but I still retain my old-fashioned ideas. I daresay I don't belong here."

Holding his voice to a casual tone, he said: "Excuse me, but I'm looking for a clean cafe. Can you tell me where the gamblers eat?"

"Where was this?"

"How can I?" The question was accompanied by a crooked smile and a regretful shake of the gray head.

"Right here, I believe. It is the most expensive place in town." The speaker's gaze remained fixed upon the window.

"It was in Dover. You took me to the principal and—"

"But your family—?" With a gambler's caution Jim was leading up to the question that had trembled upon his lips from the moment he had first recognized Rose's father.

"I'm a stranger here and I don't know a soul. Won't you join me?"

"Why, this is extraordinary! Then your name is—Rowan. You're Jim Rowan's boy. And you recognized me, after all these years!"

"Mrs. Morris died several years ago."

Mr. Morris looked up now, swiftly: in his eyes was a glitter that Rowan had seen in the eyes of famished trail dogs. "Why, you don't know me! Besides—I'm not dressed for a place like this. I thank you, but—"

"I couldn't fail to recognize that scar on your cheek, sir, inasmuch as I put it there."

"I'm sorry. I haven't heard from home in ages." There was a moment of silence, then with averted eyes and in a tone of indifference the younger man said, "Your

"Come on. You'll be doing me a favor." Jim held the door open and waited for the ragged figure to precede him, then he selected a table in one of the booths and ordered a meal for two which caused his guest to say:

"My dear boy!" The old man took Jim's hand in both of his. "How strange that we should meet like this! And how you fooled me! You had your little joke, didn't you?"

"The next morning Jim Rowan put a pack on his back and hit the trail. It was the first time in nearly five years that he had felt pack straps, for The Michigan Kid had taken his exercise by proxy, and he was dismayed to discover how soft and how short of breath he had become. He felt a pang when he heard the siren of his steamer giving the signal to weigh anchor, for he was heartily sick of the north-land and hungry for the world outside. He had worked long for this hour; he felt now as if some one had offered him a drink then snatched it away.

"Well, it is a sort of banquet with me. It celebrates an occasion."

"Merely because I wasn't sure you'd accept my invitation to dine if you knew who I was."

And the worst of it all was that he had no doubt made a fool of himself! Rose would not—could not be the girl he had known; nor could the faint spark of a boyhood infatuation be fanned into the flame of a real man's love, for men's states change without their knowing it. He knew without asking that Rose shared all of her father's scruples and prejudices. Lucky for him that he had buried The Michigan Kid.

"Indeed?"

"Hell of a camp, to let a man go hungry!" Rowan exclaimed, harshly.

daughter Rose must be a woman now."

"I meet an old friend tonight: a man from my home town."

"You see, I'm pretty old and I'm not very strong. It's hard for me to get work. However, a little poverty, a little hardship, doesn't hurt anybody. It makes one enjoy good fortune when it comes. But, Jim, my boy, tell me about yourself. How did I ever help you? You must have struck it rich to be able to afford an extravagance like this—this banquet?"

Hiram Morris looked up eagerly. "Yes. Yes, indeed! A lovely, sweet girl."

"You know how it is," he explained with a tremulous smile; "it takes time to develop a placer property when you have no capital. But I have a splendid claim and one of these days I'll land in the pay."

"Never mind. Crooked money isn't worth having and money of any sort isn't worth too high a price. This is a cruel country and it's hard to get ahead. But you're young and you've taken good care of yourself." Mr. Morris's failing eyes did not see that Jim's flesh was flabby and that the bleach in his cheeks came from lack of sunlight. "That's your early training."

"Married, no doubt?"

"The two men chatted on until their food was served, and, inasmuch as the host had not seen fit

to introduce himself the guest did not make himself known. It was not until the latter had eaten ravenously, to his complete satisfaction and had lighted an expensive cigar of Jim's selection, that the younger man said:

"I'm out of date, perhaps, but I still retain my old-fashioned ideas. I daresay I don't belong here."

## Traveling Around America



Photo Grace Line

### FOUR REASONS WHY

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take charity from strangers than from old friends. I'm sorry you made the sacrifice."

"Charity? Sacrifice? What sacrifice?"

"Father says you were on your way 'outside'—after five years. I know what that means.

Continued Next Week.

### Meehan Tied For Second Honors Among High Scorers of Nation

Red Meehan is again bringing glory to Catawba through his high scoring this season. At the time of this writing he holds the honor of being the second highest scorer in the country. The Associated Press sent out the following report:

"Ray Zeh, Western Reserve fullback, leads the country in scoring, having a total of eighty-seven points.

"Close on his heels are Ellis Meehan of Catawba in North Carolina and Stanley of Williams, each of whom has crossed the goal line fourteen times for a grand total of eighty-four points."

Zeh, however, has only eleven touchdowns to his credit, claiming the title as a result of making good 21 tries for extra points. This puts Meehan three touchdowns ahead of the leading scorer, but since "Red" doesn't convert his team's extra points, he is relegated to second place.

Red was the nation's second highest scorer last season when his arm was broken in the game with Presbyterian College. Last year's highest scorer, Shepherd of Western Maryland, was formerly a running mate of Meehan's in Keystone Prep's backfield. If Meehan should cop the title this year, this would be the second straight year a Keystone man won the title.

Red has received great honors

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"Of course you realize the supplies came just in time?"

eyes, he had ceased all regrets about that departed steamship.

She was delighted to see the boy she had known, and with her own hands she prepared the simple supper for three. Later she sought out Jim as he was strolling about the elaim.

"Father tells me that you have bought a complete outfit of supplies, and lumber for another cabin."

"Yes. They'll be out tomorrow."

The girl lowered her eyes and said with some difficulty: "Of course you realize that they came just in time. It's almost easier to

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